



## AAC Publications

---

### **Aleta del Tiburón, New Routes**

Argentina/Chile, Southern Patagonia, Torres del Paine

**On January 9, 2016, I arrived in the British Camp in the French Valley of Torres del Paine with my wife, Heather Baer. We were intent on repeating the normal route on Aleta del Tiburón (Shark's Fin), but information on the climb is scarce and the low-angled south and west faces of this formation can be climbed virtually anywhere. In camp, we met two Italians, Antony and Andrea (last names not known), who had just completed a new route on the east face of Aleta del Tiburón. Their route, El Sonido del Viento (600m, 5.10 A2), was left with the necessary pitons in situ so that a standard rack and rivet hangers are all that is needed.**

On January 14, Heather and I started at the high point of the talus on Aleta del Tiburón, about 200' left of the fin that defines the south ridge, beneath a dark, blocky feature that we deemed the Black Onion. From the top of the first pitch, I reasoned that Charlie Fowler, who had soloed the route about 20 years prior, had probably gone up the lower-angle ground to the left of the Black Onion. Heather and I went up and right, gradually edging closer to the arête on the right, which we joined on pitch 10 after climbing about 1,000' of new ground.

We underestimated the length of the climb—a total of 13 pitches—and coupled with a late start (5 p.m.), we found ourselves midnight-ed on pitch 11. We were forced to make an open bivy in a quaint hole. Eventually the sun came up and warmed our shivering bodies. Around 9 a.m. we continued climbing the final two pitches to the south summit. Totally spent by our night out in the open, we did not go to the true summit, which is 5m higher and involves another 40m of horizontal climbing along the summit fin. We descended the rappel route from the south summit, which is totally separate from our climbing route, replacing many ratty anchors along the way. We called our route When Does the Sun Come (V 5.9). Except for the crux 5.9 pitch, every pitch is 5.7 or 5.8, mostly following thin cracks, but with 40' runouts on edgy face climbing midway up the climb.

A few days later, Heather and I were joined by climber/photographer Claudio Carocca from Puerto Natales. On January 18 we hiked into the Agostini Valley, a higher tributary of the French Valley. Five minutes from base camp, Heather suffered a bad ankle sprain in the soft snow. After stabilizing her ankle, Claudio and I left to explore a crag at the very top of the valley, climbing a three-pitch route (5.10b) to a virgin summit we dubbed the Helmet. The climbing was stellar on thin cracks, arêtes, and underclings, not unlike climbing at Joshua Tree. Over the next two days we descended toward town. Heather toughed it out and self-rescued by crawling, limping, and eventually walking back to the trailhead.

Steve Schneider, USA

**Images**

Article Details

Author	Steve Schneider
Publication	AAJ
Volume	58
Issue	90
Page	243
Copyright Date	2016
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions