



AAC Publications

First ascents of Cerro Nylandia, “Cerro Fernando,” and “Cerro Akila”

Chile, Cordillera de Darwin

From September 25 to October 13, the French national women’s mountaineering team (ENAF), comprised of Florence Igier, Johanna Marcoz, Marion Pravin, and Maud Vanpouille, along with two coaches, Gaël Bouquet des Chaux and Antoine Pêcher, completed a successful expedition to the Cordillera de Darwin.

Prior to the trip, the group had identified at least two virgin peaks surrounding Esperanza Pass: Point 1,564m and Point 1,814m on the map produced by Camilo Rada (through the UNCHARTED project) as well as a possible drop-off point by boat. This zone is adjacent a major glacier, Glaciar Marinelli, and is north-northwest of Monte Shipton, in the north-central part of the Cordillera de Darwin.

On September 25 the group departed from Puerto del Hambre, transported by boatman Fernando Viveros (Chile) for the 100-mile trip across the Strait of Magellan to reach Fiordo Finlandia. The group built a base camp at 54°33'51"S, 69°43'40"W.

On September 30 the climbers ascended two virgin peaks just above the east side of Fiordo Finlandia: Cerro Nylandia (1,114m, 54°32'14"S, 69°42'20"W) and Point 1,044 (1,044m, 54°32'47"S, 69°42'7"W), a peak they suggest renaming “Cerro Fernando,” after their ship captain. These summits were reportedly of little technical difficulty but presented a good view to the southeast of the other main objectives, Point 1,564m and Point 1,814m.

From October 3–4, the group set out to attempt Point 1,564m (54°34'31"S, 69°38'59"W), however were turned back 30m from the summit due to poor weather and other factors. From October 9–10, the group made a successful ascent of Point 1,814m in better weather. The mountain is reportedly a beautiful, snowy pyramid, with technical difficulties of WI3 and 70° snow. The group chose to rename this summit “Cerro Akila,” which means “ice” in the Yagan language spoken by the first inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego. Both routes required long, tedious approaches, bivouacs at the foot of the peaks, and long days of climbing.

With a poor weather forecast, the group was picked up on October 12. They experienced an unplanned night out at sea along with 3m seas while recrossing the Strait of Magellan and did not reach Punta Arenas again until the middle of the following day. An online trip report and photos can be viewed at www.ffme.fr.

– Information provided by the Fédération Française de la Montagne et de l'Escalade (FFME)

Images



Retreating under the wind from Point 1814. In the far left, is Point 1564.



On the summit of Point 1564, from left to right: Marion Pravin, Florence Igier, Maud Vanpouille, Gaël Bouquet des Chaux, Johanna Marcoz.



View from base camp to prominent peaks near the head of Fiordo Finlandia: Cerro El Paso (2,224m, left) and Cerro el Ovejero (2,125m, right).



Climbs in Cordillera Darwin

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