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German Success On Sarmiento's North Face

This will probably only interest a few people since it involves unknown climbers on an unknown peak far from the various three ring circuses currently happening in the Himalayas. The trip report in *Alpinist* is short, but it captures a type of mountaineering that is a breath of fresh air to read; challenging, self-supported climb in a remote part of the world, out of the glare of media and completed for reasons other than sponsors or records. A few excerpts: After three failed attempts in March, German climbers Robert Jasper, Joern Heller and Ralf Gantzhorn completed a rare ascent of Monte Sarmiento's west summit (2145m) on April 2. Well over 100 miles from the nearest settlement, the remote peak towers over the Magdalena Channel in Chilean Tierra del Fuego, on the southern tip of South America. Sarmiento is accessible only by boat and is no stranger to failure due to its location and notoriously tempestuous weather. According to planetmountain.com, the peak has seen more than 30 failed expeditions. In March, the Germans arrived at the town of Ushuaia, Argentina. From there, they sailed around Cape Horn in a small yacht on turbulent waters for 11 days and more than 300 nautical miles. They established base camp at the port Caleta Escandallo on the bay Bahia Escandallo. On the morning of April 1, the team embarked on their fourth attempt on the north face. Jasper, Heller and Gantzhorn again began their ascent by hiking through dense rainforest so thick that Jasper described it as a "brick wall." They then crossed a crevasse-filled ice field to reach Collado Este, a pass below the east ridge of Sarmiento.

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