

SOM 20:
Chile – a little bit of

Meanwhile we spent a lot of weeks in Chile but we cannot see a real progress. First it seemed to go well. In Valdivia we could manage all the welding works to be done in fine quality that we wanted to be done. In future there will be no water entering the boat at the broken railing pole, two other holes are closed too, two new plates where we can mount new navigational lights are added at the bow balcony and, most important, a new tube for the anchor chain is fitted.



In this place water will never enter again. That means we can not avoid water entering here, but now it is guaranteed that it never again will visit our beds. Perhaps we should have written a book about all this water. Water in the seas, water from above, water in Chile, water underneath the boat, water in the boat, no water in the tank (?!). So, of course, water is nearly allways and everywhere.¹

Finally we had time left to visit Wolfgang. He accompanied our journies in the Patagonian channels for weeks by the Patagonian Net, a radio network here in the south. So we grabbed our chance to meet him personally.

In Valdivia we rented a car and started to Villarica. In the last moment André joined us, one of the surprisingly countless members of the Swiss mountain navy which you can meet on the seven seas.



And André gets a nice sleeping chestnut-house. There is no better than nothing.

The town of Villarica is situated Pacific Ocean and, of course, Andean mountains with all their geologic faults and active vulcanos. One very pretty vulcano in its regularly triangel shape, named like the town, is not far away of Wolfgang's site from where you can enjoy an omnipresent, extraordinary pittoresque and never frightening view. In the night you will see the reddish shine of the magma reflected by some clouds hanging on the peak.

Next day we grabbed the chance given by this geologic faults and visited one of these thermes. Thanks to Ulli and Elke – we did a long trip and accepted expensive entrance fees but the place was worth all the time and money. Located in a narrow canyon we find under a well suited grey sky a misty and mysterious somehow Japanese looking landscape. The air is really fresh but the waters are hot, hotter and more than hot, so we just start relax in this area passing slowly from pool to pool following the canyon until the end, where we find an ice-cold waterfall, moving back and forth, bathing and relaxing until our bodies seemingly start to dissolve. So we take two pieces of *kuchen* (cake) quickly (here in Chile it is called *kuchen* like in German, believe us, for sure) and start the way back soon. We want to hurry because

We were very happy meeting Wolfgang. He had rented his guesthouse but both, Ulli and Elke, offered us to share this nice place. In the so-called heating – brrrr – but

not very far from the close to the ridges of the



¹ But now we have heard somebody was first and has written this book. You will find it under the title „Wasser im Schiff im Wasser“, published by ... Verlag, but I am very sorry that I have to mention that it is written in German only. May be they look for some translating works. :-)

Wolfgang has arranged a reunion with Fernanda, the girl we met during our whale-watching visit in Puerto Pirámide. Fernandas brother in law Roland, immigrated from Germany too, is a good friend to Wolfgang. What a small world. And Roland is the one who has the glorious idea to do a very economic visit to this Vulcano Villarica. We are attracted by a hike to the summit but this is allowed only by using a local guide and this means a lot of money (and this is not to be understood because in winter you can go to the summit by skies - without any guide, no permit and so on.) "Why don't you fly to the crater? Pay the fuel to a pilot who has to do his flying hours, let it be 100 US, but do it!" Well, *como no?* So we do what we have named our boat for - JUST DO IT.

Wolfgang makes a few phone calls and during the night we are wondering: will we fly or not? During the breakfast the house phone rings: „You've got a pilot, you will fly!“

After quickly doing the Patagonia-Net Wolfgang takes us in his car and off it goes to the airfield. There we are introduced to Señor Master of mill (in German "Obermüllermeister") Pfeiffer, our pilot. A red and white Cessna has been prepared to go. We are looking at it very curiously. Ulli is the only one who has any experience with these small sport airplanes but for Anke and me it is the first time. Shortly later we will be asked to come to the plane. Because I own the biggest camera (old show-off) I get the seat aside of the pilot. After all - I have the official job to take pictures from Wolfgang's site from the birds-sight. So Anke and Ulli are crawling in for the two seats in the back of the cabin. Martin tries to sneak in the front. From the inside you see well that these planes are some 30 or 40 years old. The cramped conditions in the cabin are suprisingly. If you think about the well dimensioned cars the americanes have built at the same time you are wondering how they managed to deal with this tiny little planes.



In the beginning the engine doesn't like to work - you know it's very cold - but eventually it is thinking about and doesn't make any troubles any more. Then the ground personal (a young club member) is beckoned to come again. The radio doesn't work, the pilot can send but doesn't receive anything. Oh no, will the flight be cancelled? But no, we are not in Germany. There are only a few instructions given and off we roll to take-off. A lot of wind from the side, a minute to think and then full throttle, brakes off, and the Cessna starts to run. Somewhat shaky we take off and then the airplanes nose

continously is pointing to the sky. Nothing to see from the front seat. The two in the back reckon happily that they have the better sight to the ground. Some hundreds feet later it becomes calm. The bumpy wind close to the ground has gone. Here up in the sky is no wind, nothing. Señor Pfeiffer don't seem to be happy about this. The Cessna is climbing too slowly in his opinion. That means we will need more time and more fuel. Again and again he is murmuring in German:

„A difficult flight.“

„Really difficult today!“

„I'm not sure, if we will make it.“

First we are flying turns and circles, then we head to a little ridge nearby to look for some upwind. Difficult, indeed. We need a lot of time. Will we have bad luck? Some time we think to be on the summits level but Señor Pfeiffer means that we have to climb 300 feet more to reach the summits height. How easily you can be wrong. We are looking and looking. Being really close to the vulcano we enjoy the views to it's snowy slopes at the top and the contrasting snowy white and blakish-brown lava slopes we never



would have seen except from the birds view. Still fivehundred feet are remaining. Too much? Complicated, indeed. But he has to keep a minimum distance above the crater. And then: again a turn and now heading to the summit, the crater is clearly placed under our eyes. Then our pilot inclines the plane as much as he can and nearly on the tip of the wing we are passing just over the crater. We cannot stop watching.

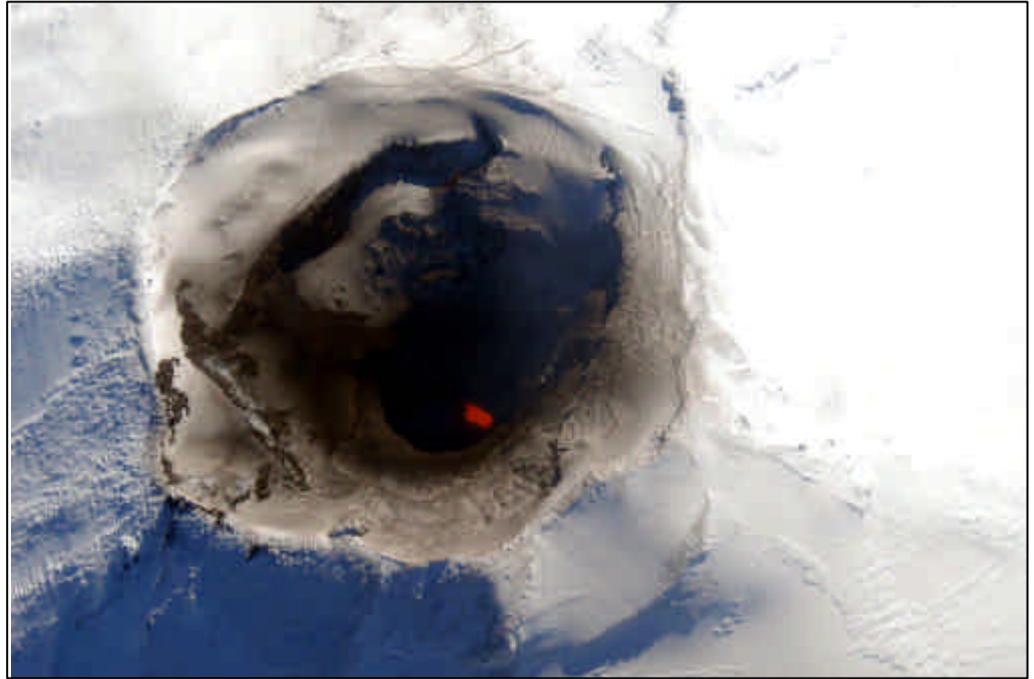
„Are we right? I can't see anything.“

„Perfect, perfect!“

The outer flanks of the crater are covered by snow but inside it's mouth it is turning to a blakish-grey, in its center changing to black contourless deepness. And then, slowly, and in the beginning nearly not to see, a dark red glow is coming out of a black brink, becoming bigger, and eventually we look into the red pupil of the vulcanos eye. Cameras are clicking. Shot by shot. And then a second approach. The pilot wants to make it even better. On the western, the sunny slope we recognize a weak zigzag structure in the snowfields, dotted with some black spots in a line. Hiking people who struggle for the summit on their own feet and power. Quick calculation: 100 Dollar per nose, exhausting struggle, and who knows if you can look to this glowing magma from the craters upper brink? Or: 100 Dollar divided by three persons, no exercise, and a guaranteed view from above? Cold it will be in both cases. But respect and our best regards to these mountain comrades.

The second approach is slightly better than the first one, a lot of wows, but now we have to go back. Fuel is limited. Absolute emphasized guests remaining in the Cessna. We talk and talk and are pleased and happy. By the way, we shot hundreds of fotos of Wolfgang's site but the vulcano flight remains the main topic for the next hours.

In the evening we meet at the *parilla* telling about well-known and unknown sailors and adding anecdotes about prominent sailing heroes. Next morning we have to return to Valdivia. Here we meet our Belgian friends Monique and Michel of LA FLÂNEUSE who arrived together with Peter and Captain Flint, the parrot, both sailing with SHANTY. Michel reports somehow sadly that his brother had expressed strong doubts about the authenticity of the foto which shows LA FLÂNEUSE passing Cape Hoorn Island. That hurts especially Anke who pushed the button of the camera². Therefore we want to show the foto again to give you an opportunity to discusse: do YOU really think that there is something manipulated in this picture (see left). And if you think so, what could have been manipulated?



expressed strong doubts about the authenticity of the foto which shows LA FLÂNEUSE passing Cape Hoorn Island. That hurts especially Anke who pushed the button of the camera². Therefore we want to show the foto again to give you an opportunity to discusse: do YOU really think that there is something manipulated in this picture (see left). And if you think so, what could have been manipulated?

Soon we leave Valdivia and again we leave old friends and some new friends we found here. These moments of saying good-bye and

² We are not really sure, who pushed the button to make this foto, but in doubt it means ladys first.

farewell are the really sad aspect of this kind of travelling we do. But don't look back, future means to go ahead.

Our first step from there is beginning phantastic. Sun is shining and good winds are blowing from the south when we are leaving the shelter of the coast. JUST DO IT shows her best sides and in the first 24 hours she gets a new personal record: 153 miles (nautical miles, of course). Next day we record an etmal of 147 miles. Never before we were sailing so fast. But then, but then... Anke notices some little noise in the area of the mast which I didn't remark until this moment. After a look for control we have a bad result: cracks in the weldings of the mastshoe again. What a shit! So we have no choice: new course – back to the coast. And this only in a one days distance to Isla Juan Fernández, which the marketing experts today sell as Robinson Island. But arguing doesn't help. Two and a half days later we reach Higuierillas, a small town with a bigger yacht club not far off Valparaíso.

Meanwhile the weldings are renewed, the mast is put in place and the engine is running again. Surprisingly the glow plugs of our engine break down and – little shock – the spare plugs we carried all the way from Germany were the wrong ones. They did not fit, too small. And the right ones were not available in whole Chile. So we had to look for somebody who could lathe some adapters for different glow plugs. Finally we recognized that even bad luck can mean some good luck. Think about the problems if the glow plugs would have broken down somewhere in Polynesia. And then ... ?

But now we are well fitted, all the bilges and the lockers are filled with food and spare parts and we are ready to leave. We are, aren't we? We could start, but since several days we are waiting for nautical charts ordered in the USA. Obviously they arrived in Chile but they still are in the claws of FedEx and until today they did not arrive. A crazy story too long for this report. But a German phrase says: eventually everything will work out fine, so cross fingers ...

Martin + Anke

Notes to the fotos according their order:

Japan in Chile? – In the *Thermas Geometricas* – Real Japan design – Wolfgang's daily view : the Vulcano Villarica – Not a daily experience: the vulcanos summit at eye level – The ones in the back are pleased – „Look in my eye, baby!“ The eye of the vulcano – Seriously: can this foto of LA FLÂNEUSE passing in front of the Cape Hoorn Island be a fake?