

**Tasermiut Fjord Expedition 2008**  
**Cape Farewell region, Southern Greenland**  
**14<sup>th</sup> July – 16<sup>th</sup> August**  
**Expedition Report**

**Dan Mcmanus**  
**Ged Desforges**  
**Tom Spreyer**  
**Tony Stone**  
**James Vybiral**  
**Es Tresidder**  
**Ruben Gutzat**



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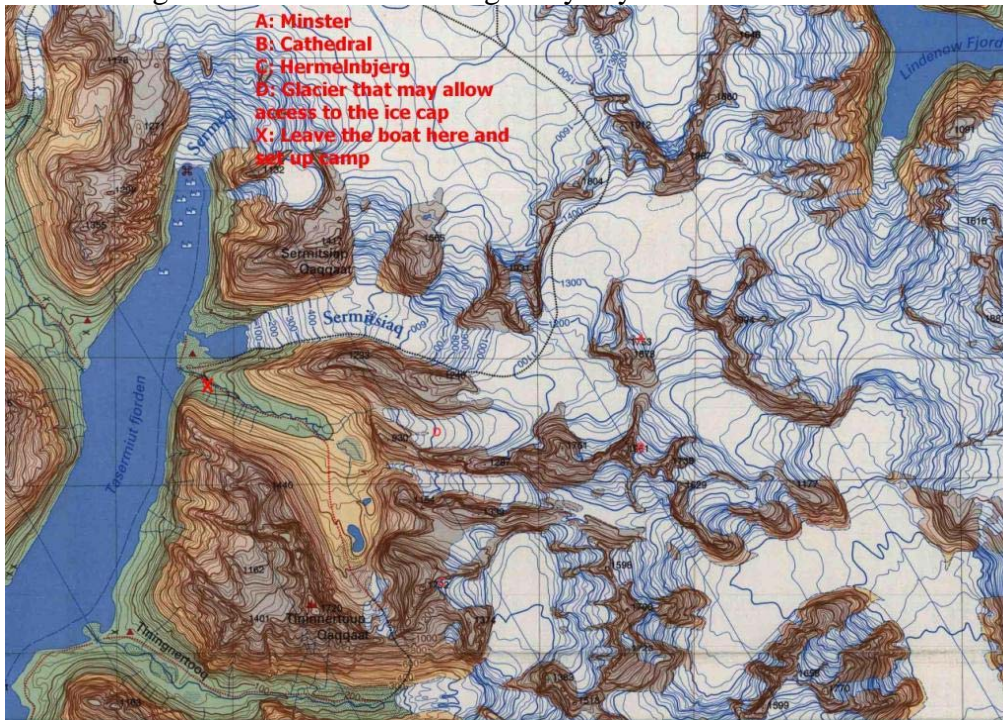
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## Introduction

I began the planning for this trip in the autumn of 2007, I was still able to enjoy the long summer holidays from university and the previous summer had been spent almost entirely climbing in the UK. I was eager to climb further afield the following summer and to experience, for the first time, going on an expedition. A friend had been to the Cape Farewell region a few years ago and, after speaking with him, I learned that this was an ideal venue for a first expedition.

I put the word out and soon had Tony Stone, Blair Fyffe and Es Tresidder interested in trip to an unspecified location in the Cape Farewell area. Tom Spreyer came to hear about the trip through Blair and so we were joined by him and his regular climbing partner Ged Desforges. Next to join was a friend of theirs called James Vybiral, a visual anthropology student who was also looking for a filming project over the summer. Then at a much later date we lost Blair, he took a job in Grenoble, and gained Ruben Gutzat, a Bavarian friend of Tom and James. So finally we were a 7, most of whom I had never met!

After initially thinking we were going to go to Prins Christian Sund, we were pointed in a much more exciting direction by a certain Lyndsay Griffin. He was part of a large and very successful expedition to the area at the head of the Tasermiut in 1971 that climbed all the major summits in the area. Since then only a handful of teams had visited the valley, all of which suffering from some bad weather and climbing the walls via big wall tactics and so taking many days on their ascents.



## Expedition Members

### **Ged Desforges** (25, English, Engineer)

UK trad onsight climbs to E5, including Cumbrian (Esk Buttress), Lost Horizons (Scafell) In Profundum Lacu (Pabbay), Little Miss Sitting Pretty (Mingulay), Right Wall (Dinas Cromlech), Barberella Direct (Trevallen), and Crisis Zone (E7, Great Wanney, after top rope inspection)

Alpine climbs to ED, including Tempi Moderni (South Face of Marmolada), 1<sup>st</sup> British ascent of Hypersalami (Sassolungo), Comici Route (Cima Grande), Cassin Route (Piz Badile)

Scottish Winter climbs to VI, including Gargoyle Wall (Ben Nevis), Stirling Bridge (Aonach Mor), Menage a Trois (Beinn an Doithaidh).

Big Wall experience, including The Nose (El Capitan), Washington Column

### **Dan McManus** (21, Welsh, Student)

UK Trad onsight climbs to E7, including Wreath of deadly nightshade, (Gogarth), The enchanted broccoli garden (Gogarth), Conan the librarian (Gogarth), Isis is angry (every pitch) (Gogarth), The Apprentice (1<sup>st</sup> ascent)( Lleyn Peninsula), TerrorHawk (Lleyn Peninsula), Lord of the Flies (Llanberis Pass), The Bonxie, What no Puffin? (Pabbay)

Alpine climbs to ED, including Frendo Spur( Aiguille du Midi), British route (West face of the Blatiere), Comici Route (Tre Cima di Laveredo), 1938 route (North face of the Eiger)

Scottish Winter climbs to VI

### **Es Tresidder** (28, English, Master's student in Sustainable Technology, Centre for Alternative Technology)

Big Wall climbs in Yosemite including Leaning Tower: West Face (A1), El Capitan: Flight of the Albatross (A3+), Zodiac (A3), Wall of the Early Morning Light (A3+), Zenyatta Mondatta (A4)

Scottish Winter to IX, including Red right hand (new route), Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner (Ben Nevis), The Duel (3<sup>rd</sup> ascent, Stob Coire nan Lochan), Blood Sweat and Frozen Tears (Beinn Eighe)

UK Trad onsights to E4

North face of the Eiger, NW ridge (Aiguille Midi), Fil A Plomb (Aiguille Plan), Petite MacIntyre (Grandes Jorasses), Bourges Mizrahi (Grandes Rocheuse)

Two trips to Western Kokshaal Too in Kyrgyzstan, attempting new mixed lines including: Fire and Ice (TD, Scottish VII, 500m), Haggis Supper (TD, 500m WI5+), Border Control (ED, 500m Scottish VIII).

### **Tom Spreyer** (28, English, Teacher)

UK trad onsight climbs to E5, including Central Sadness (Llanberis slate), Right wall (Cromlech), Pebble Mill (Burbage south), Track of the cat (Roaches), Pagan (Gogarth), Rat Race (Dunkeld), Fascist and Me (Pembroke)

Alpine climbs to ED including Eye Tooth West Pillar (Ruth Gorge, first British ascent), voie Ginat (Droites), Gervustati pillar (Mont Blanc du Tacul), South Ridge (Aiguille Noire de Peutary), Yellow Wall (Diamond, Long's peak), East face of the Steeple (Lemon mountains, Greenland, first ascent), Comici, (Cima Grande)

Scottish Winter to VII including White Magic, the Crack, Torque of the Devil (Northern Corries), Central Buttress (Ben Eighe), Gemini, (Ben Nevis), Equinox (Carn Etchecan)

Other winter climbing to WI6 including Nemesis (Stanley headwall), Weeping pillar (Weeping wall), Expert's choice central (Waterton), the Sorcerer (Ghost valley), various new routes up to Scottish VI and WI 5+ in the Lofoten islands

### **Tony Stone** (22, Scottish, Student)

UK Trad onsights to E6, including The Risk Business (Creag a' Bhancair, Glencoe) Little Miss Sitting Pretty (Mingulay), Titan's Wall (Ben Nevis), The Cad (Gogarth), Positron (Gogarth), Resurrection (Dinas Cromlech)

Alpine climbs to ED, including 1938 Route (North Face of The Eiger), Migot Spur (Aiguille du Chardonnet), Chere Couloir (Mont Blanc du Tacul), South Face (La Meije)  
Scottish Winter climbs to VI, including Cut Throat (Beinn Udlaidh), Satanic Verses, Riders On The Storm, Mega Route X (Ben Nevis), Belhaven (Coire an t-Sneachda), Coup de Grace, Pas de Deux (Beinn an Dothaidh), East Face Route (Stob Coire nan Lochan)

**James Vybiral** (28, English, Master's student in Visual Anthropology, Manchester university)  
Alpine ascents to ED including the Supercouloir (Mont Blanc du Tacul), West ridge of Salbitjen, British route, Red Pillar of Brouillard, Cassin (Badille)  
Scottish winter to VI, including Fallout corne (Northern Corries), Stirling Bridge (Northern Corries)  
Extensive ice climbing in Europe & Canada to I6 including Repentance Super, Weeping Pillar.

**Ruben Gutzat** (31, Phd student in Zurich)

## Expedition Objectives

- To establish new high standard alpine rock/big wall routes on the west faces of the Minster and Cathedral
- To establish new routes on the Hermelnbjerg and on the Tinninertuup group.

The team (of which Lyndsay Griffin was a member) were, I believe, the only people to have climbed on the Minster and the Cathedral, and this was in 1971. So we were initially most excited about exploring the potential for new rock climbs on their walls and made this our primary objective.

The unnamed valley that is home to the Hermelnbjerg and the Tinninertuup group was a little more developed. Its summits had been climbed and some of the walls big wall style. So this was only a secondary objective for us. Another possible objective we had in mind was to make the second ascent of the main summit of the Hermelnbjerg, which had not been climbed since 1971.

James Vybiral, as an independent filmmaker studying postgraduate visual anthropology, had set himself the challenge of filming the expedition as it unfolded. Using the footage, he aimed to produce an anthropological piece and possibly another more conventional short climbing film.

## Summary

After a couple of days moving loads from the fjord we had our advanced base camp established in the unnamed valley south of Sermitsiaq. Luckily this coincided with the arrival of more settled weather, which more or less lasted the entire trip! We aimed to start our climbing in this valley before making plans regarding our main objectives. Within this valley alone were many good objectives to keep us busy and the rock, though poor in parts, was largely excellent and made for very good free climbing. From some of the summits we were able to look over onto the ice cap at the Minster and it appeared that the quality of its walls didn't compare to those of the Tinninertuup group or the Hermelnbjerg. So we abandoned our Primary objectives and focused our attention on climbing new routes in this underdeveloped valley.

The second pillar in the Tinninertuup chain, T2, in particular is comprised of impeccable granite and we all climbed on this wall at least once, the team climbing a total of four new routes where previously there were none. These provided difficult pitches up to E5 often following crack and corners systems. After two weeks the Slovenians, Andrej and Tanya Grmosvek, joined us in the valley and also climbed a new route on this pillar.

T3 isn't of the same quality as its neighbour but did receive some attention. We climbed two new routes on the northern side of its central prow; these were less technical and less direct than the routes on T2. Tom

Spreyer and Ged Desforges made an abortive attempt on the central line that was climbed a couple of weeks later by Andrej and Tanya.

The largest and most spectacular of the chain is T4 whose central line was climbed 2002 by a Swedish and Norwegian team at 7a+ and A2. Another line was also climbed in 2004 left of the central pillar at 5.11 and A2+ called Rapakivi Road. Two of our team climbed a free variation to this route, on-sight (with advice from Tony Whitehouse who was working the route), in one push of about 20 hours, stopping on a ledge near the top to wait out the darkest hours.

I was most inspired by the huge North West pillar of the Hermelnbjerg; one route had been climbed on this huge expanse of rock that followed a deep chimney line before breaking out onto the wall near the top. Es and I climbed a complicated line up the walls to the right of this. Tony Stone and Ruben Gutzat reached the main summit of the Hermelnbjerg via the same route as in 1971.

## **Travel**

### **From The UK**

Stanstead to Reykjavik 14/07/08  
Dep. 20:25 – arr. 22:25 (delayed until 04:30)

Reykjavik to Narsarsuaq 15/07/08  
Dep. 14:20 – arr. 14:20

Boat charter Narsarsuaq to Nanortalik 16/07/08  
Dep. 13:00 – Arr. 18:00 (approx)

Boat charter Nanortalik to Head of Tasermit fjord 16/07/08  
Dep. 18:45 – Arr. 20:00 (approx)

### **Return to the UK**

Boat charter head of Tasermit fjord to Nanortalik 13/08/08  
Dep. 13:00 – Arr. 14:15 (approx)

Boat charter Nanortalik to Narsarsuaq 14/08/08  
Dep. 13:00 – Arr. 17:00 (approx)

Narsarsuaq to Reykjavik 15/08/08  
Dep. 15:20 – 19:20 (delayed until 19:15)

Reykjavik to Stanstead 16/08/08  
Dep 07:50 – arr. 11:45

### **Stanstead to Reykjavik (return)**

We flew with Iceland express at a cost of £250 per person. This could have been significantly cheaper if we were ready to book our flights early enough. The flight out to Reykjavik was delayed about 5 hours, a somewhat ominous start to the expedition, but we were still able to make our connection in Iceland.

### **Reykjavik to Narsarsuaq (return)**

As we had left booking our flights a little late in the day, this leg of the journey was looking to be very costly. After investigating a number of options, I got in touch with the Danish travel company Arctic Adventure who I knew had organised transport for previous expeditions. They quickly got back to me with

flights cheaper than I could find and arranged accommodation and travel in Reykjavik, which we could pay for in advance. The return flights, two night's accommodation and taxi/buses in Reykjavik cost us £650 each. On the way back our flight from Narsarsuaq was also delayed, I gather this is not unusual, but we were still able to make our connection in Iceland.

### **Narsarsuaq to Base Camp (return)**

Through Niels Jepsen at the Nanortalik Tourism Service we had arranged a chartered boat to take us to the head of the Tasermiut fjord, with a stop off in Nanortalik to buy supplies and pick up our freight. This is what I believe the majority of expeditions to the area would choose to do. If you have a big enough team, then I'm sure this will be much cheaper than taking a helicopter, and the ferry that used to go to Nanortalik no longer exists. We were a team of seven and joining us for the boat journey were two Slovenian climbers: Andrej and Tanya Grmovšek. So with nine of us in total it worked out the boat journeys cost us about £485 each.

The boat will run as long as there is not too much pack ice in the fjord or near the coast which can happen, being brought in by strong winds. The day that we arrived, the boat was unable to get to Narsarsuaq due to the ice, but luckily it made it the next day and with a bit of a rush in Nanortalik we actually made it to the head of the fjord that same day, two days after leaving the UK.

Before leaving base camp for the return journey we spoke to Niels a few times on the satellite phone, this was very useful to have. We moved our pick up day forward to give us a greater margin of error and Niels could tell us that everything looked good a few days before we were due to leave. We spent a night in Nanortalik youth hostel and moved on to Narsarsuaq the day before our flight.

## **Equipment**

### **Climbing**

We worked out the amount of hardware we needed so that there would be enough for three climbing pairs; this left us with plenty of equipment and we were very flexible in where and when we could climb. Below is what our typical climbing rack consisted of:

Rack of micronuts x2  
Rack of nuts x2  
Rack of cams x2 – from smallest alien to friend 4  
Some big Cams – 5 and 6  
14 quickdraws including 4 extendable ones  
5 spare krabs  
5 locking krabs  
2 nutkeys  
belay plate with krab x2

In addition to this we had the equipment below available to the whole expedition. However, due to the style in which we ended up climbing our routes most of the equipment for climbing big walls was never used. The weather we encountered and the nature of the climbing lent itself to fast one or two day ascents.

12 half ropes	12 x Aiders
2 x 100m statics	1 x mini traxion
1 x 60m static	2 x hauling devices
150m accessory cord	10 x Nylon Daisy chains
3 x Rope protectors	4 x Big haul bags
14 x jumars	1 x small haul bag

12 x climbing tape

Double ledge with fly

Budget ledge and fly

A very large bag of chalk

**Camp**            *See Appendix I*

### **Emergency equipment/first aid**

We hired an Iridium Satellite phone from 3<sup>rd</sup> Planet Connections Ltd for just over a month at a cost of about £200. This worked very well; it was used several times to make social calls back to the UK and was very useful to stay in contact with Niels in Nanortalik regarding the charter boats. We actually had our pick up date moved a day forward to give us a bit of extra time before our flight from Narsarsuaq. We were charged another £90 extra for the calls that we made.

### **Food**

We shipped the vast majority of our food from the UK. Although we tried to have as much variety as possible much of our base camp food had a very Asian theme; variants on dahl and rice lend themselves well to being transported, as they are made from dehydrated ingredients.

Nanortalik does have two supermarkets which have all the basics, but the prices have to be seen to be believed. In Nanortalik we bought rye bread, cheese and fresh vegetables which lasted a week or so.

Our third source of food was Greenland itself. If visiting the Tasermuit fjord area definitely invest in a cheap fishing rod and a large number of spinners. We dined on barbecued trout and arctic char, both of which were very tasty! In addition to fish we also ate many mussels that we found on the beach at low tide. Boiled up and served with lemon juice and Tabasco seemed to be the preferred dish. There are also bilberry bushes all over the hill sides, these make a good snack while walking or are even better with something like angel delight or custard. Some of us spent rest days harvesting a box full.

### ***Popular Food***

Mindful of the fact that we were going to walk a long way up a valley that was difficult to gain accurate information about, we tried to work out the food rations tightly. As is often the case on larger expeditions, we were not strict enough on rationing at the start of the trip and subsequently had to watch what we ate towards the end. It should be noted that we were picked up on the day that we originally agreed and finished the last of our food that morning and hence had no contingency food. Clearly we could have survived for many more days but it would not have been much fun.

It would have been good to have had a little more of everything. However, specific items that we could have done with more of were:

Hot Chocolate

Milk powder

Chocolate spread

Coffee

Garlic

Pre-fried onions

Potatoes

Crackers (the rye bread, bought locally, was only palatable for the first week or two)



Canned fish  
Butter

**Sponsors**    *See Appendix IV*

## **Weather**

During the time we spent travelling to base camp the weather was quite poor; bad visibility and light rain. This continued for a day or two after our arrival at the head of the Tasermiut fjord. Afterwards however, we experienced nearly unbroken sunshine for the next month. Occasionally cloud appeared to build on the ice cap leading us to think the weather was about to change and we'd panic a little, but this always cleared and the blue skies would return. I believe this is unusual and that we were very lucky to have had such good weather. Furthermore this meant that the walls were unusually dry; a problem for previous parties. There was a period of two or three days about three weeks in, where rain stopped play.

## **Insurance**

We all looked to the BMC for our insurance. Because we were not on the ice cap, not at high altitude and the area is not actually very difficult to access we could take the Alpine and Ski insurance policy. We all arranged our own insurance individually, so it doesn't appear on the expeditions expenses, at a cost of about £106.

## **Freight**

We shipped the vast majority of our equipment to Nanortalik in advance, about a month before we were due to leave. We used the Icelandic company Eimskip whose UK offices are located in Immingham.

Things were difficult to arrange on the way back and I think because of this and we will have used a different company, the freight back was more expensive than on the way out when our barrels were full.

## **Waste Disposal**

**Human Waste:** Human waste was buried in several trenches dug approximately 100m from base camp, away from any watercourses. These were covered over with soil when they were nearly full, and surface vegetation replaced where possible. All toilet paper was burnt.

**Gas canisters:** Empty gas canisters were shipped back to the UK for disposal. The unused gas canisters were sold to Niels at the Tourist Office, for a small price, for future expeditions.

**Batteries:** Used batteries were shipped back to the UK for disposal.

**Other waste:** All other waste was packed out, except for a small amount of paper that was burnt in a bonfire at the beach. There was no provision for recycling at Nanortalik, so the waste was disposed of in the normal town bins.

At our first camp, which was on the side of the fjord where we left the charter boats, we found a large amount of broken glass and some pieces of rubbish. We collected as much of this as we could and added it to our own rubbish that was disposed of in Nanortalik.

## Wildlife

By Ruben Gutzat

The fauna and flora of Southern Greenland belongs to the arctic tundra biome. The border of this ecosystem is set by the 10°C summer isotherm, which means that the warmest month in summer has an average temperature of less than 10°C. This definition makes biological sense, because this line roughly corresponds to the tree line.

The pathetic looking attempts of the respectable Dr. Søren Ødum to establish an arboretum in Narsarsuaq gave us an impressive demonstration of this rather abstract definition (to his defense one also has to mention that in 2005, the very first Greenlandic timber cut took place at two small plantations in the South of the Tasermiut Fjord – which again raised the question amongst specialists of whether there were indeed taiga-like forests in south Greenland before the arrival and hence logging activities of humans).

Although the vegetation in the valleys of Southern Greenland can be splendid in appearance, with around 500 species it is rather lacking in diversity. An explanation for that lies in the isolation of Greenland, which makes it difficult for species with heavy seeds to invade (such as conifers and legumes).

On our hikes up to base camp we found ourselves trapped in shrubs of mountain birch (*Betula pubescens*), gray-leaf willow (*Salix glauca*), fireweed (*Chamaenerion latifolium*), and Greenland mountain-ash (*Sorbus groenlandica*). While gaining more altitude the scenery become one of alpine heath and marshland. The presence of delicious blueberries (*Vaccinium sp*) gave (a bit too often) nice excuses for little rests and on those occasions we discovered amongst others orchids (there are 5 species in Greenland) and the little carnivorous butterworts (*Pinguicula sp.*).

Almost everywhere, even in between boulders right next to the glacier we found consolidation in niviarsiak – which is Greenlandic for “young girl” – and describes quite accurately the innocent appearance of the purple flowers of the Greenlandic national flower (*Chamerion latifolium*).

Even on our highest summits we were not alone: the non-north facing ridges and highest points were covered with enormous, several cm thick black lichen.

Some map lichen (*Rhizocarpon geographicum*) specimens in the south of Greenland belong to the oldest living organisms on earth and have found to be almost 5000 years old.

The fauna of Greenland consists of typical arctic sea and land-living creatures: amongst the most spectacular mammals are undoubtedly herds of musk ox (*Ovibos moschatus*), walruses (*Odobenus rosmarus*) and the Greenlandic heraldic animal – the polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*) all of which can be seen only very rarely in the South of Greenland.

The most dangerous and indeed only land-mammals we encountered (besides ourselves) were arctic foxes (*Vulpes lagopus*) and arctic hares (*Lepus arcticus*). However, when we were riding our boat back to Nanortalik, we were lucky enough to come across a feeding hunchback wale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) one out of 15 wale species living in the sea around Greenland.

More than 200 bird species have been observed around Greenland but only 60 of them are breeding on Greenland.

In the evenings or early mornings at base camp we sometimes heard the nasal orr ka-KARRR from rock ptarmigans (*Lagopus mutus*). Our strenuous hikes were accompanied by the songs of several species of small brown birds – which to determine we left to future generations of ornithologists.

At the coast we saw sea gulls (*Larus hyperboreus*), eider ducks (*Somateria mollissima*) and on one occasion the Greenlandic sea-eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*). These eagles are at the northern edge of their species distribution and are slightly bigger than their continental cousins – a phenomenon that is called the Bergmann’s rule and describes the finding that northern species are often smaller than southern species which makes their surface to volume ration smaller – obviously an adaptation to cold climate conditions.

Due to the arctic climate there are no reptiles or amphibians on Greenland.

The only freshwater fish that can be found in the extremely nutrient-poor streams and rivers of Greenland is the arctic char (*Salvelinus alpinus*). Rather than only one species the name encompasses up to 19 different species with a broad distribution and very different life history types. Some populations are living in freshwater and others live anadromous – that means they migrate from rivers to the ocean to feed and back to freshwater to reproduce.

We enjoyed the pale pink to bright red meat of our arctic char grilled on fire of driftwood. By far biggest specimen we caught was probably around 1kg but there are reports of arctic chars with more than 9kg!

Finally, the least complex organisms were also the least enjoyable on our trip: The insect fauna consisted of a stunning variety of mosquitoes (*Aedes sp*) and flies.

References:

CAFF (conservation of arctic flora and fauna) 2001. Arctic flora and fauna: status and conservation. Helsinki: Edita. 272 p.

<http://en.sl.life.ku.dk/Faciliteter/GroenlandsArboretet.aspx?forside=false&expath=&type=>

By Ruben Gutzat



## Finances

### Funding

We made applications to the following funding bodies and were very fortunate to receive generous sponsorship from the Mount Everest Foundation, The BMC and the Gino Watkins Memorial fund.

BMC	awarded £2,400
The Gino Watkins memorial fund	awarded £1,500
The sports council for Wales and Scotland	unsuccessful
The Nick Escourt award	unsuccessful
Mark Clifford grant	unsuccessful
The Mount Everest Foundation	awarded £1,500
The University of Edinburgh	unsuccessful

### Accounting

Tony Stone and I opened a joint account with Nationwide in our names. Ideally we would have opened an account in the name of the expedition, but to do this required a starting sum in the account of roughly £5000, which was impractical for our purposes. This did cause some complication as cheques from funding organisations are often made out in the name of the expedition. All the members pooled their portion of the expedition funds into this account from which we paid for all expeditions needs.

**Expenses Spreadsheet**      *See Appendix III*

## New Routes

### Hermelnbjerg

#### Ramblin' Man

27 – 28/07/08

1200m, E5 6b

All free in about 30 hrs including a bivi.



Climbed on second attempt by Es Tresidder and Dan Mcmanus on the 27/07/08

Topo: *see Appendix V*

Descent:

Scramble to the low point on the ridge between the west summit and the main summit of the Hermelnbjerg, where there is some abseil tat. Make four abs to scree/snow slopes below and descend these to the top of the steep wall below, above R hand edge of the hanging glacier. Make another four abseils into the hanging valley and descend scree to camp to tea and medals.

### **North East Ridge of Hermelnbjerg.**

10/08/08

1.5km, 650m vertical from the col on the ridge, TD, difficulties to E1.

Walk toward the far side of the col then follow the glacier (or scramble up rocks on its right bank) to an obvious breche on the NE ridge. Follow the ridge spectacularly, more-or-less on the crest, until an obvious series of ledges to the right (North) of the ridge can be followed to their meeting with a large gully/couloir (this is followed in descent). Climb the left side of the couloir to reach the crest about 50m below a gigantic gendarme. Make a rising traverse on the slabby wall on the left (South) side of the ridge to an obvious corner. Follow this to below an overhang, traverse left underneath the overhang to gain a steep crack, followed this and continue up and slightly right to huge jammed blocks. Continue in the same line to regain the crest. It is now possible to take a fairly direct line on the right (North) side of the crest toward the summit (much scope for variation). Climb the E face of the summit pillar (initially loose) in one pitch to belay on the far side at the highest point, having crawled underneath the huge summit boulder.

Descent: Abseil the line, or close to it, until the large gully/couloir. Abseil directly down this (careful to avoid rockfall) to reach the glacier.

### **Tinnertuup II**

#### **Piriton Pillar**

21/07/08

700m from top of initial slabs, 11 pitches up to E5 6a, climbed in 14hrs.

Es Tresidder and Dan Mcmanus

Topo: *see Appendix V*

#### **War Cry**

31/07/08

13 pitches, 650m (technical) climbing, 850m, two pitches of E5 6a.

Topo: *see Appendix V*

Tom Spreyer, Tony Stone and Ged Desforges.

Right: Tony Stone on War Cry.

*“Tom, Tony and Myself left basecamp at 5.30, and made good time up the lower easier ground having already climbed it whilst making the first ascent of Scorpion Grooves. We had noted a good water trickle just below the ledge at the bottom of the steep ground, so opted to save some weight by filling up water bottles up there. Disaster nearly struck when we arrived at the ledge to find no trickle. Thinking the climb was over before it started; we searched frantically, and managed to find a tiny snow patch with drips coming off. Tony led the first pitch whilst Tom filled up the bottles; both a lengthy process. We were aiming for the stunning, clean corner system leading up to a big capping roof at half height. The first few pitches went smoothly, until Tony set off up a tricky looking face pitch. All seemed to be going*



*well, until we heard a cry, and looked up to see the air filled with wires, which flew past us to scatter on the slabs below. Luck did not seem to be on our side. With a decent rack of cams however, we decided to press on. Reaching the base of the corner system late in the morning, the sun moved off the face and the temperature plummeted. Tony pulled off a couple of impressive leads to land us directly below the big roof, where it wasn't clear if progress would be possible. Tom and Me hung uncomfortably on the belay whilst Tony disappeared off round the corner looking for a way. The situation looked utterly wild as we saw his legs bridged out wide, before a stream of cursing and grunting accompanied his progress upwards. An almighty roar announced his success onto a crack above the roof, and two cold, numb bodies followed. We had emerged onto the upper face now, and I led a few pitches of superb, sustained cracks to join Scorpion Grooves just below the summit block. The cold was biting as Tom then took over to tussle with the final offwidth to land us on the summit at 10 p.m, just as Ruben and James appeared from a new route on the North Face. Being more confident about the descent, we spent the midnight hours wriggling down scree and snow, and staggered back into basecamp at 3 a.m, thoroughly knackered and very pleased.”*

Ged Desforges.

### **Anglo-Bavarian Direct**

31/07/08

East face

E2 approx

10 pitches plus soloing and simul-climbing.

### **Scorpion grooves**

24/07/08

E3 5c, 700m

Tom Spreyer and Ged Desforges

*“We left basecamp at 5.30, and by 6.15 were moving together up the lower slabs. The first 200 metres were easy going, and we managed to drink from plenty of trickles to try and preserve the 3 litres of water we carried for as long as possible. The angle increased slightly, and another 150 metres of VS ground landed us on an obvious ledge at 8.00, where the wall steepened dramatically. Here we scooped a flapjack, got the other rope out, and got ready for some steeper action. The climbing was immediately superb; intricate and technical climbing up thin grooves and cracks set the tone. The second pitch gave a stiff boulder problem section, landing us at the bottom of a stunning crackline, splitting the face for 50 metres; a pitch as good as any we have encountered on the classic routes of the Alps and California. A couple of alarming pitches took us through some bands of rotten rock, before yet more steep, stunning groove climbing found us on a hanging belay at the top of an hourglass slab, under a huge roof. A tricky and bold pitch round into a new crack line, followed by an awkward offwidth saw us at the ledge approximately halfway up the steep section of the face at 3.00.*

*One easier pitch up and left found us in the middle of some intricate ground, with the way ahead not very obvious. Retreat from this point would not have been much fun due to the steepness of the ground beneath us, and the weaving path we had taken so far. A couple of character building pitches up slightly loose chimneys and off widths, and a superb, long, steep finger crack and things were looking up again. We could see the monolithic summit block not far above, and thought the remainder of the route would be a formality. How wrong we were. The temperature had dropped by now, and belaying was a cold, lonely affair. Tom disappeared up a groove, and after much shouting, huffing and puffing, re-appeared. I moved the belay closer to reduce rope drag, and saw the problem. A short steep wall barred the way, where Tom had managed to fiddle in some gear but then being too pumped to make the moves up, had managed to climb down. With the ropes already clipped through the runners, I managed to quickly pull through, continue up yet another stunning crack, to arrive on a large ledge, on the shoulder at the base of the summit block, at around 10.00. Convinced the route was now in the bag, I relaxed and bought Tom up. He headed off round the corner, expecting a scramble to the summit. How wrong we were again. The rope went tight and I followed, only to find Tom at the base of a steep offwidth, leading into a splitter chimney. This was not what we needed after 16 hours of climbing, but there seemed to be no other way up*

*the sheer, 40 metre summit block. Tom took a deep breath, and headed up. After battling off arm cramps on the first section, he found a bold alternative out on the face to avoid the middle section, then disappeared into the depths of the mountain. I stood below, huddled inside both belay jackets, shivering away and willing the rope to keep snaking upwards. Presently, Tom shouted victory, and I followed. A short boulder problem, and we were on top. Relief at having got up was quickly replaced by sheer awe at the gobsmacking view that lay before us. The midnight glow of the sun lit the distant peaks and the ice cap, and down below the fjord glistened under the moon. We rested on the top for an hour, and ate the last of the meagre food rations. A walk down the back led to the top of the descent gully, but deciding it was a bit too dark to safely start down, we huddled and shivered for an hour or two, and tried to get some sleep. 3 hours of climbing down the loose gully and wriggling down between the snow and gully wall saw us back in basecamp at 6.00, where we stuffed ourselves with sardines and hot chocolate, and disappeared into sleeping bags for a long time.” Ged Desforges*

### **Tinnertuup III**

#### **Head In The Clouds**

20/07/08

2 pitches, AD, 100m technical (HVS) climbing, 900m, 650m vertical  
Follow slabs immediately to the right of the great black fault until forced into the fault below a large overhang. Follow the rising traverse line of the fault, initially loose and narrow, until further traversing becomes barred. Follow a large corner system for 55m to a ledge. Make another pitch in the same line, crossing a small overhang on the left and belay on its top. Traverse directly right for 20m to reach a large platform on the North Ridge, follow this to the top.

Descent: North Ridge to col between TII & TIII (by abseiling and scrambling) then abseil into the NNE gully and follow it down to the valley.

Tone Stone, Ruben Gutzat and James Vybiral.

#### **Anglo-Bavarian Direct**

25/07/08

East face, E1 approx

### **Tinnertuup IV**

#### **Rapakivi Road, free variant.**

22 - 23/07/08

24 pitches, 1300m climbing, 950m vertical. Up to (hard) E3 5c (crux pitch as First Ascentionist's free crux)

Topo: *see Appendix V*

### **Conclusion**

We all consider the expedition to have been a great success, despite not climbing our primary objectives; we climbed a total of seven new routes and made two repeats. The routes were of a fairly high standard of technical difficulty and some of very high quality. I also believe that these were achieved in the best possible style: in very fast time, using minimal equipment and never placing bolts, which is a decision we had made in advance. Everything was made easier by our luck with the weather and given the hopes and experience of the group we had made a good choice of venue.

There are now not so many objectives in the valley for future teams, all of the attractive faces of the Tinnertuup group have routes on them; in particular the central prows of T2, T3 and T4. An alpine style repeat of the stunning central line of T4, Qivitoq, is a good objective. One that we had hoped we would do, but unfortunately an attempt was thwarted by seepage low down and then we ran out of time. Then of course there is still the Minster and Cathedral, the south summit of the Minster still unclimbed. New climbs on the prow of T2 are still worthwhile as the rock is of such good quality and there is an abundance of good features to climb.

All members of the expedition agree that any or all of this report may be copied for the purposes of private research. We are very grateful to those who helped support this expedition financially and are surprised and impressed by the level of support available to young people for this sort of venture. We would also like to thank all those who gave us very good advice in the run up to the expedition. Especially to Lynsday Griffin for pointing us at this valley and Tony Whitehouse: for sharing his photos and immense knowledge of all things Greenland with us.