

AC
acl 27495

COMPASS The Support Group

99/3

Compass Support Group
Greenland Rignys Bjerg
Mountaineering Expedition 1999



Rignys Bjerg Mountain Ranges



Lat/Long: N69°05 , W26°25
Airport of Entry: Constable Point
Time in the Mountains: 14-21 days

Compass Support Group Private Limited Company No. 2989182
36c Nevem Square LONDON SW5 9PE ☎ 0171 373 9091 fax ☎ 0171 235 3426
email: compass@minema.com

+483

1. Introduction
2. Map of the Area
3. The Project
4. Membership
5. Timetable
6. Logistics
7. Budget
8. Bibliography
9. Acknowledgements



Introduction

Following extensive research over a period of 12 months, and with the aid of Tangent Expeditions International, we have discovered many unclimbed alpine mountains deep inside the Arctic Circle.

To the best of our knowledge, the Rignys Bjerg Mountain Range (N 69°05" W 26°25")—has not previously received the attentions of modern mountaineering expeditions.

Our activity is an independent expedition into this area. We intend to make as many first ascents as allowed by time and the weather. The team will undertake exploratory ski-touring and mountaineering in this remote region. The project will involve further photographic research to identify suitable ascent opportunities for future expeditions.

The principal aim of the organisers is to confront the AIDS onslaught on gay men's health and to promote a new health consciousness through "adventure therapy". This expedition plans to stretch that concept in one of the remotest parts of the World and is divided into two headings:

1. Specific Expedition Objectives and Aims

- To undertake a mountaineering expedition in a remote part of the World.
- To promote gay men's health through Adventure Therapy.

2. *Specific Expedition Objectives for 1999*

- To make first ascents of as many unclimbed peaks and summits as is possible.
- To make the first British ascents of as many other unclimbed peaks as is possible.
- To carry out exploratory ski-touring and ski-mountaineering in a region of East Greenland.

**RIGNYS BJERG MOUNTAINS
(EASTERN AREA)**

SCALE 1:170,000 approx. 1cm = 1.7km



**TAKEN FROM AERIAL SURVEY, AUGUST 1981
PHOTOGRAPHED FROM 14,300M (46,000FT)**

EXTENSIVE RESEARCH INDICATES THAT NO MODERN MOUNTAINEERING EXPEDITIONS HAVE EVER ENTERED THIS AREA. THIS IS CONFIRMED BY OUR TWIN OTTER PILOTS WHO HAVE NEVER FLOWN ANY EXPEDITIONS INTO THESE RANGES. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE OCCASIONAL COASTAL PEAK MAY HAVE BEEN CLIMBED BY EARLY SAILING EXPEDITIONS. CONSEQUENTLY WE HAVE NO FURTHER PHOTOS!

RIGNYS BJERG MOUNTAINS
(WESTERN AREA)

SCALE 1:170,000 approx. 1cm = 1.7km



TAKEN FROM AERIAL SURVEY, AUGUST 1981
PHOTOGRAPHED FROM 14,300M (46,000FT)

EXTENSIVE RESEARCH INDICATES THAT NO MODERN MOUNTAINEERING EXPEDITIONS HAVE EVER ENTERED THIS AREA. THIS IS CONFIRMED BY OUR TWIN OTTER PILOTS WHO HAVE NEVER FLOWN ANY EXPEDITIONS INTO THESE RANGES. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE OCCASIONAL COASTAL PEAK MAY HAVE BEEN CLIMBED BY EARLY SAILING EXPEDITIONS. CONSEQUENTLY WE HAVE NO FURTHER PHOTOS!

The Project

The Rignys Bjerg Mountains are in East Greenland and are to be found lying between the Watkin Mountains and the mighty fjord of Ittoqqortoormiit "Those who live where there is most peat" [Scoresbysund as known by the old Danish name). The range contains mainly unclimbed peaks of upto 2800m. The area is on the very fringe of the Greenland icecap.

Our expedition will involve flights by Twin Otter ski plane direct onto the glacier as indicated in the expedition map. This form of transport will ensure that we reach some of the remotest Arctic mountains.

The emphasis of the expedition will be on covering quite a large area (on skis) and climbing as many unclimbed peaks within the area by their easiest routes.

The expedition will spend three weeks in the field and will be contributing in a very significant way to the mountaineering history of the region.

Typical height gained from the glaciers to the summit is in the region of 300 to 600 metres. Many summits can still involve technical ascents with long sections of pitched climbing.

We shall obtain accurate GPS positions for each of the peaks selected by the expedition.

Team Membership

B. Mitchell Climbing leader.
I. MacDonald.
B. Romanelli.
P. McEwan. Skiing, navigation and logistics.

Field Dates and Timetable

RIGNYS BJERG MOUNTAINS
July 2nd - 23rd 1999

The regard will be given to environmental considerations. All equipment and human waste will be removed.

COMPASS The Support Group

The expedition will only be the second mountaineering party ever to enter this range of mountains. Tangent Expedition 98 having been the first.

At the moment we have thought it wise not to provide all our logistical details because this part of Greenland is drawing the attention of other planners. We do not wish to be 'gazumped' by other expeditions.

All members of the expedition will travel together from the UK and all official permits will be obtained through the intermediary of Tangent International Expedition and we are grateful for their support and the personal attention of Paul Walker.

Logistics

The expedition to the Rignys Bjerg Mountains is a small three-week adventure therapy mountaineering activity in a remote part of Arctic Greenland. The numbers will fly from the UK to Reykjavik, Iceland. The team will then fly on to Constable Point in Greenland. From there, we shall use a Twin Otter ski plane to take us onto a large crevasse-free glacier some 5km wide and at an elevation of 2000m above sea level. (See photographs).

The expedition will spend three weeks in the field between July and August 1999. The expedition will be totally self-contained with food preparation being undertaken by each team member. We will establish a base camp from which we will travel by skis and establish forward bases as is necessary.



Compass Support Group Private Limited Company No. 2989182
36c Nevern Square LONDON SW5 9PE ☎ 0171 373 9091 Fax 0171 235 3426
email Compass@minema.com

Permits 9 (VHF)	Fixed	50
Permits (Rifles)	Fixed	50
Pulks (2)	Fixed	150
EPIRBS (2)	Fixed	200
Tents supplied by us.		
Post Expedition Costs		
Administration	Adjustable	100
Report	Fixed	20
Reception for Sponsors	Fixed	200
10% Contingency		32
Additional Pre-Expedition Costs		
Publicity/Photographs	Adjustable	100
Reception Launch	Adjustable	100
Sources of Income		
Members Personal Subscription	Fixed	4000
Sponsorship	Adjustable	13000

Budget

The expedition to Rignys Bjerg Mountains Greenland is a small 3wk Adventure therapy Mountaineering Expedition in a remote part of the Arctic. The expedition aims to carry out its programme within a budget of £ 17,000.

The crux of the cost is the charter of the Twin-Otter Ski-plane. The aircraft is very expensive for a small private group to charter. We will be using the services of Tangent Expeditions International.

Proposed Expenditure. Estimate.
Pre Expenditure Expenses.

Administration.	Adjustable/Fixed	Maximum
Postage	Adjustable	50
Telephone	"	50
Printing	"	100
Publicity	"	250
Field Equipment		
GPS	Fixed	400
Photographic	"	100
Packaging	"	150
Maps	Fixed	50
Insurance	Fixed	800
Flights UK to Iceland		+
Iceland to Constable Point		+
Ski-Plane (both ways)		11400
Rignys Mountains		.
Medical	"	250
In-Transit costs	Fixed	400
Accom / Coach	Fixed	150
Air Port Taxes	Adjustable	100
Permits	Fixed	200
Field Expenses		
Skis (4 pairs)	Fixed	420
Sleeping bags (loan)	Fixed	100
Food (for 4, 3wkks)	Fixed	400
Stoves	Fixed	100
MSR Fuel	Fixed	50



Sponsorship information

The Compass Support Group Greenland Rignys Bjerg Mountaineering Expedition 1999 will rely entirely on private funding. This will be sourced from members own subscription , grant agencies, charitable trusts and commercial sponsorship. A detailed budget is attached.

Contact address

Forms of sponsorship

Sponsorship is sought in the following categories.

Cash donations towards the overall cost of the expedition. Gifts of £250, £500, £1,000, £5,000, £10,000 or larger sums will help to make this venture possible.

As well as cash grants, sponsorship in the forms of the purchase or supply of goods, services and equipment is also sought.

Sponsorship benefits

Sponsor's name and logo in Expedition title
Sponsor's involvement in all press coverage
Sponsor's name and logo on expedition equipment
Photographs on the mountain with sponsor's name, logo or product

Furthermore, sponsors are welcome to discuss any other promotional activities not included in the above list.

**Compass Support Group Private Limited Company No. 2989182
36c Nevern Square LONDON SW5 9PE ☎ 0171 373 9091
Fax 0171 235 3426 email Compass@mlnema.com**

Bibliography.

- Brinley Mitchell West End Arts Cinema Manager.
Many years experience sailing and climbing. Climbing experience in Swiss Alps, Austrian Alps. Extensive experience winter climbing in Scotland, Climbing and sailing experience in Svalbard. Climbing and sailing expedition to Svalbard 1995. Age 44. Skiing Swiss Alps.
- Ian MacDonald Graduate of RCM.
Climbing experience in Swiss and Austrian Alps. Winter climbing in Scotland. Years of experience sailing in British waters. Age 33.
- Bruno Romanelli Graduate of RCA
Climbing experience in Swiss and Austrian Alps. Occupation, Sculpture. Age 30.
- Pete McEwan Further Education College Teacher.
Many years experience climbing and sailing. Climbing experience in Swiss and Austrian Alps. Skiing experience in Swiss Alps. Winter climbing experience in Scotland. Climbing and sailing expedition to Svalbard 1995. Age 50

COMPASS

The Support Group

A little about Compass

Since the early 1980s we have been monitoring the onslaught of illness on those close to us. We looked for restorative powers through our own efforts and those who supported all the alternatives to dealing the immune collapse suddenly being experienced by gay men. We support the informed choices made both under allopathic supervision and through complimentary therapies. For us, the sea and mountains call up the required strenghts on many leavels. The key has be to return to shared experiences, fears and joys in order to handle the prospect and reality of illness. We aim to show that a shared experience of sailing and climbing will help gay men to deal with their own life. The greatest challenge is to break the paradigm that HIV=AIDS=DEATH.

We have formed a Lintied Company to best take forward our knowledge and skills of mountaineering in the health interests of other gay men. Using the concept of 'adventure therapy' we shall work for change in the medical paradigm around HIV and AIDS and promote links with others who are trying to heal their own immunity damage.

Our activites have ranged from a climbing expedition to Svalbard in the Arctic, sailing to the Islands of Jan Mayen, Iceland, the Faroes and Shetlands. Mountaineering in the Austrian Tyrol and Swiss Alps as well as the hardy climbing and hiking in the English Lake District and the cradles of British mountaineering in Snowdonia and the mountains of Scotland.

We return to the Arctic with our Group to promote the life affirming principles that we all have the right to expect health and to join forces with those who work for this basic right.



Contact Sheet

Brinley Mitchell

**36c Nevern Square
LONDON SW5 9PE
Telephone 0171 373 9091
Telephone 0171 235 4226
Fax 0171 235 3426
Email Brinley@minema.com**

Peter McEwen

**36c Nevern Square
LONDON SW5 9PE
Telephone 0171 373 9091
Mobile 0956 193 987**

Bruno Romanelli

**24 Stockwell Gardens
LONDON SW19 ORX
Telephone 0171 274 2871
Mobile 0958 555 473**

Ian MacDonald

**98 Tollington Park
LONDON N4 3RB
Telephone 0171 281 7758
Mobile 0958 412 384**

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 1

TITLE:

Compass The Support Group East Greenland Rignys Bjerg
Mountaineering Expedition 1999

PRECISE LOCATION IN THE FIELD AND DATES:

69° 05' N 26° 25' W

**Port of entry: Nerlerit Inaat (Constable Pynt) which serves the area of
Ittoqqoortoormit (Scoresbysund).**

Time in the mountains 21 days

Dates: 3 July - 25 July 1999

AUTHORS:

Brinley Mitchell

Pete McEwen

Ian MacDonaid

PERMANENT CONTACT ADDRESS:

36c Nevern Square

LONDON SW5 9PE

telephone: 020 7373 9091

email: brinley@kinonet.com

YEAR: 1999

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 2

PROVISO

The compilers of this report and the members of the expedition agree that any or all of this report may be copied for the purposes of private research.

SUMMARY

We managed our expedition for 1999, the planning having become after a previous 1995 expedition to Svalbard. We raised 39% of the money through sponsorship, the balance coming from bank loans and our own accounts. Our plans started around January as we had organized, documentation, licenses, tickets, insurance, provisioning and heavy gear to be freighted out through our agent Paul Walker of Tangent International Expeditions. It was the right strategy as there were only 3 of us in the expedition (a forth member having to pull out at short notice) and we were in in full-time work . The expedition was departure London 30th June 1999, with onward travel to Greenland, approximately 3 weeks in the field and pick-up in the Rignys Bjerg on 25 July 1999.

We achieved 6 ski-tours and submitted 3 peaks. See attachment with aerial photograph. The weather and conditions were on the whole correct for July with a number of days spent tent-bound due to adverse wind and snow.

INTRODUCTION

who are we?

We are three gay men who have been living under the spectre of AIDS. As part of the generation that worked to social and political liberties we matured during the active 1970s and so were ideally placed to try and understand the onslaught of illness during

the early part of the 1980s. From the beginning, we were skeptical as to the medical paradigm being offered to sufferers and, along with others - hence known as 'Aids-dissidents' - sought to create our own understanding. We believe that in the early days, our politics and belief in alternative and complimentary medicine achieved a stasis which allowed us to take a view as to our mental and physical well-being, We had been involved in the twin activities of sailing and climbing and found that the use of these skills helped to build health, self-esteem and create a space whereby one could come to terms with dealing with illness - irrespective of whether it was an AIDS condition or some other immunosuppressive condition like MS or Lupus.

MAP

There are no detailed maps of the area other than aerial photographs and aerial charts. See attached aerial map with summit details.

TEAM MEMBERS

Brinley Mitchell Age 44 - cinema and conference manager.

Ian MacDonald Age 33 - lecturer in music and tenor singer.

Peter McEwen Age 52- lecturer in electrical engineering and associated topics.

FIELDWORK AND RESEARCH

planning stage

The planning began after a successful sailing and climbing expedition to Svalbard in the Summer of 1995. Henceforth we started preparing through meetings and correspondence, all the necessary background information for an expedition to

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 4

Greenland. We built up a small library of books detailing the chosen area. We were helped to some degree from having access to the Internet, which gave information about previous expeditions members who had posted their reports on the net. We were also thoroughly assisted by our agent Paul Waiker who, from previous commercial experience in Iceland and Greenland, was able to carry out the organization of flights and licenses. We felt this was the right method in planning as the Danish and Greenland Home Rule authorities are very reluctant to allow small expeditions into remote areas without the necessary background of Arctic experience. We were responsible for all our equipment (apart from ski hire) and ensured that we were financially, medically and logistically prepared for the expedition. Planning took the form of a number of meetings held at regular intervals, copious correspondence and lists and above all communicating in a clear and methodical manner with our Agent and amongst ourselves. Use was made of a 'pc' to coordinate our plans.

FINANCES & SPONSORSHIP

Our total cost of approximately £3000 (1999) per head was met 30% by grants from the Austrian Alpine Club, the Mount Everest Foundation, The Gino Watkins Memorial Fund, the British Mountaineering Council and Associated Capital Theatres, Curzon Cinema and Kinonet. The Expedition was also financed by personal bank loans and sponsorship. Initially, we had drawn up a list of potential sponsors known for their own spirit of adventure (like Richard Branson of Virgin) and equipment suppliers (like Vango tents). Our strategy was to provide a very personalized letter whether directed 'cold' to potential sponsors or 'hot' to known contacts. All correspondence was provided with a colour printed brochure which gave our aims and stated our reasons for wanting to go

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 5

out to East Greenland. We believe that our unique expedition outlook was one that was not easily understood by our prime 'market' - the gay community, press and media. Despite there being gay-centred activities interest in all field sports, expeditions are still viewed with skepticism. Like all communities, we are moving slowly from a protective metropolitan-based environment to a more open interaction with society in general. In addition our holistic approach to physical and mental well-being in regards to immunosuppressive physical conditions is still viewed by the medical paradigm with suspicion. Even in this day of growing understanding of complimentary and alternative therapies, the medical establishment resists inroads into their total control of medical conditions. We were not able to surmount the inability of sponsors to willingly understand that our aims and goals were of general and specific importance. Marrying the British tradition of amateur exploration along with the contemporary concerns of aging and illness.

BUDGET

see details in the attached brochure.

REGULATIONS

Our Agent Tangent Exploration International provided us with the necessary permits from the Danish Polar Centre for entry into East Greenland and firearms license. These documents were actively scrutinized by the Commandant at Constable Pynt and so there should be no illusion taken that there could be a 'wild' entrance into the landscape. Most of the regulations concern environmental impacts and we took particular care to pack and eventually remove with us all rubbish .

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 6

In Greenland, we were provided with a 30 aught 6, 8mm rifle in case of a confrontation with a polar bear. Two of our party were familiar with fire arms from our 1995 Expedition to Svalbard. It took on average about 10 minutes to teach somebody to use a firearm safely. Given that we were quite far inland, the lack of marine life or any type of fauna, it would have been extremely surprising if we had come across a bear. The animal would be outside it's denning area and would be consequently starving and dangerous. We did dutifully carry the firearm inside a pulk and only fired off a number of rounds against a giant snowman whilst waiting for the Twin Otter pick-up. The rifles are heavy with a painful recoii if miscarried against the shoulder. The impact of a buiiet would certainly rip a human's body apart and the range was well over 1 mile. We followed the correct safety procedures when handling the item even with an empty magazine.

fieldwork

We are not professional scientists and limited our fieldwork to the following;

1. - necessary daily readings - temperature and barometer.
2. - ensuring correct positioning through the use of a GPS.
3. - studying the field relative to the maps in our position which were 10 year old aerial photographs taken at 15,000m.

We spent a lot of time and discussion just looking at the landscape with straight-forward orienteering.

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 7

discussions and conclusions

Our primary reasons for returning to the Arctic was to build up our own levels of experience, test our training and enjoy the Arctic area. The primary goal of our group is to promote health and Aids awareness through the experiences garnered from outdoor activities. We set ourselves a number of objectives and felt that given the level of experience, we achieved a realistic, sustainable and enjoyable balance.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND LOGISTICAL REPORT

research materials

- 1. - GPS hand-held**
- 2. - altitude reader**
- 3. - barometer**
- 4. - compact binoculars, writing materials, compasses, tracing paper.**
- 5. - aerial photographs**

training

Our general training, apart from regular exercise, was to climb and ski in the Scottish Highlands, climbing and scrambling in the Lake District and Snowdownia, as well as the Alps of the Tyrol, Southern Switzerland and Northern Italy. Collectively, our experience tended to be at the maximum grade II snow and ice.

diplomatic clearance

This was handled in it's entirety by our agent Paul Walker of Tangent International Expeditions. We cannot emphasize enough the need to make sure that all paperwork is

completed and to the expected standards.

finance and fund-raising

The finance and fund-raising was carried out by ourselves through the following strategy:

- 1. Preparing a sponsorship leaflet and brochure.**
- 2. Approaching companies who subscribe to a charity profile.**
- 3. Approaching companies connected with the provisioning of outdoor activity equipment.**
- 4. Approaching institutions connected with exploration and mountaineering.**
- 5. Personal financing.**

insurance

Our insurance was discussed and arranged through our Agent Paul Waiker of Tangent Expeditions International. We believed that the best approach was to ensure medical expenses and SAR bonds not only as a means to ensure our own well-being but also to satisfy the Danish Polar Centre and Greenland Home Rule Authority.

travel , transport and freighting arrangements

The transport and freighting arrangements were carried out by our Agent Paul Walker of Tangent Expeditions International. Our freight was packed and dispatched from the Agent's base 2 months prior to our own departure. Shipping agents provide many different services but we felt that our Agent was the most adapt at streamlining any

service since he is actively involved in the region and understands best the necessary freighting arrangements.

customs and immigration procedures

Greenland only requires a valid UK passport - no visa, the same if transiting via Iceland. Customs declarations for freight are handled by the Agent and there is only the personal customs declaration at the point of entry (Iceland or Greenland).

administration of the expedition in the field

Our administration in the field was relatively basic, since we were only 3, we had a consensus arrangement with the Team Leader making the final decision, accepted by all, if a conflict arose over tactics and strategy.

medical arrangements

Essential supplies taken were as follows:

1. Personal toiletries - dental care the most important.
2. Field first-aid kit
3. Sun cream (total sun block).
4. Sun hat (for shade and prevention of sunburn and headaches).
5. Glacier glasses (essential to protect against sun blindness. Must be 100% UVA/UVB).
6. After sun moisturiser.
7. Paracetamol tablets.
8. Cocodamol [500g Paracetamol + 8g Codeine (mild-moderate pain relief)].

- 9. Brufen/Nurofen (containing ibuprofen), (mild-moderate pain relief and anti-inflammatory, good for reducing mild-moderate pain from soft tissue injuries),**
- 10. Votarol (Diclofenac) or Preservex (Aceclofenac).**
- 11. Chloromycetin - Ophthalmic eye ointment 4 (x2).**
- 12. Blister treatment, foot powder or talc.**
- 13. Baby wipes (for general body hygiene).**
- 14. Throat tablets.**
- 15. Diarrhoea tablets. Tannin supplement anti-diarrhoea. Dioralyte.**
- 16. Laxative tablets.**
- 17. Adhesive plasters.**
- 18. Ear plugs.**
- 19. Eye shield.**
- 20. Women should ensure an adequate supply of sanitary provision.**
- 21. Dental repair kit & hypodermic kits**
- 22. Homeopathic first aid remedies.**

antibiotics;

- 1. Erythromycin - [sore throats, tonsillitis (allergy to penicillin), ear infections, sinusitis].**
- 2. Trimethoprim - urinary infections, ear infections (allergy to penicillin).**
- 3. Co-amoxiclar (Augmentin) contains amoxicillin.**
- 4. Prochlorperazine (cut protection)**

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 11

analgesics

i. Bupremorphine (Temgesic) for broken limbs and fractures.

SPECIAL HAZARDS

The terrain was what we expected and there no untoward hazards. Care had to be taken with;

- avalanche hazards,
- swings in temperature,
- wind chill,
- crevasse crossing,
- the brittle condition of all rock,
- rock falls.
- awareness of the remote site.

WEATHER IN LOCAL CONDITIONS

We were on the whole very lucky with the local weather. Days were sunny and clear. Out of the 22 days spent in the field about 7 were spent tent-bound due to the bad weather. We did have problems with heat reduction; going through the rigors of jackets off, t-shirts off, then more and more sun block creams. Then the wind would pick up and we would reverse the procedure.

Temperatures during the day were around 20-23° C; the evenings and night were much cooler hovering around 0°. The main problem for chilling was the NE wind which used to pick up from the Ice Cap and blow down the valley towards our Base Camp. It only

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 12

needed a bivi bag to escape the chill as the wind was usually on the scale of a Fresh Breeze, except when it increased to Gale Force.

DAYLIGHT —

Daylight in the Arctic is both sublime and dramatic. Beautiful pinks and purples bath the mountain tops in stunning paints. The day was unforgiving in the intensity of it's brilliance. A few clouds would bring down the temperature and also allow some respite on the eyes.

WARNING! take at least 2 pairs of GLACIER SUN GLASSES (not ski goggles).

Snow blindness would be a real problem for an expedition. So as a team, we always checked each other's glasses. Keeping them on neck lines all the time as they always went on 'walkabout' if you let them out of your sight.

NIGHT SKY

We were usually in our sleeping bags for around 21.00 hrs. The night was cold with a clear blue tinge. Usually the wind picked up with a freshening breeze. Visibility quite good on the whole for long distances as the sun was no longer impinging on the eyes. There was a twilight quality to the light which was deceptive in what you held as 'light' made it quite difficult to actually read and make out letters.

DAILY ROUTINE

Once the Twin Otter plane had taken off we launched ourselves into a flurry of activity and within a few hours had our provisions stored and organized, the two tents erected;

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 13

the Vango was to be our base camp tent and the North Face West Wind tent was to be for gear and provision storage. Soon Ian was well into his task of building a snow wall and latrine.

This speed was partly due to our excitement and the sense of isolation that suddenly descended on all of us as we took in the immensity of what we had personally undertaken.

It took us the remainder of the day sort out our personal gear and stow in designated places.

As we knew each other very well and known each other for many years and in the case of my partner for 22 years, there was a great element of familiarity. This did not stop the ferocious arguments which developed from time to time. But we were sensible in keeping them in check. The most common source of grumbles being centered around gear. It is therefore vital that expedition members identify their gear as clearly as possible and have a stowage place which doesn't change. We did find it a bit difficult to maintain from time to time as tiredness, lack of concentration and slipping of self-discipline meant that gear was misplaced. Cooking was organized on a rota basis with one person carrying out all the breakfast, lunch and evening meal duties per day, this included melting drinking and cooking water. We found this arrangement the most convenient as it meant that one could prepare food items in advance of them being required.

PROVISIONS

Our provisions were carefully provided for by our Agent Tangent Expeditions

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 14

International. They broadly followed the traditional British fare of protein, carbohydrates and plenty of sweets (US: candy) and desserts; great quantities of British 'chocolate' (usually only 30% cacao 70% sugars, flavours and fats). We had powdered apple and orange juice, tea and coffee, powdered milk and sugar. We supplemented our foodstuffs with dried Japanese noodles (dried Udon & Soba), miso soups and green tea. We also carried a number of packets of dried seaweed (Khombu or kelp) and Japanese condiments. The advantage of Japanese food is in the variety and strength inherent in the noodles and the mixtures that result from judicious use of the available ingredients. The general food was packed into individual day-packs consisting of breakfast cereals or porridge, soups, soya (as we were all non-meat eaters during the expedition period), spaghettis, dried vegetables and sauces along with the ubiquitous sweets (candies). We did not feel the need for massive glucose input and usually had a hearty breakfast followed by the evening meal. So we ended the expedition with a very large bag of sweets to return to the UK. Lunches were packed as processed cheese and flavoured soya paste in tubes along with biscuits and fruit cake. We were all interested in Japanese food for expeditions and have in the past used the Monks traveling menu of rice-balls stuffed with pickled umboshi plums (to preserve the rice) as quick snack foods. Macrobiotic foods do not get the good press they deserve and it only needs a small cultural shift to become enjoyable, convenient and wholesome. Back in Iceland, we returned to meat in order to savour the whale and seal meats as well as the great sea fishes available in most restaurants (at exorbitant prices). In the field our cooking implements were the sturdy MSR stoves and local Icelandic fuel (Heptein) as white spirit fuel is not available in the Northern Arctic. Our Agent provided

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 15

the fuel (Heptein) from his own reserves held at Constable Pynt. We took 5 x 5 litre plastic containers. We used Zippo lighters as they were the more reliable than matches. Breakfast was made up of cereals, instant porridge and tea. We tried to substitute coffee with green tea and miso soup (fermented rice paste). It usually took us about 2-3 hours to prepare the evening meal and heat up snow for about 5 litres of water. This was the most onerous and tedious task and we took it as a gift from the gods when we found some 'moulin' glacier melt water on a couple of our explorations. We used 2 small MSR cookers placed on a wooden flat frame and with the additional water melting tasks managed on 20 litres with 5 litres as emergency reserve (not required by the end of the expedition). We took 2 repair kits and found that the Heptein fuel burned dirty and black compared to white spirit. We cannot express our high enough praise for the reliability and sturdiness of the MSR burners.

LATRINES

Our aim was to be a clean expedition and to this effect ensured that we withdrew all refuse with us on departure with the Twin Otter plane for disposal in Iceland.

Human waste was taken care of through the digging of a latrine in the glacier. We aimed to use as little paper as possible and tried to ensure that faecal matter was well covered and deposited well away from the camp site. Future expeditions may take this thought on board; the sophisticated packaging systems now available can adequately ensure, economical, safe and hygienic sealing of human waste for onward disposal.

TEMPERATURE

The temperature did not vary that much unless you were taking the brunt of wind chill.

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 16

Most days were bright and sunny with not a cloud in the sky. Then we registered temperatures of up to 30°C. Night times were consistently cold in the region 0-3° C. Overcast days and cloudy nights did not seem to affect the temperatures too much.

LOCAL WEATHER

We had set up the expedition towards the end of Summer, most people travel to Greenland in June and early July. Most Summer expeditions would tend to end their sojourn well before mid-August when the weather would suddenly change.

During our 25 days we had about a third very bad weather, a third overcast and a third bright and sunny. The prevailing wind was off the ice cap and had a strong wind chill factor. We were also subjected to katabatic winds, fairly fresh to strong.

During the bad weather, we experienced gale force winds with strong snow falls and whiteout conditions. During these periods, we spent out time in the tent reading and sleeping. Our Vango Quasar tent stood up well to the conditions and we were particularly careful with the MSR stoves in the ante-chamber. We all accepted the need to be cautious and unhurried when preparing hot water and food. Consequently great store was taken in preparing the meals and enjoying the morale boosting factor it brought about.

The weather was on a scale that dwarfs the idiosyncrasies of British weather and so it was easier to read the weather systems as they came across our area.

As a note of caution; it would be advisable to ensure secure anchorage of all tents and equipment as the direction of the wind could change quite easily.

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 17

FLORA & FAUNA

We came to the Rignys Bjerg without expecting to see any flora or fauna. The former did show a presence in tiny alpine flowers and lichen and the latter by its total absence. The lichen and moss was found only in those areas where the breakup of the rock into an almost muddy substance was able to sustain a growth. These patches were tucked away in areas where the direct sunlight had melted snow into the almost sticky rock. Careful attention had to be paid to seeking out these heroic flora as they were lost in the overall brown tones of the rock.

Some of the glaciers provided fast flowing moulins but as they were ice-bound, unable to sustain any growth. Interesting enough, the absence of any flora must affect one as any discovery of lichen and tiny petals was greeted with joy.

ROUTE REPORTS

photography

The main photographs for identification of the site were 2 aerial images taken about 1979-80 by the United States Air Force. They were taken at 14,300m so it took quite some time to work out our position once in the field.

land photography

Professional advice led us to the Olympus 'mju II zoom' using both Fuji chrome 100 colour and Kodak Elite Chrome 100 from the Kodak Select series. We took 12 rolls of film which was adequate for our needs and experience. The lack of points of reference and the huge distances between mountains meant that we tried to always link the photo with one of the expedition or item of equipment. This to give some sense of scale.

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 18

There is no need to take special precautions with batteries (which worked quite well on the camera less on the head torches). We included a VHS video camera. Overall, unless the camera person has some good experience with field work, a lot of film and soundtrack can be wasted. We aim to edit the final product from 6 hours of tape to achieve approximately 20 minutes of valued presentation.

ADVENTUROUS ACTIVITIES

general setting

The Rignys Bjerg mountains are located in East Greenland at 69° 05" N 26° 25" W with a range of mountains up to 2800m with typical height gained from the glaciers of about 300-600m. Access is only possible by Twin Otter plane flight organized from NW Iceland with port of entry being Constable Pynt (Herlerit Inaat) on the Eastern seaboard serving the area of Scoresbysund (Ittoqqoortoormit).

GEOLOGICAL SETTING

In Greenland the ice caps are prominent topographical features; most of the coast is comprised of gneiss and metamorphised granite and limestone with several type of true granite. The area explored by this expedition included areas of glacier, bergshrund, moulin and roches moutonnées.

EXPEDITION DIARY OF THE RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION 1999

dates

30th June; depart Heathrow for Keflavik.

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 19

1st July ; Reykjavik.

2nd July; depart Reykjavik for Akureyri and Constable Pynt.

3rd July; depart Constable Pynt for Rignys Bjerg Mountain glacier 69° 15'N 26° 41'W.

4th July; continue to set up base camp. Check equipment.

5th July; SKI-TOUR 01

5 hours round trip W-N-E-S.

6th July; rest day and design and make three nose guards.

7th July; SKI-TOUR 02.

8th July; exploration of edge of ice-cap to 'Beany Saddle'.

9th July; rest day.

10th July; Walrus Beany skiing script.

11th July; dreams and philosophizing - Rifle target practice.

12th July; SKI-TOUR 03.

'Dali's Fingers'.

13th July; SKI-TOUR 04

Towards ice cap and horse shoe mountain.

14th July; rest day.

15th July; white out, katabatic winds, tent-bound.

16th July; as above.

17th July; as above - weather moderates, build snow shelter.

18th July; as above.

19th July; SKI -TOUR 05

Rock - Beany Saddle - Peak 7333 (2671m).

20th July; pulks to start of climb 7333 (2671m).

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 20

21st July; climb to ridge below summit - return to base camp.

22nd July; rest day - weather deteriorates, preparations for return to mountains.

23rd July; SKI-TOUR 06

'Ian's Ridge' - Summit.

24th July; return to base camp.

25th July ; dismantling of base camp and preparations for outward Twin Otter plane - flight direct to Isofjordur and onward to Reykjavik.

26th July; Reykjavik.

27th July; Reykjavik.

28th July; Keflavik to Heathrow.

29th July ; expedition disbands.

EXPEDITION LOG

SKI-TOUR 01 - 5 hours round trip W-N-E-S

Weather: Excellent, hot 30° C+. Cloudless with no wind.

Duration: 5 hours

Route: Bearing W 271° for 1.40km to 'Ian's Ridge' (ski-slope practice), then followed the line of a deep crevasse heading NE for approximately 1.5km, then circled our way back S, SSW to Base Camp.

Detail: 'Ian's Ridge' Bearing 271° - Distance 1.40 km 69° 15.100' N 26° 43.691' W.

7th July SKI-TOUR 02

Weather: Day 1 excellent, hot 28° C, cloudless, no wind.

Day 2 - fresh, cool 7° C. Pressure 803. A little wind and cloud during early evening, very cloudy by 21.00 hours. Duration: 2 days

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 21

Route: 1st - bearing due North 357° for 5.21km, Brinley leads up a run-on to main glacier, set up forward camp at 'Rock'.

2nd - continued North up to 'Beany saddle', then climbed around the back onto to mountain peak we name 'Mackies Peak'. Return South to base camp.

Detail: 'Rock' - bearing 357°, distance 5.21km, altitude 2.232m, 69°17.901' N 26°45.704'

W - winding trek avoiding vast areas of exposed crevasses with a slow continual incline.

'Makies Peak' - bearing 356° - distance 5.72km - altitude 2.295m - 69°18.105' N 26°

46.323' W - very slippery climb. Top gave spectacular views of the glacier network.

Find an assortment of lichen and arctic flora hidden amongst damp rocks on summit plateau. Areas of broken-down rock have consistency of chocolate-coloured mud.

12th July SKI-TOUR 03 - 'Dali's Fingers'

Weather: overcast, snow drift, cool 3° C. No sun, low cloud, freshening wind.

Duration: 1 day.

Route: bearing West 271° for 1.40km to 'Ian's Ridge'. Circle around N, NNW, NW, W approximately 1.6km up to another saddle named 'Dali's Revenge'. Climb and explore outcrop of pinnacles called 'Dali's Fingers'

Detail: 'Dali's Revenge' - bearing 270° - distance 2km. Altitude approximately 2.000m.

The fingers were a crop of very brittle, smooth oblong rocks reaching about 35m up from the saddle rising to about 2.058m.

13th July SKI-TOUR 04

Using 'Dali's Revenge' as position for forward camp.

Weather: changeable, occasional moderate to heavy snowfall, visibility

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 22

moderate to poor. Winds N and NW - warm 8-21° C. Duration: 2 days.

Route: bearing NW 322° for 5.64km. Skied towards ice-cap staying almost parallel to the bergschrund to the West (seeking out possible routes to summits). Circle N towards middle of glacier and horseshoe mountain. Return via same route.

Detail: No possible ascents, nothing under Grade 4, bergschrund deep and wide, many crevasses. Weather unpredictable.

19th July SKI-TOUR 05 'Rock', 'Beany Saddle', Peak 7333 (2671m)

Weather: Day 1 - overcast, very windy, cold 4° C.

Day 2 - blue skies, mixed cloud, hot and cold 14° dropping to -1° (wind chill).

Day 3 - blue skies, mixed cloud, warm 12-16° C. Little wind.

Duration: 4 days.

Route: 1st - North bearing 357° for 5km.

2nd - North bearing 359° - North bearing 005-007° then bearing NE for about 1.5km towards rock base of 'Peak 7333' (2671m). Then E up along ridge route towards summit. First peak at 2587m named 'Brinley Point'.

3rd - trek up onto ridge running South from 'Mackies Mount' and 'the Nipple'.

Southerly bearing 174-181° for return to base camp.

Detail: 1st - followed, still visible, Twin Otter plane take-off tracks towards 'Rock' - roped up for crevasse danger.

2nd - a difficult and tiring route up the saddle with puiks, mixed rock and ice climb to summit. 'Brinley Point', a large pillar of rock. Accessible but not possible to climb over it. It was necessary to come back and circle around the base of the North side. Summit of 'Peak 7333' (2671m) - a plateau. Spectacular views of the valley below.

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 23

Descent to forward camp made hazardous by strong winds. Temperature dropping steadily.

3rd - Crampons necessary, ice solid. Top of ridge rocks are warm with broken rock and mud. Return to base camp.

23th July SKI-TOUR 06 'Ian's Ridge'

Weather: Excellent, blue sky, hot, 30° C. No wind, distant mixed cloud. Discard clothes for fresh air (using strong sun block).

Duration: 5 hours.

Route: West bearing 271° for 1.50km to 'Ian's Ridge' for ski-slope practice. Return East bearing 91°.

Detail: 'Ian's Ridge' - bearing 271°. Distance 1.50km - 69°15.100'N 26°43.691' W-

24th July; return to base camp

dismantle base camp.

25th July .

Twin Otter due 10-12 hours, start preparing for overnight stay when plane finally arrives approximately 16.00 hours. Return flights to Isofjordur and Reykjavik.

CLIMBING

We had six skitours and 3 peaks. Our different age groups and levels of experience meant we were not going to attempt all peaks within reach. Our attitude was one of savouring the landscape, carefully preparing our routes and attempting forays that would be within our reach. We made use of the skis, essential on the terrain and experimented with various means of distributing weight around the pulks.

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 24

They are unwieldy trays and need attention with packing to ensure good distribution of weight and items. There was nothing worse than forgetting where the water bottles were stored and having to plough through the pulk. A routine packing system helps in saving time and mitigates the aggravation caused by misplaced equipment.

CONCLUSION

The expedition to the Rignys Bjerg Mountains was accomplished with 3 people of differing abilities and outlook. The organisation of the expedition was assisted by Paul Walker of Tangent Expeditions International who provided valued logistical and administrative support. Given our small size, this was an essential prerequisite. We accomplished our objectives in attaining 3 summits and 6 ski tours. We were safe and managed to look after each others needs. We carried out rope safety where appropriate for crevasse crossing and climbing. We avoided any serious mishaps and ensured that our departure was clean (with the exception of human waste). The expedition was run on budget and we carried our financial safety margin back to the UK. We have built up a library of 350 35mm slides, 20 minutes of video tape and enough anecdotal and necessary information to address a 40 minute lecture. We hope that the experience expressed through this report and our series of lectures to interested parties will provide additional information to any future expedition to East Greenland.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge the friendly and financial support of friends too numerous to mention in this column. We acknowledge the support of Paul Walker of Tangent Expeditions

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 25

International. Bill Ruthven of the Mount Everest Foundation, the British Mountaineering Council, The Gino Watkins Memorial Fund, The Austrian Alpine Club, Mayfair Entertainment Group, Fraser Harrington, Simon Knighton of Motability UK, Kinonet and the Principal of Southgate College London N14.

APPENDICES

- i. List of summits and ski tours**
- 2. Brochure of the Rignys Bjerg Expedition 1999.**

POST EXPEDITION - TALKS & PRESENTATIONS - MEDIA COVERAGE

Our exit from the Rignys Bjerg was from the pick-up point on the glacier with flight to Isofjordur then regular domestic flight to Reykjavik. Our equipment was freighted from Isofjordur to Reykjavik then onwards to Hull and delivery to our Agent in Cumbria. A 3-day safety margin was not used so we had time to recuperate at a small Reykjavik bed and breakfast and explore the city. We made sure to enjoy the thermal pools at the Blue Lagoon some 45 minutes from the Capital. We were booked on a scheduled Icelandair flight from Keflavik to London's Heathrow airport.

We are providing various reports both for our sponsors, or own records and, in a more light-hearted manner, for others. We have collated approximately 350 35mm slides and 3.5 hours of VHS tape. We are seeking help from various contacts to edit the material and will process the work at Southgate College, London N14. In addition a report will be submitted to the Royal Geographic Society, the Mount Everest Foundation, The Austrian Alpine Club, The American Alpine Club, the Dansk Polar Center,

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 26

Body Positive and all other sponsors and interested parties. We are participating in the Austrian Alpine Clubs series of lectures alongside another 1999 expedition to the Lemon Mountains of Greenland.

We will provide material for other interested parties and will launch a series of lectures in order to recuperate some of our outgoings. We shall also strive to ensure more coverage on the electronic media.

MEDIA COVERAGE

Unfortunately we attracted no media coverage other than a number of small paragraphs in the local press and newspapers serving the gay community. Our report will be posted on the internet on a site under construction as of March 2000.

MEDICAL

We were determined not to fall victim to any illness and accident but could only arm ourselves with the necessary medical items to secure our well-being. The emphasis was on pain killers and dental medications with a number of fast-acting antibiotics. One of our team was a First Aider (an excellent course is run by the St John's Ambulance Brigade). We surmised that the main cause of injury would come from sharp objects, falls and burns. As it turned out, our major cause of concern was for one of our expedition who had developed what is termed 'walking pneumonia', which only after the return to the UK developed into a life-threatening condition, luckily corrected in good time.

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION

1999

page 27

All the above team members wish to return to the Arctic for 2001 and we should welcome any enquiries from others interested in visiting the area of Dronning Louise Land (76°N). We are available for lectures, talks on both activity-therapy and the interrelationship between climbing and sailing.

Brinley Mitchell

Peter McEwen

Ian MacDonald

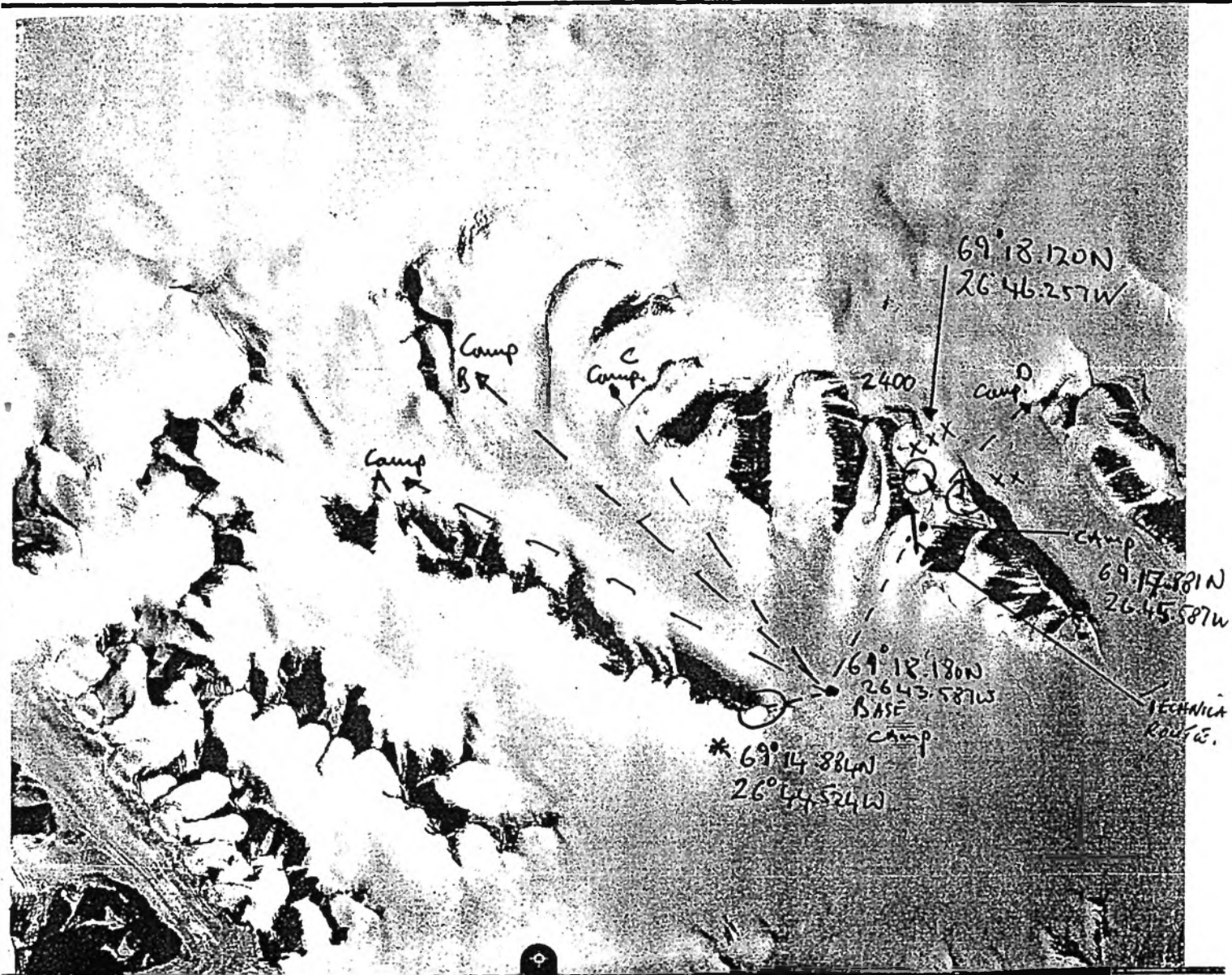
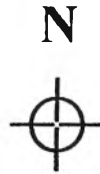
7 April 2000

Rignys Bjerg Expedition 1-25 July 1999

Summits are circled

Base Camp 1600m

- x Summit grade PD climbed by South Ridge 2000m
- xx Summit grade PD climbed by North East Ridge 2320m
- xxx Summit grade PD climbed by South West Ridge 2020m



Total amount of climbing completed

3 Summits

1 Technical Route

Summits in area: 69°18.120' N 26°46.257' W

1. summit xxx time taken 3 hours climbing 2020m
2. Summit xx time taken 5 hours 2320m

Technical route in area 69°17.901 N 26°45.704W

1. Summit time taken 2.5 hours 2000m

6 Ski exploratory tours located by →→→ in area 69°18.180' N 26°43.587 W

Ascents by Alpine style (food & equipment on pulks)

xxx 8th July

x 13th July

xx 22nd July

Tech. Route 23rd July

Base Camp 3rd July

Camp A 5th July

Camp B 10th July

Camp C 12th July

Camp D 20th July

All heights ASL

Compass Support Group Rignys Bjerg Expedition 1-25 July 1999

Budget Administration

Postage	50
Telephone	50
Printing	100
Publicity	250

Field Equipment

GPS	400
Photographic	100
Packaging	150
Maps	50
Insurance	800

Flights UK-Iceland	
Flights Iceland-East Greenland	
Ski plane	11400
Medical	250
In transit costs	400
Accom/Coach, airport taxes, permits	450

Field Expenses

Skis - 3 pairs	420
Sleeping bags x 3	225
Food 3 weeks	400
Stoves	100
Heptein fuel for cooking	50
Vango Tent	350
Ski repair	85
Baggage excess	250
Permits VHF	50
Permit rifle	50
Pulks x 2 hire	150
EPIRB hire	200

Post expedition costs

Administration	250
Report	50
10% Contingency	300
Additional pre-expedition costs	
Publicity/photographs	150

COMPASS SUPPORT GROUP RIGNYS BJERG EXPEDITION PAGE 2 OF 2

EXPENDITURE TOTAL	17530
Sources of Income	
Sponsorship	3000
Members personal	14530
INCOME TOTAL	17530