



AAC Publications

North Liverpool Land, various ascents

East Greenland, Liverpool Land

In April, Natasha Sebire and I made the long journey from our homes in Australia to the northernmost part of Liverpool Land. From Constable Pynt we hired dog sleds to travel north along the frozen Hurry Fjord, through the Klitdal Valley, and across the Carlsberg Fjord. After the two-day journey, we were dropped 65km north of Constable Pynt, at the start of a glacier from which we could access far North Liverpool Land. We progressed on ski, hauling our 160kg of food and equipment in pulks, ascending the glacier and heading east across the icecap to the Neild Bugt region. We finally set up base camp at 71°21'53" N, 22°04'05" W, at an elevation of 493m and near Cone Nunatak, which was climbed in 2007 by Jim Gregson's team (AAJ 2009).

Our goals were to climb new peaks and paraglide from their summits. With fantastic weather and generally light winds for the two weeks we were at base camp, we made first ascents of seven peaks, flying from the summits of four. The peaks ranged from easy hike-ups, to ski traverses, to mixed snow/rock routes. We took our lightweight paragliders on all climbs, in the hope of flying down. Our first summit, Kagoo Peak (900m, 71°23'10" N, 22°02'41" W), was a non-technical ascent about three kilometers from camp. It gave us our first views over the huge expanse of peaks to the west of the Klitdal, and of the sea ice breaking up off the coast to the east. We were also delighted to make our first paragliding descent, landing right next to camp.

Next, we climbed a nice rock and snow ridge to gain the summit of Castle Peak (744m, 71°20'47" N, 22°03'19" W), which had a broad, domed, snow summit, allowing us an exciting fly down. On a windier day we made a short ascent of Dome Nunatak (650m, 71°22'33" N, 22°01'50" W), on which we had a fun time soaring with our gliders.

We climbed the biggest peak at the edge of the icecap, dubbed Mt. Mighty (1,001m, 71°21'20" N, 21°58'39" W), mostly via a rock and snow ridge. The final 55° hard-packed snow slope of the summit ridge was a little disheartening, as we knew we couldn't launch from it. However, we were delighted to find that the far side of the summit was rounded, and we had a most exhilarating flight, looking down on the route we had just climbed.

Our next outing was a west-east ski traverse of Diamond Peak (883m, 71°23'31" N, 22°01'20" W), and from there we skied across to a col, from which we ascended snow slopes to the top of Dome Peak (860m, 71°23'07" N, 21°59'43" N).

Our only bad weather day while on the icecap was a complete whiteout, where fog, which regularly formed over the sea ice and often crept up the glaciers, crept rather higher than usual. On the following day, in perfect sunshine, we climbed Longridge Peak (958m, 71°23'00" N, 21°58'07" W) via 50° snow slopes. We reascended Kagoo Peak and Castle Peak, the latter by a different, easier route, simply for the fun of flying down again. From the last route we had a good view of an unclimbed rock buttress that Jim Gregson photographed in 2007 (AAJ 2009, p. 155). It would give a ca 200m climb with a straightforward descent on snow ramps.

We had thought technical rock climbing would be out of the question in the sub-zero temperatures, but decided to give it a go, having thrown in a pair of rock shoes just in case. Waiting till later in the day, when the sun had warmed the rock sufficiently to prevent freezing fingers, we embarked on the climb, pleased to find the granite surprisingly solid in most places. However, the buttress proved

steeper, longer, and harder than anticipated, and we eventually backed off.

We returned to Constable Pynt on ski via the Klitdal, reaching it after seven days of travel and two sitting out bad weather. In all we had exceptional weather in our five weeks in Greenland, losing only five days to bad weather. The minimum temperature was -28°C , the maximum about -2°C : this occurred in early May at the end of the expedition, as temperatures began to steadily increase. Coordinates for Mt. Mighty and Dome Nunatak are taken from Google Earth, the rest from our GPS readings.

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Images



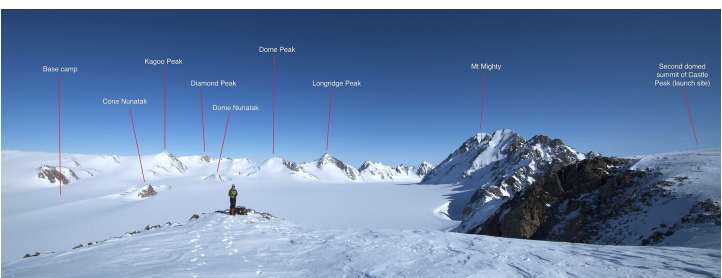
Natasha Sebire stands in front of Castle Peak, with the Australian route marked.



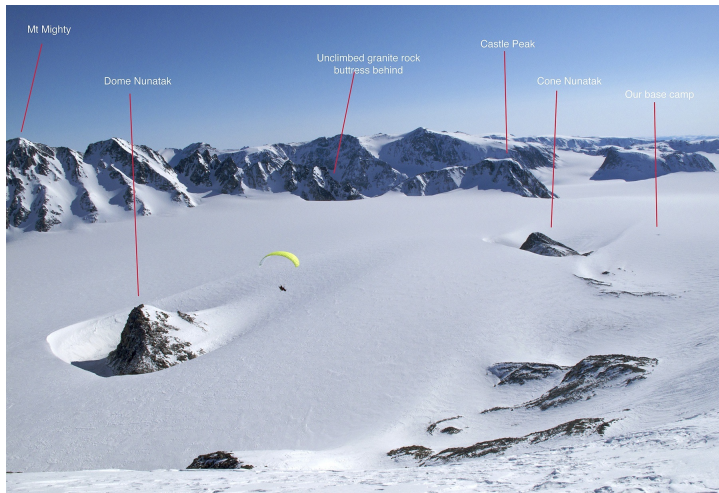
Mt. Mighty, with the Australian route.



Approaching the summit of Castle Peak with Mt Mighty behind



Panorama from the summit of Castle Peak.



The panorama from Kangoo Peak, with Natasha Sebire in flight to base camp.

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