



AAC Publications

Liverpool Land

East Greenland, Storefjord region

With research indicating there had been no previous ascents of peaks immediately north and south of the Storefjord, seven members of the Eagle Ski Club visited this area, northeast of the commercial airport at Constable Pynt, in April. Hunters and dog-sledders in this area have confined their activities to the coast, while a recent "Ski Traverse of Liverpool Land" expedition moved through the main valleys but did no climbing.

Using local agent Nanu Travel, Phillipa Cockman, Stuart Gallagher, Adele Long, Declan Phelan, Howard Pollitt, John Russell, and Dave Wynne-Jones (leader) snowmobiled from Constable Pynt to the ice-covered Storefjord, and then north up a side fjord to a small wooden hut alongside thermal springs. Polar bears are a threat in the area, and the team took not only a rifle but also a sled dog, to act as an alarm.

Although the team included veterans of Denali and Logan, everyone felt the cold more than on any previous trip, despite recorded temperatures never falling below -20°C . For this reason, technical climbing proved out of the question, but soaking cold-damaged feet in the hot springs gave some compensation.

The main mountains north of the fjord were steep and rocky, and the spires of the main peak, Kirken (1,209m), would offer challenging rock and mixed climbing at a warmer time of year. The team climbed four modest peaks in this region, enjoying fine and sometimes outstanding ski descents.

The group then moved south across the fjord to the Himmerland Peninsula, and together with the dog reached an 815m summit to the west of the access valley, only to find a small cairn on the top. This was disappointing, as it was the dog's first ascent of the trip.

Unfortunately, they were unable to penetrate a major glacier system to reach the highest summit, Doppeltoppen (1,040m), so decided to move south of Himmerland to the Mariager Fjord and explore its surrounding peaks. Three of the team climbed a fine unnamed 1,100m peak in rather marginal conditions, after which the group made a spectacular journey by snowmobile down the east coast sea ice and back along Scoresby Sund to Constable Pynt.

Due to the severe cold, there were several cases of incipient frostbite, highlighting concerns that the latest ski boots lack adequate insulation, as manufacturers produce lighter boots in view of warmer conditions now experienced in the European Alps.

Lindsay Griffin, MountainINFO, with information provided by Dave Wynne-Jones, Eagle Ski Club, U.K.

Images



Phillipa Cockman (and the sled dog “Blackie”) on the Himmerland mini-icecap. The peak is unnamed and unclimbed.



On the west side of the Himmerland Peninsula.



Declan Phelan on the summit of a peak at the head of the most northerly glacier in the Kirken massif.



Liverpool Land, showing activities of 2013 Eagle Ski Club expedition.

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