

THE BRITISH STAUNING ALPS EXPEDITION GREENLAND 2017

EXPEDITION DATES 4TH APRIL – 5TH MAY

Summary Report

30 years of inspiration
DBF
DOUGLAS BADER FOUNDATION



EXPEDITION SUMMARY

The British Stauning Alps Expedition 2017 has returned from Greenland and we have had an incredibly successful trip!

I was awarded a grant by The Douglas Bader Foundation and I'm hugely thankful for their support.

Our expedition ventured into unexplored areas of the remote Stauning Alps region in Central-Eastern Greenland. The team were self-sufficient throughout, carrying all kit, food, shelter, scientific instrumentation and travelled on skis, pulling pulks. A huge physical challenge in an extremely remote environment.

Our original objectives were threefold:
(1) **Explore** - to venture into unexplored areas and claim first ascents on new peaks.
(2) **Research** - to repeat measurements taken during the 1970s and to install a network of ablation stakes in the Roslin Glacier to observe the impacts of climate change.
(3) **Inspire** – I am registered as blind/severely sight impaired and despite the difficulties some of us must face, I want to show and inspire people that great adventures can be undertaken, showing disability has no barriers.

(1) Our route involved skiing up the Roslin Glacier and down the Bjørnbo Glacier in a new circular route, approximately 100km in length. (This route had been attempted before, but never successfully completed.) It required the crossing of 2 high cols with full pulks. We ventured into places never explored before and travelled through pristine remote environments, dealing with freezing temperatures down to -28^{o}C. We experienced heavy snow and artic storms while out in the field, our camp was buried in snow on several occasions! We successfully climbed 2 new peaks and claimed first ascents on these mountains from the Bjørnbo Glacier. Climbs were made in full alpine style.

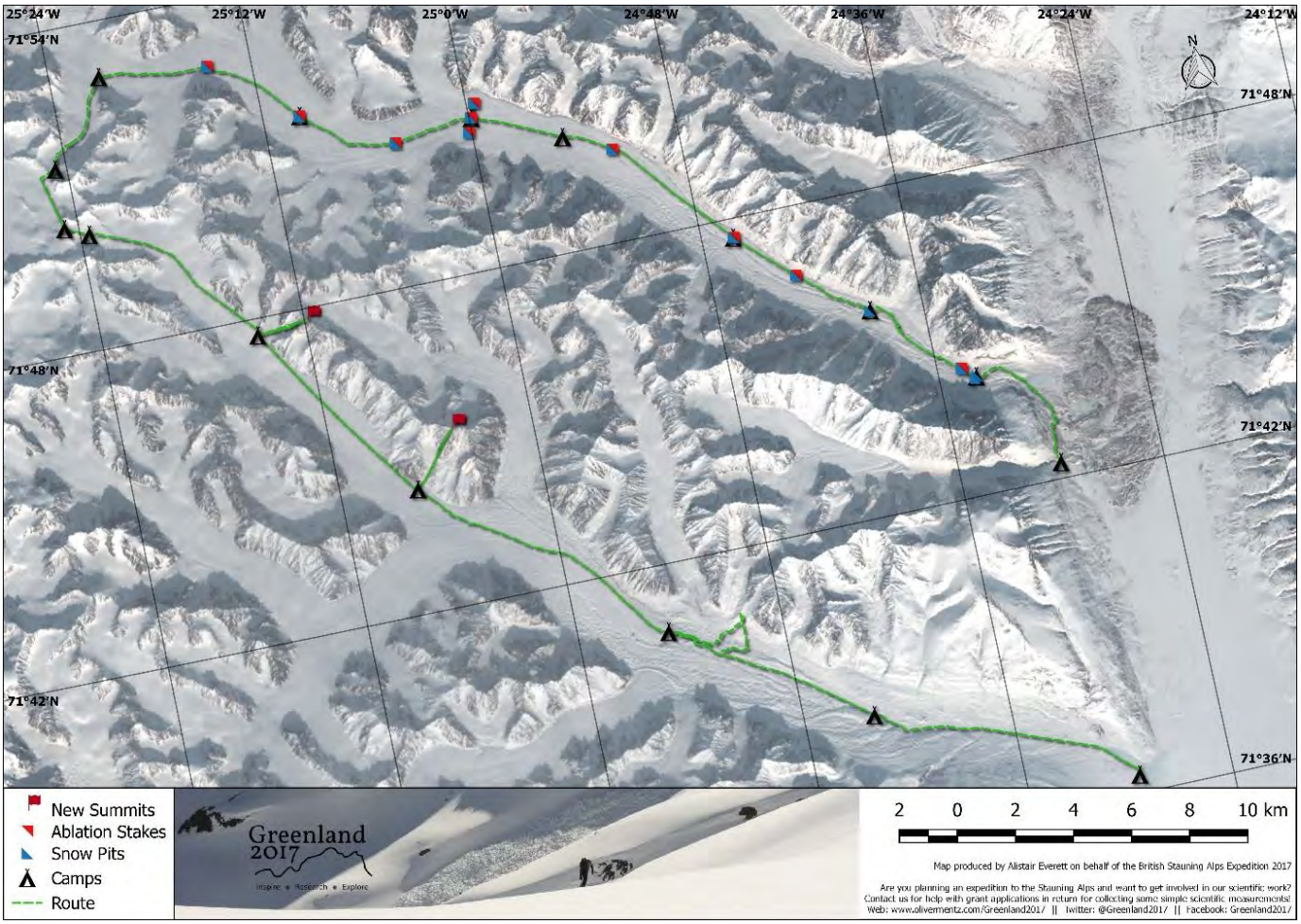
(2) The expedition also successfully accomplished all the scientific goals which were set. A network of ten ablation stakes were installed on the Roslin Glacier. These stakes cover the length of the glacier from the snout, at 200m above sea level, up to the edge of the accumulation area, at 1700m above sea level. The stakes were placed at elevation intervals of approximately 200m, with additional stakes placed in a transect across the glacier in the approximate location of those measured during the 1970s. The stakes were drilled to a depth of 6m at lower elevations and 5m further up the glacier. This means that even at the lowest elevations the stakes should be expected to remain in place on the glacier for 2-3 years, providing a long window of opportunity for repeat measurements to be collected. Stake locations have already been passed to the World Glacier Monitoring Service and future measurements can be added to their records once they have been collected. In addition, snow depth and temperature profiles were collected from 14 snow pits covering the ablation area of the glacier. Snow depths ranged between 1.4 and 1.8m and the temperature and density profiles provide a valuable insight into the accumulation of snow on the glacier over the previous winter. Data from these snow pits will be collated and added to online inventories shortly.

(3) I took part in all aspects of the expedition and played a key role in the team - pulling more than my fair share of weight in the pulk(!), skiing, climbing, digging snow pits, drilling holes, setting up camp, but not the cooking, I wasn't allowed near the stoves! I truly have had a fantastic adventure. It was brutally cold and physically challenging just to survive in that kind of environment for a month. To achieve all what we set out to do was such an amazing feeling and to be able to call myself an Arctic Explorer is pretty cool! I believe I am the first Visually Impaired climber to gain a first ascent in Arctic Greenland! Through telling my story I hope I can go on to inspire others to challenge themselves and to go on an achieve great things, showing disability has no barriers.

A huge thank you to the Douglas Bader Foundation for supporting me in my endeavours.

Our facebook page is regularly updated, please see here for latest posts: https://www.facebook.com/greenland2017/

Our Route (from our GPS plots):



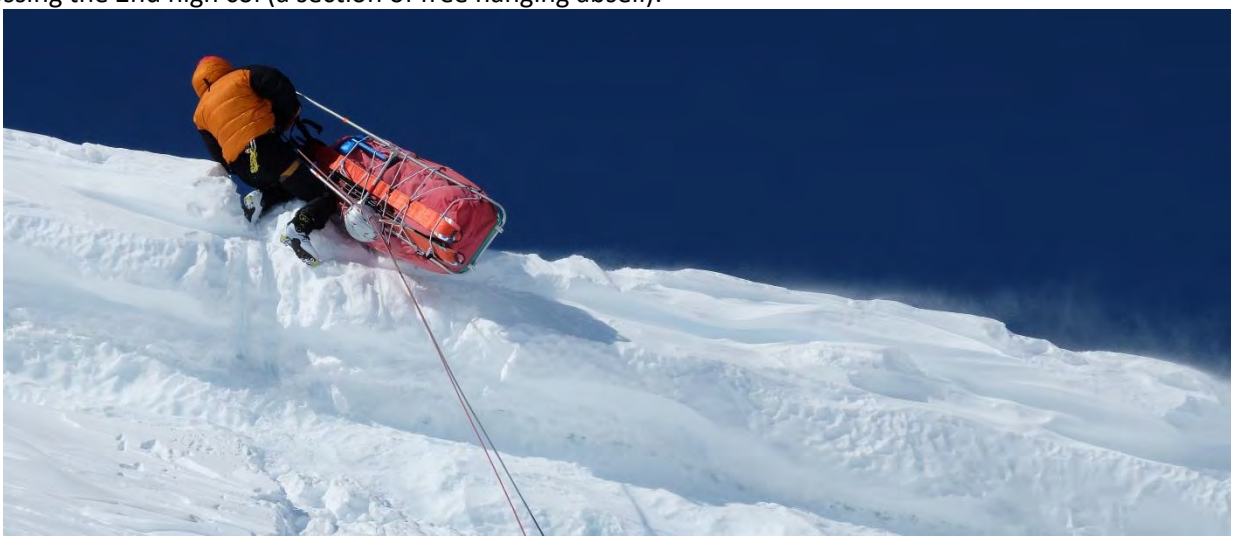
Jesse on the first day:



Jesse on the last day:



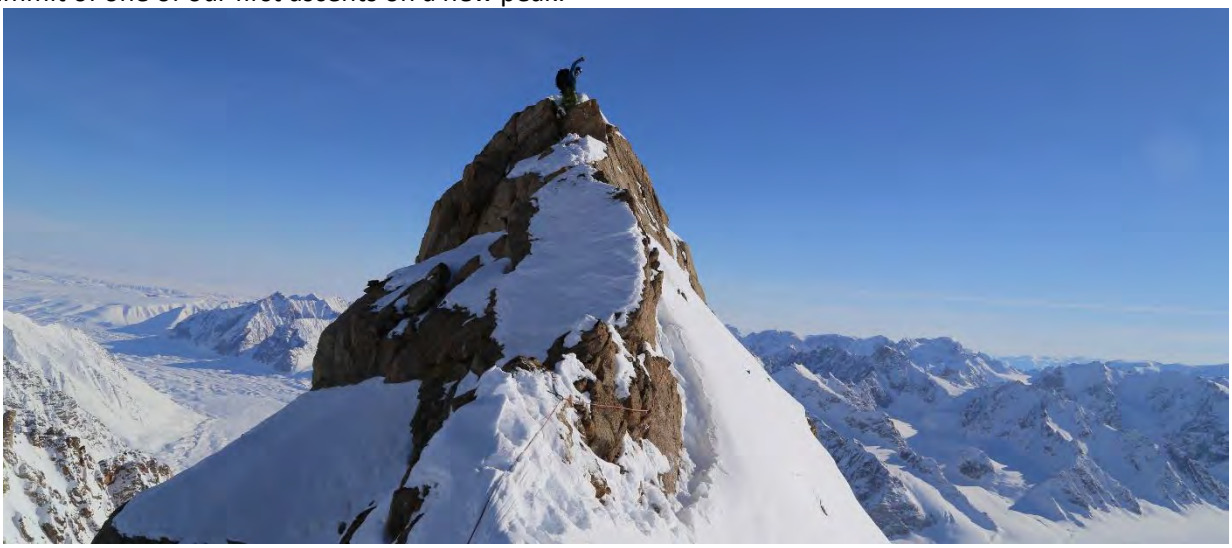
Jesse crossing the 2nd high col (a section of free hanging abseil):



The team crossing the pristine plateau between the 2 high cols:



At the summit of one of our first ascents on a new peak:



Jesse following in footsteps around the steep arête on peak 2:



Jesse on the lower section of peak 1:



Jesse leading the way down the Bjørnbo glacier:



Making our way through the crevasses on the Roslin Glacier:



Jesse on the summit of our new peak



The team:

