

MTQ3's Snowdonia Expedition (20-21 Oct 07)

Contributed by Lexi Cameron

For our first weekend the MTQ's did not freeze whilst bashing up in Sennybridge. Instead we went to the other end of Wales to Snowdonia to enjoy the pleasures of the mountains there. We stayed in Indefatigable in Anglesey. The aim of our EX was to train and assess all expedition members in micro navigation to prepare them for MLP, ML(T) and ML(S) and for every member of the EX to climb Mt Snowdon via a "non tourist route" in preparation for further climbing in the years training.

Ascending the Summit of Snowdon

Saturday was spent walking up and down the mountains, tackling the second two highest peaks, whilst trying to keep the porridge, stodgily made that morning, at bay. Our esteemed leader delegated each member of the group to lead and navigate a leg of the walk, as part of the SMP. It was a long day, however the weather kept spirits high and there were some spectacular views. Saturday also helped us towards the main expedition on Sunday. We came across pretty varied terrain, from easy tracks to rocks to going completely off the track and having to use our map skills to find the next stop. When we thought it was almost over Capt. Lawrence very kindly guided us to the bottom of a hill with plenty of scrambles so that we could practice our "three points of contact" techniques. However tired we were there was always the thought of the Rugby [Ed: Rugby World Cup Final, England v South Africa] in the back of our minds and whether or not we would make the match in time. On return to the centre there was a quick change and then on the minibus into Bangor for some dinner and the match. We were all in bed fairly early that night, after no celebrating!!!

Taking a well earned break.

Despite the loss and very early start (no porridge this time!) everyone was happy enough, ready to take on the challenge of Snowdon, the non-tourist route. After a long slog getting to the bottom of Crib Goch we took a right and walked round the side of the ridge, a route not known to many. This path certainly had challenges of its own, with a steep slope, making those who did not like heights really push themselves. Once half way along the ridge we went vertically up onto Crib y ddysgl, which was hard work. I think every body's calves were burning!! (Rob captured our grimacing faces when he tried and succeeded to take the most unflattering photos he could!!). There were a couple of interesting ridge walks which once again tested people, with sheer drops and jagged terrain. Before the final climb to Snowdon was a well deserved lunch break which gave us all an energy boost to get to the top. Despite a disturbed view at the top with heavy clouds, the howling winds allowed a quick glimpse at the view every now and then. On the descent the clouds did lift and we were able to see all the lakes and surrounding mountains. Due to time constraints the group could not carry on the Snowdon Horseshoe and collectively walked down the Pyg Track after a thoroughly rewarding, challenging yet enjoyable walk, hike and climb!

Overall we had a fantastic couple of days walking, with good weather and spirits. Thank you very much to both Capt. Lawrence and 2 Lt Alex Lodge for organizing the trip.

At the end of the day.