

NORFOLK ARMY CADET FORCE EXERCISE DRAGON VENTURER – SNOW CADET 2018 POST EXERCISE REPORT



**EXPEDITION TEAM
NORFOLK ARMY CADET FORCE
CADET CENTRE
DEREHAM
NORFOLK
NR19 1AD**

FLAINE - FRANCE

10-17 FEBRUARY 2018



**ARMY
CADETS** 
GOING FURTHER

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Post exercise Report for Ex DRAGON VENTURER - SNOW CADET 2018, the aim of the exercise was to take 14 cadets and 5 Cadet Force Adult Volunteers who wouldn't normally have the opportunity to ski in the Alps, on an Alpine Skiing expedition to Flaine, France. All personnel attending the expedition have completed the Ski Foundation Level 1 (SF1) Course taught by three qualified instructors, Army Reserve Maj Paul Whitehead, Army Reserve Warrant Officer 2nd Class Anthony (Smudge) Smith and Combined Cadet Force Staff Instructor Ian Roach. Instruction took place from 0900hrs to 1600hrs daily for six days with evening teaching periods. The course ended with the SF1 assessment. The general concept of the trip was to accommodate the participants in four man apartments, empowering them to feed and administrate themselves and each other in a foreign environment.

The expedition was organised and led by Lt Michaela Stordy and QMSI Chris Jewell.

The following Cadet Force Adult Volunteers were selected for the exercise:

CNE Squadron: SSI Rose Jewell and SSI Jane Olah.

Britannia Company: SMI Melanie Bishop.

The following Cadets were selected to attend the exercise:

Britannia Company: Cpl Aaron Crebbin, LCpl Amelia Ayres and LCpl Andrew Mabbott.

CNA Battery: Cpl Toby Edwards, Cpl Callum Baring, Cpl Emily Millar, Cpl Ethan Griffin-McCleary, Cpl Oscar Simmonds, Cpl Tyler-Jay Pitcher and LCpl Imogen Pitcher.

CNE Squadron: SSgt Todd Vincent, Sgt Kiri Wells, Sgt Tom Moore and Cpl Sophie Gadsby.

FUND RAISING

Each member of the exercise gave a personal contribution of £250, the remainder of the money for the expedition was raised through donations, fund raising events, in the shape of bag packs and car boots sales, and public money. The following organisations were kind enough to give donations:

- The Royal Anglian Regiment Benevolence Fund.
- The Army Cadet Force Association.
- Norfolk Army Cadet Force.
- Mrs. H.R. Greene Charitable Settlement.
- The Reserve Forces and Cadets Association.
- CNE, CNA and Britannia Company NACF.
- HQ Support Command Adventure Training Grant.
- The Sir Philip Reckitt Educational Trust.
- The Mason Trust.
- Albert Lodge.
- The 3rd Battalion the Royal Anglian Regiment.

Also a special thank you goes to all the staff at TUI Dereham for their generous discount and un-wavering support throughout.

PLANNING AND LOGISTICS

Before an expedition of this nature can be undertaken by the Army Cadet Force, approval has to be sought from the MOD via Land (Army Headquarters) and clearance for Adventurous Training overseas from SO2 (AT) HQ Support Command. The Joint Services Adventure Training Form A (JSATFA) and risk assessments were completed and despatched, these forms laid out the travel arrangements and detailed itinerary for the trip broken down into travel, course instruction, accommodation and other activities.

BRIEFINGS AND MEETINGS

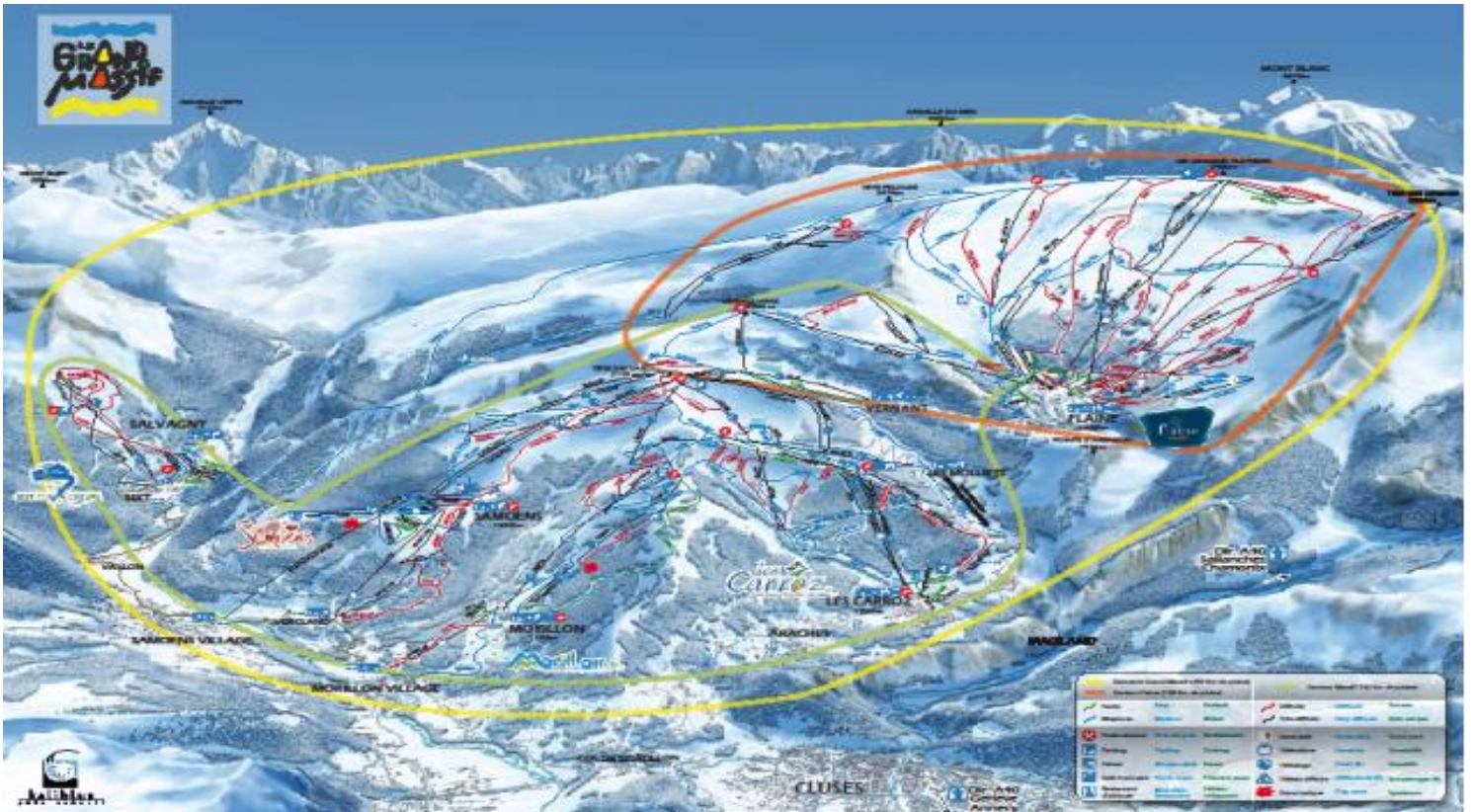
In order to select the participants for the exercise a parents briefing evening took place at HQ NACF which outlined the aim and itinerary of the trip, after a short presentation from the planning team the remaining team members were selected. A co-ordination meeting then took place every few months to plan future fund raising events and to keep the team updated on progress.



FRIDAY 09 – SATURDAY 10 FEB 2018 - DEPARTURE

Finally the day had arrived for us to depart to Flaine; it had taken 18 months of planning, organisation and fund raising to get to this point, the team paraded at the Cadet Centre Croxton Road, Thetford at 2300hrs for a final kit check and baggage weighing, we then departed for Gatwick in 2 Norfolk ACF Minibuses ready for our flight at 0825hrs. After a trouble free check in, we took off, landing at Geneva at 1105hrs (local), we then had a 2 hour coach transfer to Flaine, on arrival we firstly made a short tour of the resort on foot, pointing out key locations to all members of the party before checking into the hotel and settling into our rooms. The room adults then took their

cadets to the ski hire shop to get fitted out for boots and skis, once the ski equipment was secured in the hotel ski lockers the adults then took the cadets food shopping using the meal planners and menus each group had written prior to departure. After returning back to the hotel each room then prepared their evening meal and was then briefed in preparation for our first day on the slopes tomorrow.



The Flaine Bowl Ski Area

DAY 1 SUNDAY 11 FEB 2018

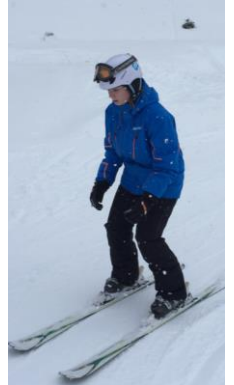


The first day on the slopes started early at 0830hrs and with falling snow causing visibility challenges we all paraded at the ski lockers to get kitted up before moving to the beginner slopes, once all the lift passes were issued the instructors took their students onto the nursery slope located in Flaine Forum for a warm up and their initial assessment which would determine which group they would be in for the first part of the course. Once grouped the instructors then took the students through the basics which included balance, posture, gliding, stopping and basic turns, all students soon grasped the basics and all saw significant progress by lunch time. After lunch the groups continued with basic skills and

then later in the afternoon the instructors introduced their groups to the ski lifts which enabled them to take on some more demanding slopes. All instructors felt the students were taking to the initial instruction very well and had met their training objectives for the day which were basic sliding, ploughing, stability, speed control and body posture.

Emily Millar said the following about day 1 of the course:

"I enjoyed the atmosphere, laughter and fun of today, I learnt how to do sharp, safe turns without falling over however I didn't like falling and getting knocked over".



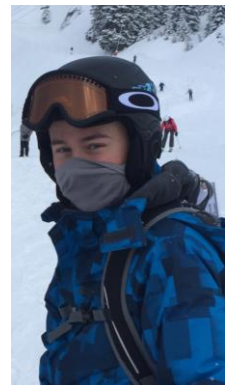
DAY 2 MONDAY 12 FEB 2018

The second day on the slopes began at 0845hrs in a winter wonderland of freshly fallen powder with all groups meeting at the Grand Van lift for a briefing on the day's activities before going to La Bissac for a warm up, Maj Whitehead and WO2 Smith took their groups further up the mountain to work more on turning, balance and confidence while SSI Roach kept his group further down the slopes working more on the basics. In the afternoon all groups progressed higher up the mountain taking on some more demanding piste's as the students became more comfortable on the snow. Some students required more one to one tuition but by the end of the day they were all generally at the same standard within their group.

Tom Moore said the following about Day 2: "Today we focused on turning and being able to control our speed, to begin with we went on a small green slope but by the afternoon we had progressed onto blue slopes which was awesome".

Sophie Gadsby said this about Day 2:

"I really enjoyed today and I am feeling more confident, we mastered turning and even went down a few red slopes. What I really enjoyed about today was that at the end only myself and another cadet wanted to do an extra run, so with the instructor we went down another red, I am loving every second".



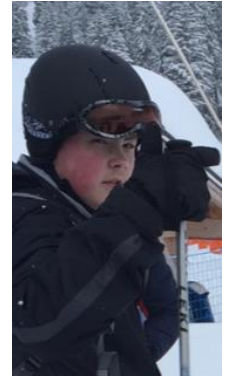
DAY 3 TUESDAY 13 FEB 2018

Day three began in glorious sunshine as we all met at the La Bissac for our daily warm up, the instructors then changed groups before heading off up the mountain. The instructors took the first hour to reassess their new groups before advancing them on the skills they had learnt so far, each group learned about body separation before tackling parallel plough turning. By the end of the day most students had tried red runs and all had been taken out of their comfort zones with some more demanding skiing.



Kiri Wells said the following about Day 3: "Today I mastered how to parallel turn and I only fell over once, I didn't enjoy my legs aching from turning but after a while I got used to it".

Todd Vincent said this about Day 3 "I joined the higher group today and moved onto the bigger slopes, it was also the first time I had been on the six man chair lift, I found the day challenging but I had definitely improved by the end".



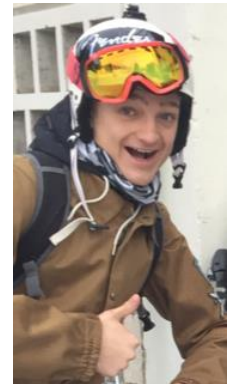
DAY 4 WEDNESDAY 14 FEB 2018

Another sunny day started once again at 0845hrs with all groups meeting at the La Bissac for the daily warm up, the instructors then rejigged their groups before taking them up the mountain to work on the lessons already taught. Today was all about perfecting technique and the students demonstrating that they had grasped the basics before progressing onto carving. Throughout the week the instructors also took the opportunity to show examples of different snow pack, snow features and emergency shelters as and when they came across them. In the evening the whole trip went out to unwind to the local bowling alley for some well-deserved rest and recuperation.



Amelia Ayres said the following about Day 4: "Today I really enjoyed trying out the chair lift and taking in the magnificent views, my skiing progressed and I learned how to turn better, there wasn't anything I disliked about today".

Oscar Simmonds said this about day 4: "Today we changed instructors and we skied most of the Grand Massif ski area, as the conditions deteriorated throughout the day, skiing became more difficult as the snow was sticky, I had to learn to navigate around the ski area in poor visibility which I enjoyed".



DAY 5 THURSDAY 15 FEB 2018

Day 5 saw our spell of good weather end as rain set in on the lower slopes which meant that the snow conditions started to deteriorate into sticky slush, this however gave the instructors the perfect opportunity to demonstrate the importance of technique as turning, slowing down and stopping was made more difficult in the poor snow conditions. In the afternoon all groups continued to work on technique. The day was cut a little short in-order for everyone to get in the warm and dry out.



Imogen Pitcher said this about Day 5: "I really enjoyed learning about body position and how to perfect my parallel turns down steep hills".

Andrew Mabbott said this about Day 5: "The best part about today was destroying a blue run and not falling over, the worst part was getting very wet and cold. Today I have learnt to bend and stand while turning which makes it easier".



DAY 6 FRIDAY 16 FEB 2018



Day 6 started with all groups practicing for the final days skiing, consolidating all skills previously taught, nerves were running high as a course pass was at stake. After lunch the whole group went to the top of the mountain for a group photo, the entire course then skied down together showing off their skills. Students had to demonstrate throughout the day the plough turn, the plough parallel turn, body posture and body separation and for a bit of adrenalin they all took on the half pipe. After a full days skiing resulting in 16 Ski Foundation level 1 passes. We all then returned to our apartments before sadly handing in our skis. In the evening all members of the course went out for an end of course meal at the local Pizza restaurant after which we had a prize giving ceremony back at the hotel.



Toby Edwards said this about Day 6: "Today I learned how to control height when coming off a jump which was real fun, however I didn't enjoy poling along the flat parts as it made my arms very heavy, I also learned how to control my speed on the half-pipe, the best part of the day was skiing with the other groups".

Tyler-Jay Pitcher said this about day 6: "Today I most enjoyed skiing as a whole group but I did learn today that going fast is not always best, also if I lean to far forward I will fall over, doing the half-pipe was great although I kept falling over".



SATURDAY 17 FEB 2018 – JOURNEY HOME

The day started early with reveille at 0600hrs as we were due to meet the coach transfer at 0730hrs and we needed to clean the rooms and hand in the keys before departing to Geneva, we all then boarded the coach for a trouble free journey to the airport. On arrival, check-in and security were manic but eventually we all got through and after a tour of the duty free shops and a frantic quest for food we took off for Gatwick. We cleared baggage reclaim and customs with no problems and boarded the minibuses back to Norfolk; after some final admin back at Thetford we all then went our separate ways with the memory of a fantastic course still fresh in our minds.



Callum Baring's highlight of the course was: "the final day, skiing as a group, skiing in powder and landing some jumps".

Ethan Griffin-McCleary's highlight of the course was: Skiing down together as a group and seeing how everyone else had improved, it was great fun".

Aaron Crebbin's highlight of the course was: "Day 5 was the best day for me, we skied mostly red slopes and my technique has really progressed so much".

CADET FORCE ADULT INSTRUCTORS THOUGHTS ON THE COURSE



Rose Jewell, Mel Bishop and Jane Olah said the following about the course:

"The week was absolutely brilliant, to see what everyone can achieve in one week was amazing. The weather could have been better but that was the only improvement I could ask for. The improvement of the cadets, that were made through skiing were delivered by true determination by them in mind and body and could not have asked for a better bunch of young adults. This was a fantastic trip and I believe everyone has grown as a person from being involved in it. Thank you to everyone to helped make this happen".

"One of the most rewarding experiences; from start to finish Snow Cadet 2018 saw self-motivation, achievement, friendship, many laughs and a ton of memories to cherish forever. I am sad it is over but happy to have found a new love for a hobby I probably never would have had the opportunity to do without with help of you all".

SUMMARY AND EXPEDITION CONCLUSIONS

Ex DRAGON VENTURER SNOW CADET 2018 has proven to be a great success, all of the Cadet Force Adult Volunteers and Cadets have risen to the challenge of fund raising and achieving the Ski Foundation Level 1 qualification. The Cadets' experience of living together and looking after each other in a foreign environment has proved that they have developed and changed for the better, learning a lot about themselves and each other along the way. It is important to remember that no cadets were excluded from the trip for family financial circumstances and all of the adults and cadets that attended the exercise have been a credit to NACF and their parents/guardians. In organising Ex SNOW CADET it has also been proven that there are many individuals and organisations within Norfolk more than willing to help and support young people achieve their goals and to assist in their personal development. Our fund raising efforts were a key ingredient in making the expedition a success, with kind donations and hard work fundraising we have managed to meet all our payment targets. **With the value of the pound against the euro and the increase in prices both in the UK and France it goes without saying that without the kind donations from the public, trusts and other organisations this expedition would not have taken place.**

Both Lt Michaela Stordy and QMSI Chris Jewell would like to thank all who assisted with and all who took part in Ex SNOW CADET 2018.



TO INSPIRE TO ACHIEVE

