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95/20

1995 BRITISH TASERMIUT FJORD EXPEDITION

ABSTRACT

Tasermiut Fjord South Greenland. First ascent Nalumasortoq Left-hand Tower. Big wall style climbing grade E4 A2.

CLIMBERS

David Anderson
Craig Dring
Ian Dring
Paul Tattersall



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1. INTRODUCTION

High quality big wall type climbs can be found in the Tasermiut Fjord region of South Greenland. Many lines have not had ascents.

The Nalumasortoq Towers form a line of three satellite peaks to the main mass of Nalumasortoq. The latter was climbed for the first time by a French party in 1960. The Left-hand Tower was attempted by Ben Masterson and Kurt Albert in 1994, but they were forced to retreat due to bad weather after completing 9 pitches .

Until our climb the Towers had had no ascent. It was our original intention to attempt a line on the central tower, however on our arrival we found that a Swiss party were firmly ensconced on this route (they subsequently failed after about 10 pitches). We therefore decided to attempt the line that had been tried by Masterson/Albert.

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to Acknowledge the financial support of the MEF and the BMC.

Rene Nielson of the Nanortalik Tourist office was very useful source of information and material help.

We are also grateful to the following people/organisations who helped our expedition in various ways:

Dave Wills, Jerry Gore, Dave Williams, Martin Moran, John Mills, Adrian Vernon-Fish, Mottram Couper ,Buffalo Clothing/Sheffield, Ron Fawcett of Marlow Ropes, Paul Cravan at PC products and Lyon Equipment, Oliver Cooper at Terra Nova, Mark Vallance at Wild Country, Macpac, Outside at Hathersage and last but not least Angela and Sandra.

3. EXPEDITION SUMMARY

Weds 28 June - Fri 30 June

Fly London- Keflavik - Narsarsuaq- Nanortalik.
Overnight in Keflavik and Narsarsuaq.

Sat 1 July

Shopping Nanortalik.
2 boat trips to base camp in Tasermiut Fjord. Difficulties with drifting ice and choppy seas.

Sun 2 July - Wedns 5 July

Set up advanced base camp and fix approach to route.



Thurs 6 July - Fri 14 July

Climb route : 4 climbing days climbing in pairs. On day 4 all members reach the summit in a 20 hour push. 12 pitches were fixed over 3 days. Rest days and dubious weather were spent exploring the basin. A Scramble up pyramid peak gave fine views.

Sat 15 July - Tues 18 July

Break ABC, return to BC, rest day and trip to ice cap where a large section of the ice broke away and fell into the Fjord, the resulting tidal wave almost swept the boat away.

Weds 19 July

Craig, Ian and Paul climb 9 pitches of Moby Dick on Ulamertorssuaq.

Thurs 20 July

One boat load back to Nanortalik via Tasiusaq.

Fri 21 July - Tues 25 July

Sight seeing and exploring around Nanortalik , very worthwhile backpacking, iceberg hopping and whale spotting.

Weds 26 July - Fri 28 July

Nanortalik- Narsarsuaq - Keflavik - London.

4. ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Nalumasortog Left-hand Tower E4/A2 800m

(A strong team would be able to free the route in it's entirety at a standard of E5 with one pitch of E6).

Approach

From the top of the moraine cross a small glacier to the base of a band of wet slabs stretching across the bottom of the face (20 mins). Ascend the slabs at the narrowest point to a band of ledges which may be snow covered in parts. The route starts just left of a series of vertical crack lines in the centre of the face.

The Route

Follow left-ward diagonal cracks for 14 sustained and steep pitches to a large ledge (good bivouac). A short pitch leads right-wards across a gentle slab to a series of roofs. A further 3 steep pitches lead to the top.

The climbing is predominantly crack climbing from finger to off-width/chimney. 50m ropes are required.

The stances are protected in the main by 1 or 2 bolts. Protection on pitches consists of nuts and camming devices. No bolts or pegs were placed for direct aid or protection on pitches.

Descent

Rappel down the line of ascent.

Time

A time of 3 days should be sufficient to repeat the route. Porta-ledges are required if the route is to be undertaken in one push.

5. POTENTIAL FOR FUTURE EXPLORATION

Note on existing and potential climbs in the Ulamertorssuaq base camp region (See Map):

The best rock in the area is to be found on the steep vertical faces. The low angle rock tends to be mossy and loose in places.

- 1) Pinasut Pap - 1 route exists on west face. Potential on S/SE face for short steep clean lines 10-12 pitches.
- 2) Ketil (Uliuit Qaqa)- Several routes. Potential on all faces. Long up to 1500m. Best approached from NW.
- 3) Nalumasortoq - Lots of potential lines on the Towers. Steep and clean granite. 15-20 pitches.
- 4) PT 1520 - No routes to date . Several faces. Long slabs, plus the steep, blank NW face.
- 5) Pt 1858 and 1825 - Actually peaks in the Ulamertorssuaq Massif. No routes to date. A series of complex faces, some slabby. Approach across glacier to NE.
- 6) Ulamertorssuaq- Several routes exist on west face. The shorter North face is un-climbed.

APPENDIX

A1 CONTACTS

Rene Nielson of the Nanortalik tourist office was extremely helpful. A contact address is given in Ref 1.

Route information to the area is being compiled by Steen Madsen (Ref 2).

A2 ADMINISTRATION

Permission is not required for mountaineering expeditions in the Tasermiut Fjord region. A letter to this respect from the Danish Polar institute is given in appendix A9.

Details on how to apply for an MEF/BMC grant can be obtained from Bill Ruthen (Ref 3).

A3 WEATHER

Our experience and previous expedition reports all point to July being the best climbing month, (driest and warmest). June and August are distinctly colder and wetter. In June 95 there were very few climbing days high winds and much rain was reported.

We had 26 days in the Tasermit Region (and Nanortalik)

Dry - including sunny days that were windy and grey - 18 days.

Mixed - started wet turned sunny - 2 days.

Wet, low cloud, grey - 6 days.

Pattern for July 95.

3 days sunny - 1 day wet - 1 day sunny - 1 day wet - 2 days sunny - 1 day mixed - 9 days dry (mixture sunny and windy) - 3 days wet/foggy - 1 day sunny - 1 day wet/foggy - 1 day sunny

A4 TRAVEL

Flights were arranged through Arctic experience (Ref 4). It is possible to fly direct to Narsarsuaq from Copenhagen, probably connecting with London on the same day. This was the arrangement made by Paul Marshall's 95 Sermersooq expedition (Ref 5).

At Narsarsuaq and Nanortalik it is possible to camp or stay at Youth Hostels, the latter can be booked through Rene Nielson.

The journey to base camp was by an 8 man Avon semi-rigid inflatable with a 40 Hp outboard motor. Journey times were anything between 2-4 hours depending on loading and the state of the drifting ice and sea conditions. The Fjord became distinctly choppy in the afternoons.

Freight

Freight was sent by sea, (according to Rene Nielson it is also possible to send it by air). We used Leman (Ref 6). There were severe problems with drifting Ice this year and we were very lucky that our freight arrived as very few ships got through. Rene Nielson cleared our freight in Nanortalik.

A5 FOOD

In Nanortalik there are two medium sized supermarkets where basic food stuffs can be purchased (VISA accepted). There is a further small shop in Tasiusaq where a limited variety of food is available .

Petrol for stoves is available at Nanortalik and Tasiusaq.

Prices are approximately 50% more expensive than the UK. The currency is Danish Krona.

A6 EQUIPMENT

A typical rack required to repeat the Left-hand Tower or a route such as Moby Dick should include the following:

Friends 0.5-4 3 sets
Rocks 1-4 1 of each
Rocks 5-10 2-3 of each
Quick-draws 14 (more krabs required if decide to fix)

A large piece of protection such as a No 4 or No 5 camalot or an expanding tube would prove invaluable to protect the wide chimney sections on some pitches. All the belays have either two bolts or a bolt and a wire (the tape in situ would need replacing). You'll also need a 50M 11mm lead-line and another 50m line to rappel. All rappels on the Left-hand Tower are 50m or less, Moby Dick has several 60m pitches.

We also included in our rack:

10-15 LA
10-15 KB
10-15 Angles
3-4 Bongs
20 Copper heads
2 RURPS
2 Birdbeaks
30 Free karabiners
50 Tie-offs
3 peg hammers

The ease of the aid and the high amount of free climbing meant that we didn't need any of the above equipment. However other lines on the Nalumasortoq Towers might require this type of gear as they appeared to be much thinner with shallow and blind cracks.

A variety of equipment is available for hire from Rene Nielson in Nanortalik. This includes:

400m of 9mm static line - £50 for 1 month.

Three 8 man Avon semi -rigid inflatables each with a 40 Hp engine - £700 for 1 month.

Various large pots and pans.

Other items that would be good to take:

Mosquito head nets (essential)
Mosquito repellent (essential)
Plastic boots
Crampons
Axes (1 per person)
Collapsible ski poles

The temperatures were pleasant in direct sunlight and chilly in the shade/evenings. Clothing and sleeping bags that are used in the western Alps are suitable. A duvet is useful for the evenings.

Mosquitoes were a problem at BC, at ABC they were bearable and on the route no problem existed.

A7 ACCOUNTS

	£	£
GRANTS: BMC	900	
MEF	800	1700
	-----	-----
COSTS: Air Fare	3323	
Boat	700	
Equipment hire	50	
Freight	200	
Gas	30	
Fuel	50	
Medical kit	68	
Insurance	100	
Film	195	
Food	361	
Accommodation	224	
Equipment	250	5551
	-----	-----
Net cost of expedition:		3851

Note: Carte Neige insurance was used which is cheaper, but not as comprehensive as BMC insurance (contact in Ref 7).

A8 MEDICAL

A comprehensive medical kit was taken (see Ref 8). From this only the Piriton (antihistamine for insect bites) and Savalon antiseptic were used.

There is a sizeable hospital at Nanortalik. The nearest telephone to BC is at Tasiusaq a full days walk from base camp or 1 hour by boat. (i.e. It is much easier to escape in the event of a problem if a boat is retained at BC. This must be firmly secured as there is a large tidal variation).

REFERENCE

- 1) Rene Nielson
Nanortalik Tourist Service
PO Box 160
3922 Nanortalik
Greenland
Fax Greenland 33442
- 2) Steen Madsen
Hylderej No 2
9560 Handsurrd
Denmark

- 3) W H Ruthen
MEF
Gowrie
Cardwell Close
Warton
Preston
PR4 1SH
- 4) Arctic Experience Ltd
29 Nork Way
Banstead
Surrey
SM7 1PB
(Tel 01737 362321)
- 5) Paul Marshall
Westward
Lyncombe Vale Road
Bath
BA2 4LS
- 6) Leman
Bradford Office
Dealburn Rd
Woodroyd Industrial Estate
Bradford
BD12 0QN
01274 693231
- 7) Ziggi Davenport
Hinton Manor
Eardisland Nr Leominster
Herefordshire
HR6 9BG
(Tel 01544 388146)
- 8) Expedition Medicine
Published by Expedition Advisory Centre
(see address below)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 1) D Wills Expedition Report to Tasermiut Fjord 1993.
- 2) The American Alpine Journal p205 1977.
- 3) The American Alpine Journal p93 1988.
- 4) Vertical p64 Juillet 1992.
- 5) Alpine Journal 1968.

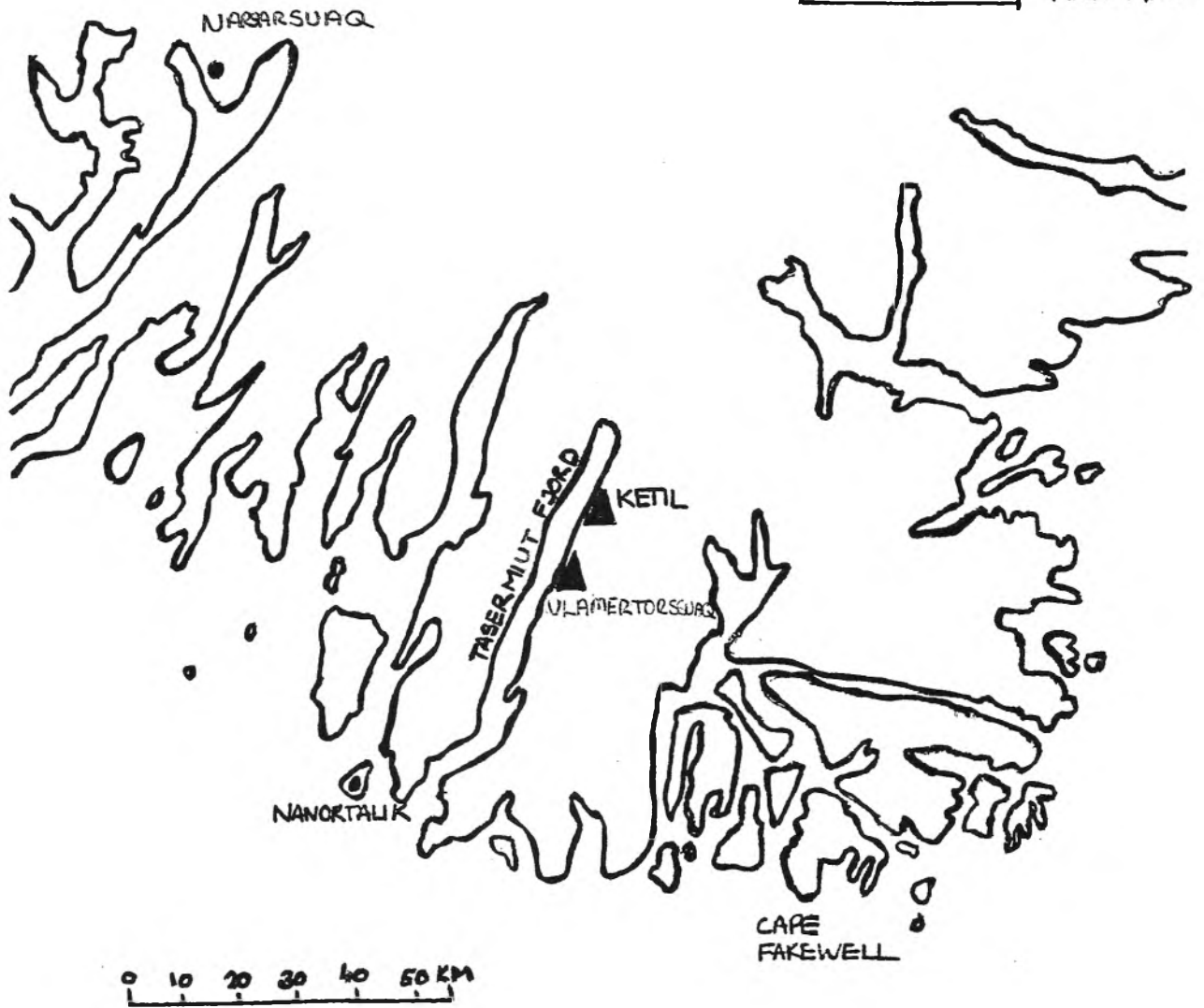
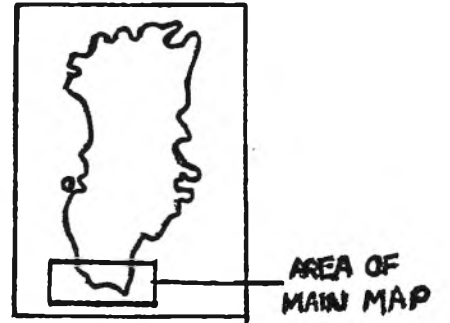
6) Mountain Review No 6 p17 1994.

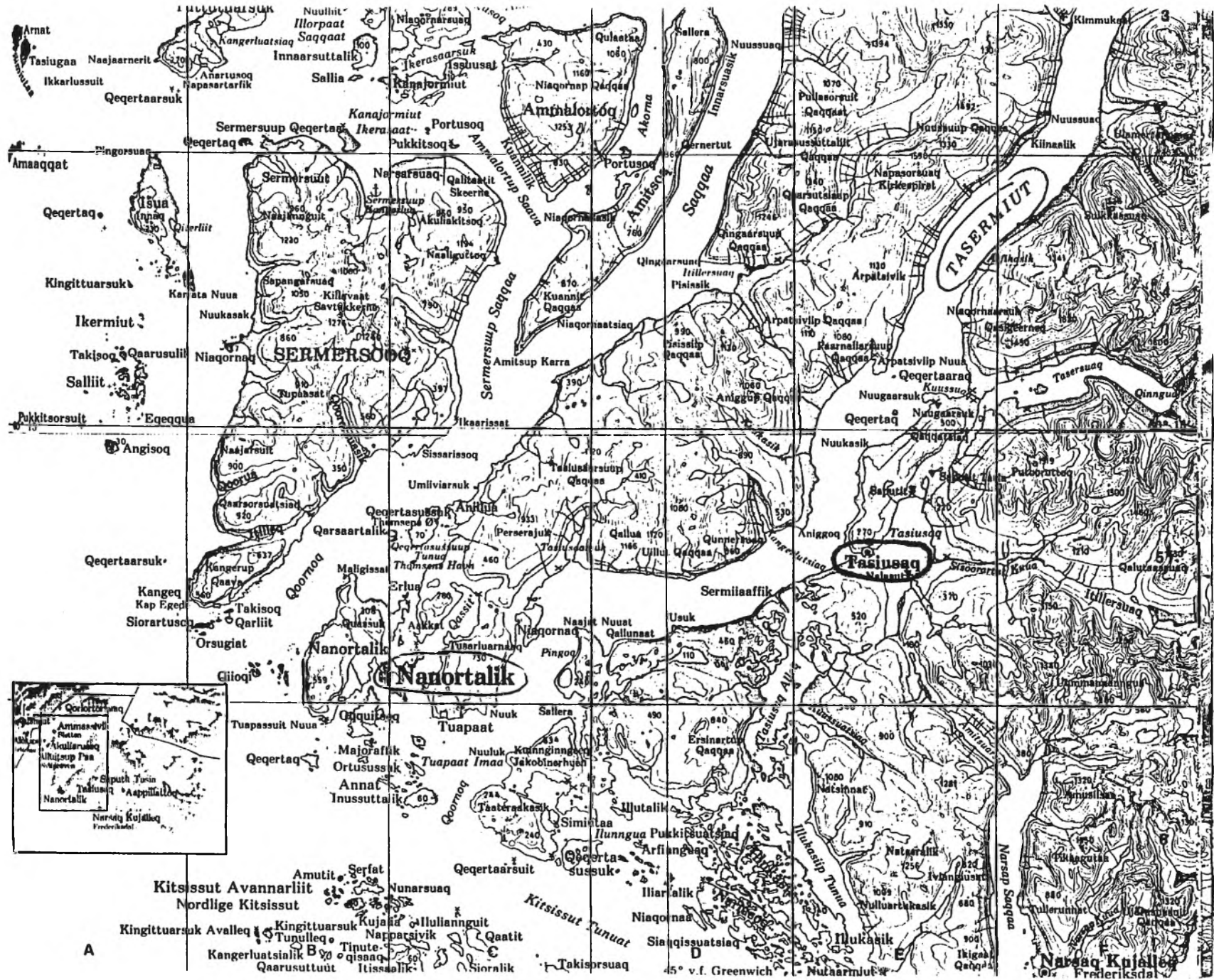
7) Rock and Ice No 65 p56.

8) Expedition Advisory Centre
Royal Geographical Society
1 Kensington Gore
London
SW7 2AR
(Tel 0171-581 2057)

9) Alpine Club Library
55 Charlotte Road
London
EC2A 3QT
(Tel 0171 6130755)

SOUTH GREENLAND





A

Kitsissut Avannarliit
Nordlige Kitsissut

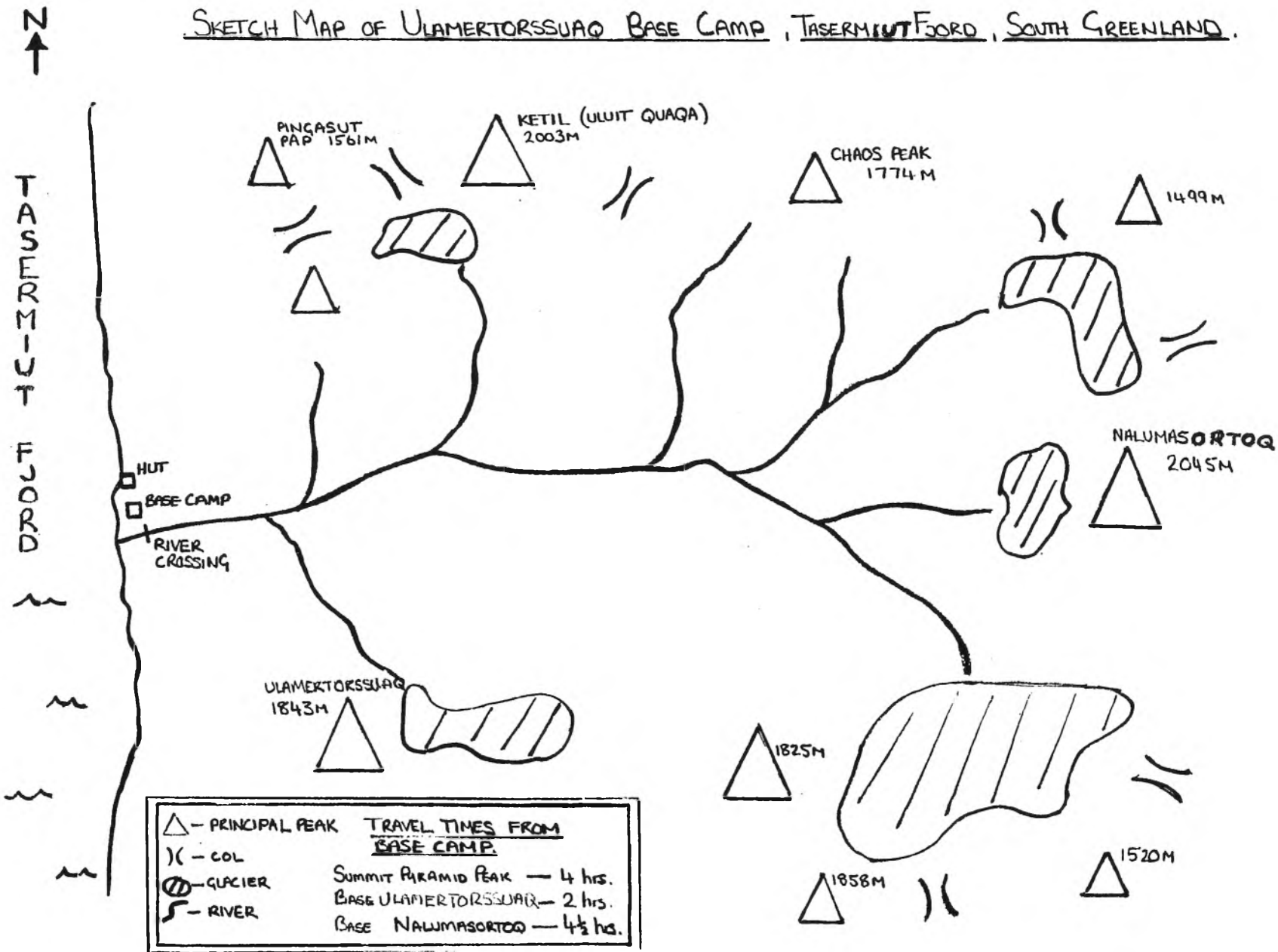
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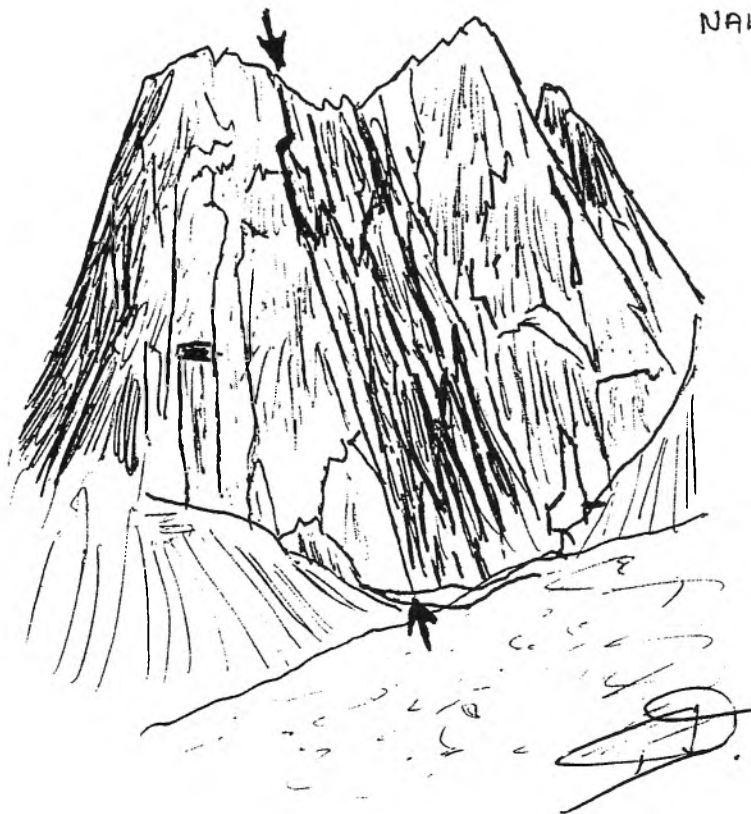
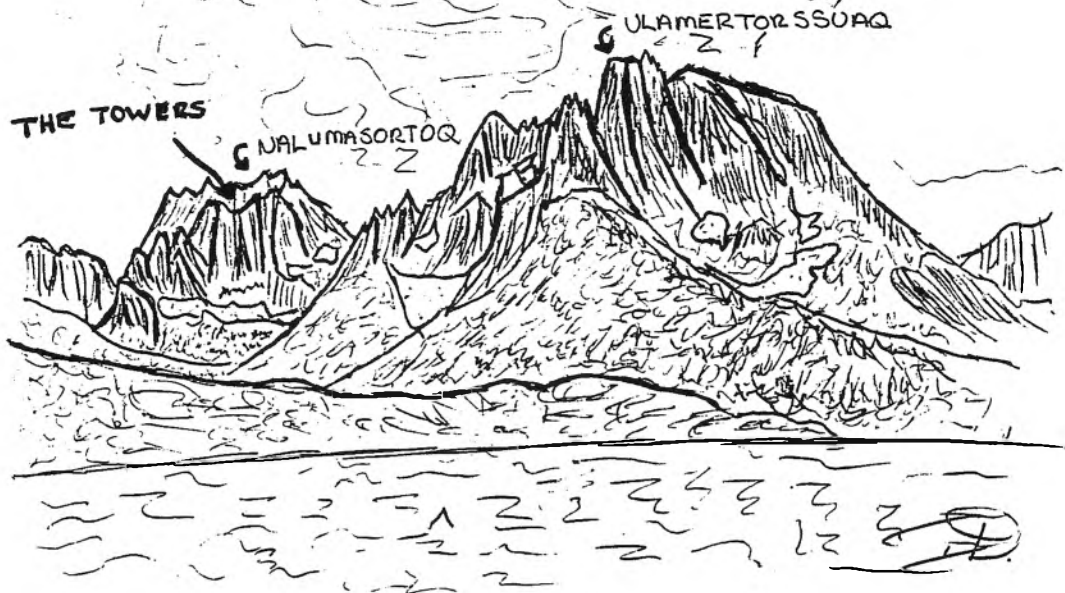
Kitsissut Tunuat

45° v.f. Greenwich

Narsaq Kujalleq
Frederiksdat

SKETCH MAP OF ULAMERTORSSUAQ BASE CAMP, TASERMUT FJORD, SOUTH GREENLAND.





NALUMASORTOQ
TOWERS

ARROWS MARK
THE ROUTE

12 December 1994
Ref.: 5.125/00-95
Letter :2594
AMA/-



I. Dring
1 School Rd North
Rudheath, Northwich
Cheshire
CW9 7RN
England

Re.: Expedition, Greenland.

Sport expeditions taking place in uninhabited areas (i.e. outside towns, hamlets or stations in North and East Greenland) or anywhere on sea ice or the Ice Cap have to present an application to the Danish Polar Center . Projects and expeditions to the National Park must submit the completed application form not later than 31 December prior to the year in which the activity is planned to take place.

Expeditions or tourist visits to the inhabited region along the West coast of Greenland in the area between Upernavik and Nanortalik need no permit from the Danish Polar Center. An expedition to Tasermiut Fiord near Nanortalik needs no permit.

For travel and tourist information please contact

Greenland Tourism
P.O.Box 1139
Pilestræde 52
DK-1010 Copenhagen K
Ph.: 33 13 69 75
Fax: 33 93 38 83

Yours sincerely,

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