Hike Report Log

Day 1

We got off to an early start. Breakfast was porridge. We wanted to do 7/15 peaks on this day. Left the campsite and 737 and used the GOS to navigate to the main path. The first peak was a long walk away – 3 hours and group morale suffered. One member even wanting to quit. The winds were howling blowing heavy beads of water from the clouds that surrounded us into our skin. Lunch sheltered behind a rock wall much improved the general mood and we pushed on. Despite the views being entirely made up of sheep and thick grey mist that blocked visibility past 30m. Peaks 2,3 and 4 fell in quick succesion. We decided to take the 2 hour detour to do peak 5. This would prove to be a fatal mistake. Vaughan injured both his Achilles tendons on the way and me, Fred and Benedict had to take turns carrying his bag for the rest of the day. Peak 5 did have some good news a brief 30s break in the fog provided us with some spectacular views. As we hiked on doing peaks 6 and 7 the clouds cleared even more. Now we could see the mountainsides dotted with brilliant greens and purples aswell as alpine lakes glimmering in the sun. The descent to the bus station was where the trouble started. Although we believed we had enough time the descent proved to be vicious. Fred fell on a tough section while carrying an extra bag rolling head over heals and thankfully only coming away with a badly bruised hip. Me and Benedict would manage the extra bag for the rest of the way taking care to never be holding it on difficult sections. Christopher was next to slip cutting open a knee and taking a few pebbles to the head. Catching the bus having been long since given up we pushed on. Once we were within 500m of the bottom me and Benedict went ahead taking turns to stay with the bags while the other went back up the hill to ferry Vaughan and Fred's bags down. Christopher took his own bag down. It took us a while and a visit to the YHA to eventually find a taxi that would take us to the campsite. We arrived at 2156 and assembled tents in the dark. - Nathan

Day 2

The next morning Fred and Vaughan decided they were unable to continue the walk and so we decided it would be safest to return home together. - Nathan

What did we learn

Not only did I learn survival skills key to this sort of expedition, such as improving my navigation skills and the endurance to continue climbing, I also learnt a healthy respect for the mountains and the value of a backup plan when we had to rely on it after things went wrong. I found out how much I could rely on my friends when I got injured as well learning more about myself, learning my limits and how far I could push myself. Overall I learnt how to be a better hiker, improving my navigation, endurance and resilience, but this also reinforced the value of preparation. After relying so heavily on how we prepared, I know what it takes to be independent in an environment such as the mountains, having friends I can rely on but also knowing when it is time to turn around, when it is too dangerous to carry on. Knowing my limits and how to safely push them as well as when to stop will stay with me for my life. – Fred

The first challenge we faced was budgeting. We had to learn to plan carefully to fit everything within our funds. We compared various websites for train tickets until we eventually found a discounted one, and visited multiple shops to ensure we got our food at a good price.

The largest challenge was the hike itself. With Vaughan getting injured early on, we had to work as a team to take turns carrying his bag, and to keep morale as high as we could. This became even harder on the final descent of the first day, when Fred and I were injured too. We persevered and eventually reached the campsite, long after dark. We ended up losing a tent in the dark and worked together to find it while also putting the other tent up. Eventually we found it, much to everyone's relief.

I think every one of us is more resilient and resourceful, having had this amazing opportunity. – Christopher