

Expedition film

After a great deal of work Robert has finished editing [a short film about the expedition](#). Very little climbing has made it in as it is rather difficult filming alpine climbing unless moving as a group of three.

Enjoy the film and please check out the two 'mini features' which show off [Adams bouldering ability](#) and [Roberts lack of understanding of sports nutrition](#).

Posted by [Mountaineerrobert](#) at 13:14 No comments: 

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Official trip reports

In order to meet the conditions of our sponsors, and to let others read about the trip without visiting the blog, we have produced two slightly different trip reports. These can be downloaded [here](#) and [here](#). The first is more formal and to the point, the second more verbose and amusing.

Posted by [Mountaineerrobert](#) at 04:59 No comments: 

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The expedition in the news

We will have more detailed posts up in the next week or so dealing with our time in Bishkek. In the meantime here are links to some accounts on the expedition from various sources.

A few websites have featured articles on the expedition. UKclimbing published [this article](#), written by John and Robert.

Alpinist mentioned the trip in [this article](#), dealing with mountaineering this year in Kyrgyzstan in general. The Torugart-too has seen a lot of action, evidently the revolution didn't put too many people off!

The BMC published [this article](#) on the trip.

Alpkit, a web based company making some really cool products, published [an article](#) by Robert on his and John's experience on Mur Samir. Alpkit made Robert's bivvy bag, his sleeping bag, his headtorch and his bright green synthetic jacket.

An account was published in Student newspaper, something that as Edinburgh University Mountaineering Club members we are delighted with as it is good publicity for the club.

As can be seen from these articles there is a great deal of interest in Kyrgyzstan, with many unclimbed peaks and many more unclimbed lines waiting for a first ascent.


Some light entertainment....Robert is putting together a film of the trip. Here is [the trailer](#) on youtube.



We would like to thank our sponsors, [The Mountaineering Council of Scotland](#), [The Scottish Mountaineering Trust](#), [The Sang Award](#) and [The Fabulous Bakin' Boys](#).



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Posted by [MountaineerRobert](#) at 12:28 No comments: 
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[Packing, panicing and repacking-the expedition kicks off.](#)

Adam and I converged with rucksacks and holdalls on John's flat where we went through our exhaustive kit list. Everything was checked, double checked and packed so that it would take the smallest amount of room possible. This left us with five hold bags and three for hand luggage. BMI allows two hold bags per person but there is a weight allowance of 20kg per person, shareable between a group. With our climbing hardware holdall weighing 31kg by itself we knew we would be over.



And how! The excess baggage for the whole trip was calculated as £900. We sat for a while with our heads in our hands trying not to panic then repacked, leaving out anything that would make basecamp comfortable, cutting the labels from clothing, leaving out that spare pair of boxer shorts....



Eventually, by taking the lightest gear and the smallest amount of that we got our baggage excess down to around £400 return, an acceptable if still less than ideal price to pay. Sighs of relief all round, we headed home to bed.

The next day we did all the last minute stuff, checking and checking again so that nothing was left behind. That wet evening Harry Holmes gave us and our gear a lift to Edinburgh Waverley train station where he and Nick DW gave a hand with our bags to the train. We were wished the best of luck and boarded, settling down to a comfortable night's sleep in mine and Adam's case while John was left wandering about looking for a cabin with a working door handle.

We were woken in London's Euston station by breakfast (orange juice and a croissant) being delivered- quite a luxury! Struggling to carry our bags we made our unsteady way to Heathrow airport via the Piccadilly Line of the London Tube, a fantastically efficient way to get about. With our massive amount of luggage we got some dirty looks as commuters were forced to jump over or walk around our mountain of gear, adding a considerable distance to their commutes.

In the airport we went for some noodle soup to steady our nerves before the ordeal of checking in and having to pay excess baggage. This went better than expected. Due to the setup of the check in desk and weighing apparatus I found that I could stick my foot under each of the bags as they went on and reduce their perceived weight by a fair margin. The resulting excess of 5kg was ignored by the smiling check in staff and we made ourselves comfortable on the plane for our X hour flight to Bishkek, via

Almaty.



Looking out of the windows as we flew we saw huge linear wildfires as we flew over Russia. I only learned on our return that these had damaged a great deal of property and caused severe localised air pollution.

Some time during the night we landed at Almaty, Kazakhstan. Here some passengers got off and a few more got on. From the windows we could see the fantastic fleet of former soviet aircraft and some futuristic looking models reminiscent of Naboo starfighters. This and the bizarre high peaked caps of the local officials, arriving by Lada, gave a very surreal air to proceedings.

We flew over the border to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, landing early in the morning. We were met off the plane by a driver for ITMC, the company we had hired the van from and pushed a loaded trolley of our gear, loading up the large campervan style vehicle they had sent. This delivered us to the Royal guest-house, where after a great deal of bell ringing and door knocking we were shown to our comfortable if hot bedroom. We laid down to sleep and noticed that when switched off the two lights in the room flashed at random intervals of no more than three seconds. With our sheets held over our heads to block out this artificial lightning we slept like logs.

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Posted by [Mountaineerrobert](#) at 05:11 No comments:  [Email This](#) [Blog This!](#) [Share to Twitter](#) [Share to Facebook](#)

First ascents



We achieved three first ascents on our expedition—two unclimbed peaks and a new route. We also made an ascent of a route by Andreou and Barrett from their expedition. Here we briefly describe our first three ascents. Names and grades are provisional as we are still mulling these over.

The first FA was climbed by John Proctor and I at 5034m, we have decided to call it Mur Samir (formerly pk 5008 but we got a more accurate altitude from the GPS device). Exact coordinates of the summit to come very soon. The whole story behind this ascent will be posted in due course, be assured that it is entertaining. We decided on the grade AD for our ascent route and PD for our descent route, the reason for our route choice will be apparent in a future post.



Above... Glacier with Mur Samir in background middle. John on summit of Mur Samir, China in background.



The second peak was climbed by Adam Russell and Robert at 4800m (more accurate height soon) and took a route up a couloir that was a veritable shooting gallery. This we decided to call Pk Karishkur, Kyrgyzy for wolf. It lies towards the North end of the Mustyr ridge. We settled on a grade of PD+ with fairly hefty objective dangers!



Left, Robert on the summit slopes of pk Karishkur, looking worse for wear after two back to back peaks and associated cold, sun and starvation.

Above, Adam on the summit slopes, grade I/II ice.

Below, Adam on the summit.



Adam and John climbed a long ice route at AD/D from the Teke-Lutor glacier. It provided 700m of ice climbing, mostly grade II but with occasional sections of grade III. However, when they topped out onto what they expected to be the summit they found themselves to be on a subsidiary summit. A ridge traverse was required to reach the true summit, not visible from the glacier below.



Above, Adam on grade I/II ice.

Three new routes in the 12 days climbing we had budgeted is pretty good especially considering that the weather was not always ideal. To have managed three first ascents of such good quality is success enough, the fantastic cultural experience a massive bonus. Stories and more pictures to follow soon!

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Safe return, success and stories.

We are all back in Edinburgh after a day of travel, more details on the expedition's successes to come very soon. We will post with the rough details then have a lot more, exquisitely detailed posts after that chronicling our many adventures in Kyrgyzstan. We all kept diaries on the trip and took plenty of photos/video so expect our EMFF entry very soon!

Robert



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Posted by [Mountaineerrobert](#) at 20:31 2 comments: 
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Airport


After some baggage drama (we were looking at an excess of £900 and financial ruin) we repacked and came in just over the limit. Once at the airport a little bit of foot support/combined tactics took us just 5kg over...which they ignored!

We are in the departure lounge at the moment waiting to board. Getting our baggage from Euston to Heathrow was fun on the tube, incurring much anger from the soulless, sullen eyed and sallow expressed commuters. Lol.

See you in a month!



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