ANU Mountaineering Club Expedition Fund Application

My expedition involves the completion of a ten day mountaineering course in the Mount Cook area of New Zealand followed by independent climbing in the same region. The trip was made open to club participation on the ANUMC website in July and is now in its final stage of preparation with four members: Leif Eldridge-Smith, Seann McKibbon, Thomas Polden and Ben Harvey. We are planning to climb with more club members including Gabriele Scheufele (the acting Mountaineering Officer) after completing the mountaineering course.

1. Aspiring Guides Mountaineering Course

A privately guided course is now booked for 10-19 January 2011. The course includes competent mountaineering techniques as well as survival skills. We envisage that the course will enable us to lead future ANUMC mountaineering trips. More specifically, the course addresses:

- Snow and ice climbing, alpine rock climbing, anchors, belaying and rope skills
- Glacier travel techniques
- Route selection and navigation
- Weather analysis and forecasting
- Avalanche awareness
- Camp management and emergency shelters
- Crevasse and alpine rescue
- Emergency shelters.

At the moment the ANU’s “mountaineering club” does not have many ice climbers who have the time to lead beginners on mountaineering trips. Janosch, the 2010 Mountaineering Officer was able to run a ropes course after completing the Aspiring Guides’ Mountaineering Course. The ropes course was my very first introduction to mountaineering-specific skills and gave me the inspiration for pursuing this expedition.

After completing the course, we will be able to run similar training courses that will probably introduce members to mountaineering and bring even more new blood into the ANUMC’s mountaineering division.

Further information about the course is available from the Aspiring Guides’ webpage: [http://www.aspiringguides.com/private_instruction.html](http://www.aspiringguides.com/private_instruction.html).

2. Independent Climbing

We have several weather-dependent objectives for the week following our course. We may not climb all of them (particularly as some lie in different areas) but they give us some flexibility.

Alternative 1 – Mt Cook National Park
• Objective 1: Mount Dixon (3004m, grade 2+/3) is sits on the northern edge of the Grand Plateau with views of Mt Cook and Mt Tasman.

• Objective 2: Mount Cook, Aorki is New Zealand’s highest peak at 3754m!

• Objective 3: The Minarets (3040m, grade 2): We can access the Minarets from Centennial Hut which is where we envisage our course will take place (depending on the weather). According to aspiring guides, it ‘combines alpine grandeur with the Tasman Sea views’ so it should make for some excellent photos for Epic. It involves a moderately technical snow climb and the Chamberlain and Geike snowfields which may involve negotiating some crevasses.

• Objective 4: Lendenfeld Peak is accessed from Pioneer’s Hut which we would walk to from Centennial Hut. From Pioneer’s Hut on the Fox Glacier, we will ascend through an icefall to Marcel Col at 3000m. The remaining ascent involves moderate snow and ice climbing. According to Aspiring Guides the vista from Marcel Col is hard to describe (“something you won’t believe you can experience”), but we’ll give it a go with plenty of photos once we are back!
Alternative 2 – Climbing in Mount Aspiring National Park

- Objective 1: Mount Aspiring / Tititea (which is maori for “glistening peak”). This stunning mountain is 3033m high, making it the highest mountain in New Zealand outside the Mount Cook area. It is climbed from the West Matukituki Valley.

- Objective 2: Mount Earnslaw (2816m, grade 2) has spiritual significance for the Maoris and was the main location for filming Lord of the Rings. (Think of those epic photos!) It will also require good climbing and glacier travel techniques and stamina, according to Aspiring Guides.

- Objective 3: Mount Barff (2245m, grade 2) is located at the top of the West Matukituki Valley, opposite Mount Aspiring. This involves a bit of bush bashing at the bottom and a grade 2 ascent up the South East ridge in cold conditions towards the top.