

Kungsleden Trekking, Sweden

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Owen Brook
Martin Haamer
Imperial College London
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Introduction

The Kungsleden or King's Trail is Sweden's longest and most famous hiking trail winding through the mountains in the far north. The hiking trail covers four national parks (Abisko, Stora Sjöfallet, Sarek, Pieljekaise) in the World Heritage Site Lapponia and is more than 450 km long. The route is diverse with impressive mountains and birch forests and colourful heaths. We are aiming to walk the far northern part of the trail from Kvikkjokk to Nikkaluokta, around a distance of 150 kilometres.

Motivation

Kungsleden is one of the most remote hikes in Europe, with dramatic and diverse scenery which changes along the route. The trail passes through uninhabited areas with untouched wilderness and no cellphone reception, enabling a rare chance to disconnect from modern everyday life and enjoy nature. The indigenous Sami people also continue to herd reindeer in the far north, so there is a chance we will encounter this along the route. The unique isolation and terrain being very different to anything we have experienced before, along with the chance to meet like minded people along the way, draws us to this trail in particular.

This trip enabled us to undertake our first longer thru-hike over the duration of ten days, building on our prior experience of shorter multi-day treks. The Kungsleden, although remote, is well marked and has many mountain cabins with basic facilities for the night, where we can easily resupply. Due to the presence of mountain glaciers, it is easy to refill water safely along the way, so we are not restricted to camping near these huts. Due to the location of the trail, the main limitation in this expedition was the cost, as the transport to and from the far north of Sweden is very expensive.

Objectives

We see the hike as a unique opportunity to advance both our physical and mental capabilities. The hike is physically challenging, requires significant preparation beforehand and a hike of this length will be a new milestone in hiking for both of us. The new environment, unique nature and conditions above the arctic circle, which neither of us have previously experienced, will broaden our horizons and be valuable to our education.

Our objectives were as follows:

- Hike from Kvikkjokk to Nikkaluokta, 150 km, across 9 days - includes one rest day.
- Summit the Skierfe (1179m), on the stretch Akse - Sitojaure, through taking a small well trodden d-tour from the Kungsleden.
- Gain further vital experience in adapting plans depending on trail and weather conditions - distances walked and camping spots can easily be changed.
- Learn about the culture and history of the Sami people and the nature and geography of the area along the route.
- Practice skills in wildlife photography.
- Build stamina and mental resilience needed for longer thru-hikes, through walking longer days and dealing with pests such as mosquitos
- Environmental focus through creating minimal waste and avoiding flying where possible - travelling by train, bus and boat within Sweden.
- Learn basic Swedish in advance of the trip to better engage with locals.

Team

Our team is a duo of very good friends with different backgrounds but a common passion for hiking. We had previously completed two, two/three-day hikes together along the English Southwest Coastal Path, wild camping and also stopping at campsites. The first from Swanage to Ringstead Bay and the second from Seatown to Budleigh Salterton. These hikes provided valuable experiences in long distance multi day hiking and have given us confidence to undertake a longer hike in unfamiliar terrain. Over the two trips we reduced our pack weight significantly, whilst still carrying a tent and food supplies, enabling us to walk longer distances.



Figure 1. The amazing team.

Owen Brook (22) was a 4th year student in Aeronautical Engineering at the time, now studying for a PhD at Imperial, and the expedition leader. He is a keen outdoors enthusiast who enjoys climbing, running, and hiking. Hiking experience:

- Hiking many day hikes in the Alps, Pyrenees, Lake District, Snowdonia and Scotland since childhood. Including summiting Canigou (2784m).
- Multiple three or four day treks with camping in wilderness and challenging weather conditions.
- Confident in navigation and organising multi-day treks.

Martin Haamer (25) graduated from Imperial in May, finishing his studies in MSc Transport. He is now a 2nd year PhD student at the University of Tartu in Geography and has a bachelor's and master's degree in the same field. Martin completed a first aid training course in 2017. Hiking experience:

- Hiking since childhood with dad in Scotland, Japan and the USA.
- Hiking in the Julian Alps of Slovenia and summiting Mount Tošč.
- Hiking in the High Tatras of Slovakia and summiting both Rysy and Kôprovský štít on separate occasions.
- Multiple two/three day hikes with wild camping in various weather conditions.

Expedition Overview

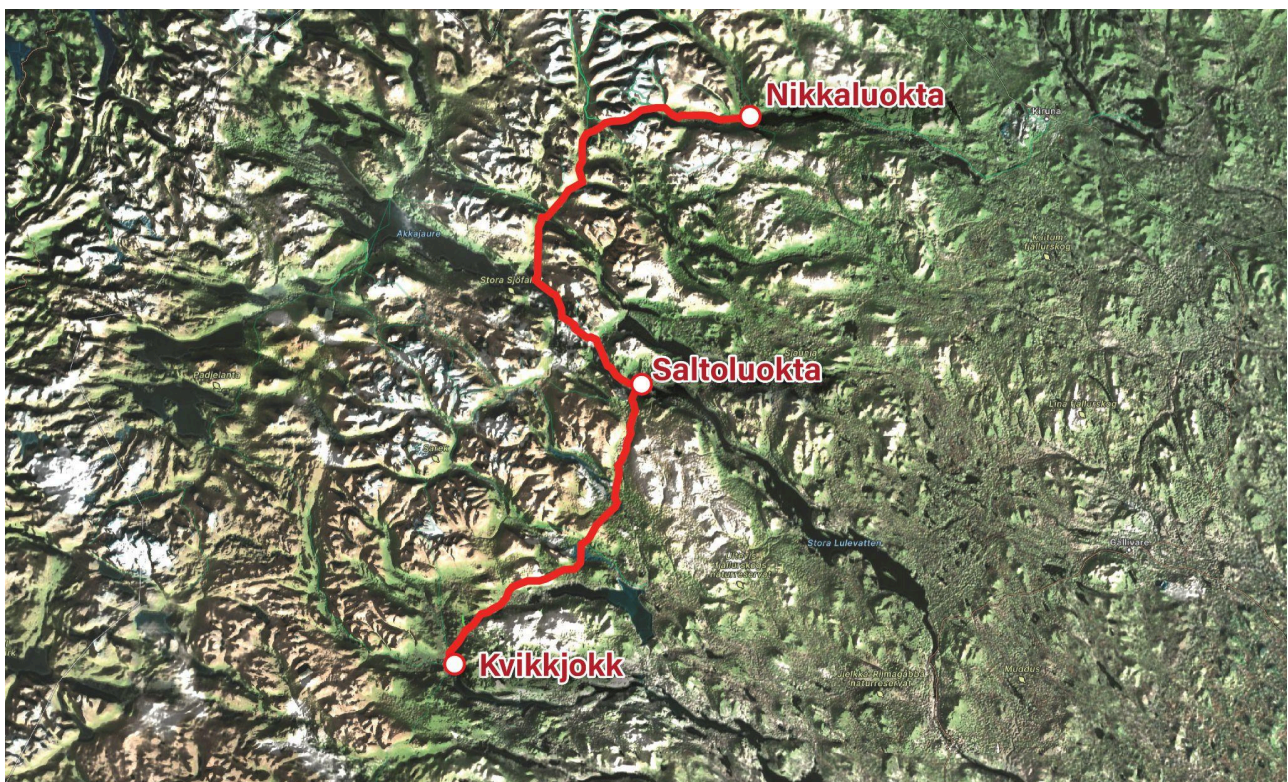


Figure 2. Map of the planned route from Kvikkjokk to Nikkaluokta. Author: Martin Haamer

Weather and Trail Conditions

Our plan was to hike along the Kungsleden from Kvikkjokk to Nikkaluokta. The hike covers around 150km and we planned nine days for the hike, including one extra day which gave flexibility in case of unsuitable weather for hiking or physical fatigue. We hiked in July when the average daily temperatures are highest, with average daily maximums at 12°C and minimums at 6°C. The temperatures could be higher during the day and will also vary based on the current altitude. July is however the month with the most rainfall with on average 87mm of precipitation, so we will take full waterproof outer layers.

The parts of the trail at lower altitude in the forest around Kvikkjokk could have significant amounts of mosquitos from the end of June, necessitating that we take mosquito repellent and head nets, as well as being vigilant about the presence of ticks along the trail.

Accessing the Trail

Since we live and study in different countries (Owen in the UK and Martin in Estonia), we met in Stockholm, which is easily accessible from both countries. This is the only part of the expedition which required flying, but for the rest of the expedition we travelled by train, bus or boat. From Stockholm Centraal we planned to take the SJ operated overnight train to Murjek from where a 4.5 hour bus ride will take us to the start of our hike at Kvikkjokk. As discussed later, this was not possible. Exiting the trail at Nikkaluokta, we took the bus to Kiruna and then the overnight train to Stockholm.

Expedition Diary

Day 1: Arrival in Sweden

On the first day Martin flew in from Tallinn and Owen from London, where we met in Arlanda Airport. In order to pick up the Garmin inReach Explorer, and pick up supplies for the expedition, we took the train to Uppsala, a large university town north of Stockholm. This involved taking out local currency and getting many snacks for the journey.

Originally we were meant to take the overnight train to Murjek in the far north, however due to engineering works this train was cancelled, and as we experienced a few times on this trip, the Swedish rail network can be quite unreliable. Instead, we took the 5.5 hour high speed train, which was delayed, to Umea, where we arrived at midnight and slept in a fantastic YMCA hostel for around 5 hours.

Day 2: Umeå to Kvikkjokk

On the next morning at 7am we took the early morning train to Boden, a large rail interchange, but this was also delayed. The conductor on this train was fantastic in helping everyone and declared - "I love my job" after we thanked her. Fortunately, this train turned into our next one, to Murjek, so we did not miss the connection. In total this was a 4 hour train journey.



Figure 3. The train station at Murjek and the bus we took to Kvikkjokk

Once in Murjek, we waited in the small waiting room with other hikers, (figure 3) and boarded the 4.5 hour bus to Kvikkjokk. There were only a total of 5 people on the bus, and here we chatted to a young Swedish woman, who planned to go into the remote Sarek wilderness for a few days alone. There are no huts, roads, or phone signal at all in Sarek and we were very impressed by people taking on this challenge alone. We gained valuable insight on where we might camp during the first few days, and potential weather conditions we might experience during early July. Speaking to those hiking in the area or who have before proved invaluable through the trip, as well as providing an opportunity to meet new people and learn about Sweden and many other countries people we met were from. As this part of Sweden is so remote, the bus (figure 3) also operates to take supplies and post to the remote communities it passes through.

Once we arrived in Kvikkjokk, a small hamlet of around 10 houses, we were immediately greeted by a swarm of mosquitos. Little did we know, this insect would prove to be perhaps one of the most challenging aspects of our trip. At Kvikkjokk there is a so called *Fjällstation*, a larger mountain station with electricity and hot water and a restaurant and small shop (figure 4). We pitched our tent near to the station with a few other hikers nearby. We sat inside the *fjällstation* until 21:00 and had a warm shower. This was a relief as despite wearing full-length clothing, hats and headnets, you would still be bitten by mosquitos within a few minutes.



Figure 4. Kvikkjokk *Fjällstation* (mountain station)

Day 3: Kvikkjokk to Parte

The first day of hiking was finally upon us, and in full mosquito gear, we set off on a 22km day (figure 5). Both our packs started off at 16kg, mainly due to all of the freeze-dried meals we were carrying for the trip, as well as an excessive amount of snacks. The terrain this day consisted of mainly spruce forest with a few birch trees, as well as wetlands, which had boardwalks over them. There were many mosquitos throughout, although by the first lake we encountered, there was a breeze which kept them away, along with a fantastic view of the snow capped mountains to the south. This was our first experience of the huge openness we would encounter for the first 5 days of walking - you could see trees until the horizon, interspersed with lakes of all sizes, smaller hills, and mountains.



Figure 5. Pictures from the start of the hike.

After a long day of walking, we arrived at the *Fjällstugan* - a small hut with no electricity, signal, or running water, of Parte. Here we spoke to the friendly hut warden who told us

we could camp there for a fee or walk a kilometre to camp near a stream. Whilst considering our options, we ate our first dinner of freeze-dried meals inside the hut, and then decided to walk on. Two other groups also had the same idea, and we found a suitable campsite about 200 metres away from the stream (figure 6). Here, the mosquitos were so bad you could not stand still at all, and we made a small fire, which acted as a small deterrent and helped pass the time. Washing out feet in the river proved problematic as mosquitos would instantly attack! Since we were in the Arctic Circle, sunlight lasted 24 hours at this time of year, but this did not prove to be an issue, since we were so tired and used eyemasks. We actually really enjoyed not having to use flashlights.



Figure 6. Our campsite for the night with the tent in the background.

Day 4: Parte to Aktse

We got up the next morning past 7am and got going around 9am We started hiking through pine and birch forests for a few hours, and were surprised by some ground-nesting birds, with some chicks (figure 7). The mother would continue along the trail for some time whilst her chicks disappeared in the undergrowth. At around midday, whilst on our first steep climb, we met a Dutch woman and her son, who declared to us that we must row across all the lakes as we were young and that rowing across 3 times was fine in the event there was only one boat on your side. We met this with some cynicism and continued to the top of the climb, where our first major views appeared, on a small plateau between the peaks of Huornnasj and Favnoajvve (figure 7).



Figure 7. The bird and view from the plateau

As far as the eye could see, it was a huge open expanse of forest, lakes, and mountains. The open nature of the area meant you could see many different weather fronts coming in and so with a large rain cloud approaching, we stopped to eat lunch. Walking in the rain was not particularly fun, especially once the views disappeared and we were back in the forest, and listening to music helped to keep spirits high. We arrived at the lake Lajtavrre in time for the 17:00 crossing over to the Aktse hut, where we chatted with a few people. We would become good friends with one of these people, Ken, who was a solo hiker from Antwerp, and encounter another group of two people regularly - who we referred to as “the Aussies” which was made of up one Australian and one Swede.

We then walked the kilometre up to the Aktse *Fjällstugan* (figure 8), and paid a small fee to camp and access the facilities. This included an inside area to sit away from the mosquitos, a small shop, and a fantastic wood-fired sauna. This was a huge boost after walking two days with heavy packs, and many mosquito bites. Here we chatted with other hikers who were hiking north to south, and got advice on good camping spots and the terrain to come over the next few days. The sauna allowed us to also wash with hot water, as you could heat water up in a container which was part of the stove. It must be noted that in Sweden, at least up North, all the saunas are taken without any clothing! However, there were separate times designated for men, women and mixed sauna.



Figure 8. View from Aktse *Fjällstugan* and the common room inside.

Day 5: Aktse to Avtsusjvagge

Poor weather was forecast for the morning, so we decided not to take the D-tour to Skerife, although we would later hear the views were clear from the top. We set off at around 10:30 and climbed up and over some mountains that were around 1000m high. Once descending the other side, we stopped for lunch, realising we had plenty of time to spare before the boat crossing at 17:00 from Svijnne. Once we arrived at the lake, we pitched the inner tent to stay out of the mosquitos and were reunited with Ken, and the two others who were on the boat the previous day (figure 9).



Figure 9. Waiting for the boat crossing and the views on our hike.

The only option at this crossing was to take a motor boat as the rowing boats were removed due to many people getting stuck in the shallows. Here Martin almost lost his mosquito headnet due to the wind, but by some luck, the boat driver grabbed it as it flew off. The boat dropped us off at a small Sami settlement, where we bought some traditional bread filled with Reindeer cheese. From here, we decided to walk on, joined by Ken before he sped ahead, as it was only 17:30, and there were many mosquitos and we were not yet tired.

We walked for about an hour and a half before we came across a suitable stream to collect water. Though we were well above the tree line, at around 770 metres, there was no wind at all, and we decided, in vain, to carry on walking to pitch where there were no mosquitos. The mosquitos never stopped and we walked until around 8:30, where we saw that Ken had pitched his tent as well, and at this point, we called it a day. This evening we experienced some fantastic views of the sunlight coming through the clouds at around midnight (figure 10).



Figure 10. Our campsite for the night with breathtaking sunrays.

Day 6: Avtsusjvagge to Saltoluokta

We woke to a pleasant breeze (and no mosquitos) and sun starting to hit the tent at around 8:00. With only 16 km left to the Fjällstation Saltoluokta, we did not walk fast and enjoyed the views. We came across one of the many emergency shelters on the route, a small wooden cabin with a wood burner, and a toilet in an outhouse. At around 13:00 a large shower came in, so using the tent footprint, pegs, guy ropes, and some walking poles, we made a shelter and ate lunch out of the rain (figure 11).



Figure 11. The views on our hike to Saltoluokta and our makeshift shelter from the rain.

We continued our descent into Saltoluokta with stunning views passing through a thin birch forest followed by a lush pine forest with beautiful undergrowth. Very suspiciously, there were no mosquitoes. Arriving at the *Fjällstation* (figure 12) we were shocked with how fantastic all the facilities were, and we paid 350 SEK to pitch the tent and for access

to all the buildings and sauna. We arrived just in time to buy dinner, a buffet including meatloaf from locally hunted moose, and we received a demonstration of a huge traditional Swedish mountain horn made from birch. We were once again reunited with our trail friends, Ken (figure 13), and “the Aussies”, and met people from Germany and Sweden as well. A rather funny juxtaposition was a local Swedish man from Gällivare who had come to stay for the weekend, sitting across from us in a suit and tie whilst we had yet to shower for two days!



Figure 12. Saltoluokta *Fjällstation*

We made the decision to rest a day at Saltoluokta as planned, as bad weather was forecast the next day, and we were grateful for the rest. It was only when we started emptying our bags to find out what food we had that we realised we had carried way too many snacks, especially as there were some small shops on route - perhaps increasing our pack weights by a kilo each. We then enjoyed the sauna all to ourselves after dinner, with the view of the lake and mountains behind it, whilst we enjoyed a well-earned cold beer and saw a reindeer running past (figure 13). Chatting with the other hikers in the kitchen was fantastic and we met two new people who we would end up seeing again. It was interesting to learn of a different route a group of 5 German guys were taking further west, off the Kungsleden, starting at Ritsem - perhaps inspiration for a future expedition.



Figure 13. Dinner at Saltoluokta with Ken and reindeer passing the sauna.

Day 7: Saltoluokta Rest Day

On our rest day, we took the chance to sleep in and bought some pasta and sauce from the shop, to have for lunch and dinner that day. We took full use of the sauna again, explored the lake shore, played Swedish trivial pursuit, and made some calls home. Here we decided to change our plans to arrive at the Kebnekaise hut in two days rather than three, so that we might be able to ascend the Kebnekaise itself, or another walk in the surrounding area. The highlight of this rest day was the evening light, where we spent a few hours just watching the sun move across the horizon on a small hill behind the huts. The photos below are some of the incredible views that we experienced (figure 14).



Figure 14. The spectacular views around midnight from a small hill near Saltoluokta fjällstation.

Day 8: Saltoluokta to Kaitumjaure

We were up early the next morning to catch the boat (figure 15) over the lake and get on the bus that would take us further into the mountains, to Vakkotavare. Due to our rest day, we were now walking a day behind our main trail friend, Ken, who was continuing all the way to Abisko. From here, we ascended onto a high mountain plateau at around 900m, where we walked the 16km to Teusjaure (figure 15). We arrived with half an hour to spare at the lake and paid for the short ride across, as there were too many people to fit in the rowing boats, and the weather was quite windy. Once across the other side, we spoke to the hut warden about suitable camping spots and bought some more chocolate

from the small hut. Here we learned that this lake is particularly famous for fishing, and the terrain began to feel slightly more alpine with steep-sided valleys (figure 16).



Figure 15. The boat we took across the lake from Saltoluokta and trail towards Teusjaure.



Figure 16. View from Teusjaure *fjällstuga*.

We climbed steeply onto another plateau, which sloped slowly down to Kaitumjaure, reaching the top at about 18:00. From here, we continued walking down the into the valley where we hoped to camp, speaking to a group of three hikers who we found had encountered our friend, Ken, earlier that day about 20 km ahead of us. Views of the mountains we would encounter in the following days emerged, with a huge cliff seen in the far distance (figure 17).



Figure 17. Views on the descent to Kaitumjaure and the waterfall we camped next to.

We were told of a good camping spot just before a bridge, which we were assured would have no mosquitos. On arriving at this spot about 1 km before Kaitumjaure, we were greeted with plenty of mosquitos, as there was no wind, and this was rather demoralising as 4 km back, we had passed plenty of spots without them (see appendix). This was one of the balances that was hard to strike between pushing on or stopping earlier at a camp spot, meaning more distance for the next day. There was a rather impressive waterfall near our campsite (figure 17).

Day 9: Kaitumjaure to Kebnekaise

The next morning we set off past 9am and walked through the forest of mosquitoes to the Kaitumajure *fjällstuga*. We arrived there at 11am and had a brief stop at the shop. From here, we entered the main valley towards Abisko and the scenery started to change drastically. We gradually ascended back above the treeline and thankfully left the mosquitoes behind. We had lunch at the crossroads, from where we would embark on our shortcut to Kebnekaise, shaving off a few kilometres from the distance along the main trail (figure 18).



Figure 18. Views hiking through the valley and our lunch at the crossroads.

The hike along the shortcut offered dramatic views of massive black mountains rising straight into the clouds (figure 19). We got the feeling of being on another planet or as if in a scene from Star Wars. The scale of the mountains was unfathomable. Weatherwise, we got both occasional downpours as well as the occasional ray of sun.



Figure 19. The massive sheer cliffs along the hike offered spectacular views.

Once passing the shortcut, we joined the most popular section of the Kungsleden trail from Abisko to Nikkaluokta. We expected many hikers, however the trail was still relatively empty. We passed along through the valley towards Kebensekaise *fjällstation* and suddenly came across a rainbow after passing a bend in the trail. The valley opened up and sun came through the clouds, offering beautiful views of the wide mountainous landscape ahead (figure 20).



Figure 20. The trail towards Kebnekaise *Fjällstation*.

There were however a lot of people at Kebnekaise *Fjällstation* (figure 20). Compared to the quaint and peaceful mountain stations at Kvikkjokk and Saltoluokta, Kebnekaise felt like a bustling town. There were a lot of hikers either returning from their ascent of the Kebnekaise mountain or those preparing to summit it the following morning. We decided to eat and go to the sauna before starting to look for a tenting pitch as the areas surrounding the station were teeming with campers. Unfortunately, Owen slipped and cut open the bottom of his toe whilst wearing flip-flops after the sauna, and hence we only put our tent up past midnight, in a beautiful secluded location above the station (figure 21) once the toe had been attended to and our plans for the next two days laid out.



Figure 21. Kebnekaise *Fjällstation* and our campsite.

Since we arrived at the Kebnekaise a day earlier than planned for the chance to summit it, we were keen on ascending the following day, a total of over 1800m of ascent. The weather seemed promising, however Owen's injured toe meant this would not be a wise

choice, along with us being quite tired from the 50 km in two days. Instead, based on our guidebook and asking the guides at the station, we decided to do a hike up to the nearby Tarfala glacier, which offered beautiful views of the Kebnekaise mountain. The hike would also allow Owen to test how comfortable he is walking out with his injured toe.

Day 10: Kebnekaise to Tarfala and towards Nikkaluokta

The following morning we set off towards Tarfala, leaving our tent behind and taking only our lunch with us on the short expedition. The trail followed a glacial river upstream with two large cable suspension bridges. Once we got to the glacier, we enjoyed lunch in the sun while taking in the beautiful view of the Kebnekaise mountain (figure 22) and Tarfala Glacier (see appendix).



Figure 22. The trail up to Tarfala and the view towards Kebnekaise.

We then returned to Kebnekaise mountain station, ate dinner, packed our tent, and headed on towards our final destination, Nikkaluokta. As the weather was supposed to be very poor for the next day, we wanted to cover as much distance as possible beforehand. Neither of us were tired from our detour to the Tarfala glacier and hence we walked another 7km before we set up camp and enjoyed a spectacular final “sunset” (figure 24).



Figure 23. Our final campsite and campfire.



Figure 24. The final “sunset” on our hike.

Day 11: The final stretch to Nikkaluokta

The rain started around 5am and would not end until the evening. Begrudgingly, we got up and packed our wet tent and equipment in the rain, keen to make it on the night train back to Stockholm and relax. The short hike to Nikkaluokta was mostly easy going, however, the constant rain didn't help lift our spirits and the hike seemed to take forever. Once we finally arrived at Nikkaluokta completely drenched (figure 25), we celebrated the end of our hike with a nice piece of cake and coffee at the welcome centre.



Figure 25. Owen and Martin have arrived at the end of their hike, at Nikkaluokta.

We got the last seats on the bus to Kiruna, where we would have to wait a few hours before the long-awaited night train journey to Stockholm. Unfortunately, to our dismay, while eating a proper meal at a restaurant in Kiruna, we received the dreaded info that our train would be replaced by a rail replacement bus from Kiruna to Boden - a journey of four and a half hours. The bus was however rather nice and comfortable and we enjoyed a few local beers on our journey towards Boden. The bus driver also helped keep spirits high with his very ironic humour. Our night train was waiting for us at Boden station (figure 26) and we finally got to our compartment. We relaxed, had a shower and then met with our Belgian friend Ken in the restaurant car.



Figure 26. The night train to Stockholm.

Whilst in the restaurant car we also chatted to a man whose father was indigenous Sami. He explained to us that despite sites such as Laponia, a protected UNESCO world heritage site, the Sami people's land continues to be taken away. This is largely through new mines being opened, which significantly disturb the reindeer, meaning large areas of land are no longer usable for herding. Additionally, he argued that the government was still seeking to erode the traditional way of life of the people, and that not enough has been done to apologise for previous persecution nor prevent it today. This is clearly still a major issue in Nordic countries, and it is clear from our discussions with Swede's this is not something they are proud of, and efforts are being made to have more dialogue to create solutions.

Conclusion

We would like to express our thanks to the Imperial Exploration Board for partially funding this trip, and in particular Lorraine and Philip for their advice, and supporting our application to other funds. Our thanks must also extend to Kiaran, who organised loaning the water filter and solar charger as well. Additionally, we would also like to thank the Old Centralians Trust for partially funding this expedition as well as the Lord Mayor's Anniversary Trust.

Reflection

This expedition was an incredible experience for both of us, and has taken us a huge step forward in our ability in thru-hiking. We gained significant experience in planning a hike in another country, from navigating the complicated Swedish rail system, through to renting a satellite messenger. A note for anyone else attempting to travel to the North of Sweden would be that the train system, in its current state, is not reliable at all and it is impossible to contact the operator VY. For this reason, being prepared to take a different route completely, or be significantly delayed is essential.

Throughout the hike we pushed ourselves mentally and physically, significantly beyond what we had done before. We were able to walk long distances, each day with heavy packs, sometimes in bad weather, as well as dealing with the extremely challenging amount of mosquitos (see appendix for picture of this). Additionally, we were able to deal with the isolation, 24 hours sunlight, and adapt our plans based on the weather.

We also experienced walking across many different types of terrain, sometimes on boulder fields for 5km, highlighting the importance of high ankle and robust walking boots on treks like this. Finally, we also learnt how to reduce our pack weight further for this trip, whilst not compromising on our preparedness. In the future we hope to return to the north of Sweden, and conduct another expedition in Sarek. This would be another step further, as there are little to no paths there, and no huts.

Contact Details

If you would like any more info about our trip if you are planning a similar one yourself then please email Owen at the email address below.

Expedition Leader: Owen Brook - omb20@ic.ac.uk

Appendix

Budget

The budget considered the most significant expenses of the trip - transport, accommodation, food, small equipment, guidebook and map, and travel insurance. We have included STF membership as this provides a 100 SEK discount on the service charge for camping near mountain cabins.

Item	Cost (GBP)	Cost (SEK)	Quantity	Total (GBP)
Flight London - Stockholm - London (including baggage)	170		1	170
Flight Tallinn - Stockholm - Tallinn (including baggage)	220		1	220
Train Stockholm - Murjek	60		2	120
Train Kiruna - Stockholm	60		2	120
Bus tickets	10		1	10
Water taxis total	65	850	2	130
STF membership	14.8	195	2	29.6
Camping service charge (with STF membership)	10.7	140	6	64.2
Saltoluokta mountain station (with STF membership)	15.2	200	2	30.4
Food	20 per day	262 per day	22	440
Equipment	40		1	40
Guidebook and maps	50		1	50
Travel Insurance	40		2	80
Planned Total				1505.2
Actual Total				1686.67

The total cost ended up being around £180 more than estimated, but this did not include a significant amount of new equipment that we purchased, which should last us many years. We did not stay any nights in a STF cabin, and paid less camping fees than anticipated, but we spent significantly more on trains as the overnight train simply did not exist on the days we could take it on the way up. We took a “high speed train” to Umea, and stayed for 6 hours in a hostel, which significantly increased our costs.

Equipment and provisions

Due to the long nature of this trip, we aimed to have a daily pack weight under 15kg, which is a common goal in the thru-hiking community. Reducing pack weight even by two kilos has a significant benefit in reducing fatigue, and chances of chafing and blistering. This will not be in compromise of the need to bring weather resistant and warm clothing.

All of the below equipment we are in possession of ourselves, unless otherwise stated, where we will request to borrow the board's equipment or purchase it for ourselves.

Clothing:

- 2x Baselayers - long sleeve and t-shirt
- 2x Midlayers - thin jumper and gilet/thicker jumper
- Long walking trousers - avoid ticks and mosquito bites - Take thicker trousers next time as mosquitos bite through.
- Waterproofs - Gortex waterproof coat and waterproof trousers
- Cold weather gear - thick gloves and hat
- Sunglasses and cap

Hiking and Camping Gear:

- Lightweight two person tent - in possession of MSR Freelite 2
- Plenty of pegs and spare guy ropes
- Waterproof hiking boots - worn in beforehand - A must given the terrain
- Lightweight walking rucksack around 50L
- 2x small hand warmers
- 2L water bladder - Did not take this as water bottles more convenient for filtering
- 500ml water bottle - Took 2L worth of bottles, but rarely carried that much as plentiful supply of streams
- Water purification tablets and filter - highly recommend Katadyn Hiker Pro
- Mosquito head net - Essential!
- Torch - Did not need this as 24hrs light.
- Electrolyte powders - to keep salt levels high
- Walking Poles - double a poles to make shelter out of ground sheet

Cooking equipment & Food:

- Jet Boil - super reliable and boils very fast so minimises gas use.
- Gas bottle - bough at Naturokompaniet
- 2x sporks
- 2x lightweight mugs for warm drinks
- Tactical Foodpack freeze dried meals - highly recommended!!

Sleeping equipment:

- Sleeping bag rated to at least 2 degrees - Possibly take a slightly warmer one.
- Sleeping bag liner - extra warmth and hygiene
- Lightweight sleeping mat
- Eye masks - 24 hours of sunlight in far North of trail

Navigation/electronic equipment:

- Compass
- Paper and digital maps of trail and waterproof cover
- Satellite Messenger.
- 2x Power Banks
- Solar charger - from Expedition Board but not used, as not enough sun.

Medical Trauma Treatment and Prevention

We will likely experience blistering due to the long distances walked, as well as ticks, mosquito bites and regular grazes and cuts. The list below details the medical equipment we will take to deal this minor trauma:

Basic medical equipment

Item	Amount	Usage
Paracetamol 500mg	25 tablets	Mild pain relief - eg headaches
Ibuprofen 200mg	25 tablets	Mild pain relief and anti-inflammatory for musculoskeletal injury
Loperamide 2mg	20 tablets	Anti-diarrhoeal medication
Dioralyte	6 sachets	Oral rehydration salts for dehydration
Antihistamine Cream	20g	Relief of itching bites
Antihistamine Tablets	25 tablets	Prevention of allergies and relief of bites
Tick remover	2	Check each day for ticks
Mosquito repellent	1	Apply in particularly bad areas
Blister plasters	20	Apply on "hot spots" to prevent bursting
Sunscreen SPF 50	250ml + resupply on route	Apply each day, even with cloud cover
Crepe and compression bandages	Various sizes	Support minor strains

General Plasters	Various sizes	General cuts and grazes
Gauze, 8ply, 5x5cm	10	Absorbing blood and cleaning wounds
Surgical tape, scissors	1	Cutting and fixing dressings
Tweezers and safety pins		
Alcohol wipes	10	Cleaning wounds
Burn gel sachet 4g	5	Relieves pain and prevents infection
Foil blanket	1	Heat retention in case of hypothermia
Whistle	1	Signal for help

In case of more severe trauma, eg. a broken ankle or very deep cut, the emergency services will have to be contacted using the international number 112. There is advance information on areas without phone signal and we will keep a record of where we last signal if an emergency occurs in an area lacking. Failing this we will use a satellite messenger device.

Once the operator has been contacted the following information will be shared:

- Name and nationality
- Nature of injury and how many people involved
- Location and terrain
- Phone number

This equipment and procedures will equip us to not only deal with any emergencies we have ourselves, but help anyone else on the trail as well. This is a key part of walking in an isolated area, and an important part of the attitude to take when thru-hiking.

Risk Assessment

Hazard	Cause	Control
Minor Trauma	Trip, Bites, Burns	Avoid walking over dangerous terrain and in poor weather conditions. Treat with appropriate medical equipment and request help if needed. Do not wait.
Major Trauma	Severe accident	Constantly keep aware of location, and contact emergency services. Insurance covers evacuation if necessary.

Hypothermia	Prolonged exposure to cold and wet conditions	Wear suitable layers, do not delay use of waterproofs. Seek shelter and adapt plans if conditions change. Call for help immediately
Sunburn	Prolonged exposure to high UV levels	Apply SPF 50 sunscreen, wear long sleeved clothes and hats.
Dehydration	Not drinking enough water	Drink at regular intervals, and refill throughout the day when crossing streams.
Heat Exhaustion	Over exertion in high heat	Take regular breaks, and do not walk if dangerously hot.

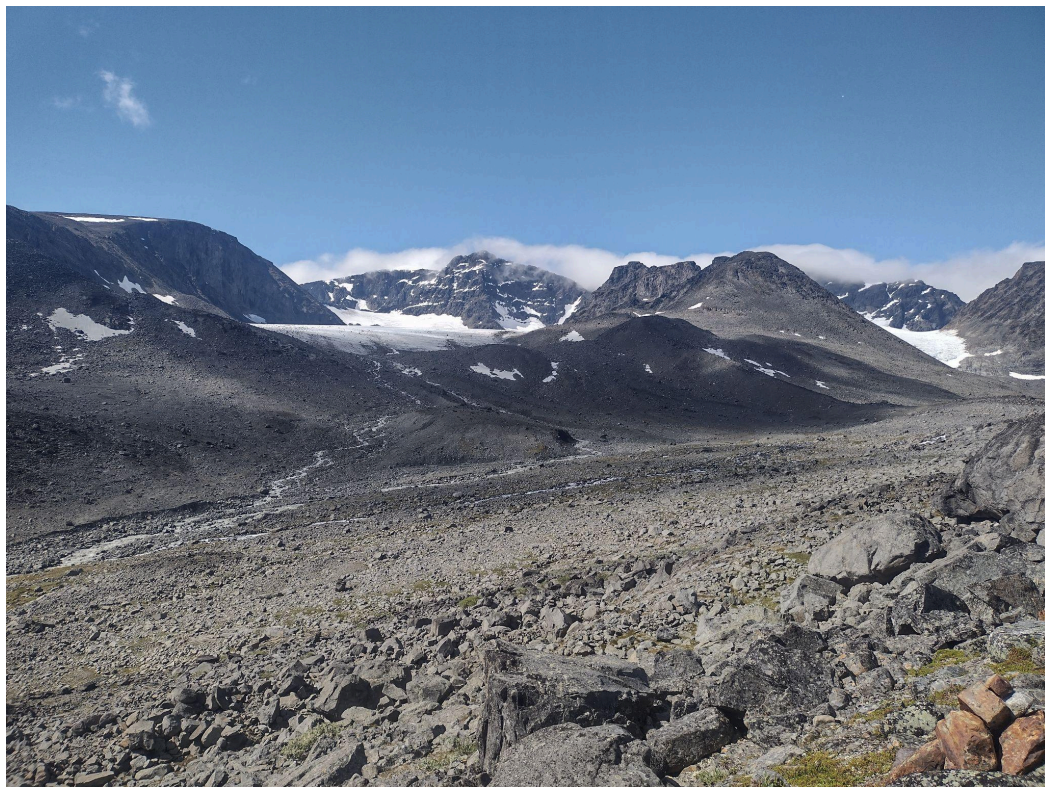
Extra Photos



Example of mosquitos in the morning



Camp near Kaitumjaure



Extra view of Tarfala Glacier