

details of techniques involved in the experiments. The publication is well illustrated with abundant maps, plates, and diagrams.

R. K. Headland
Scott Polar Research Institute
Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER

PLANNING POLAR EXPEDITIONS

POLAR EXPEDITIONS. Renner, G. (editor). 1984. London, Expedition Advisory Centre. 183 p, illustrated, softback. ISBN 0.907649.16.5. £5.00.

EXPEDITION PLANNERS' HANDBOOK AND DIRECTORY 1983/4. Winsler, S. and Winsler, N. 1984. London, Expedition Advisory Centre. 314 p, illustrated, softback. ISBN 0.907649.10.6. £6.00.

Polar Expeditions was prepared for an Expedition Advisory Centre (EAC) seminar held in March 1984 and run by the editor of the handbook, Geoff Renner. The contributors form an experienced group of polar travellers. The editor does not envisage the handbook as the final word on high latitude travel but rather as the starting block for the embryonic polar expedition. The advice offered by the experts can be broadly divided into two classes; surviving and achieving expedition objectives. In the former category problems of route-finding by map and satellite photographs, radio communications, medicine and dentistry, windchill, food and eating, safety and power supplies are tackled in the context of cold climes. It was particularly pleasing to see a section on the removal of glacial flour from drinking water, a problem that might not even be imagined by the newcomer to glacial terrains. Experience is recounted in manhaul sledging, surveying, photography and biological, glaciological and meteorological projects, all likely expedition objectives. There is a section on leading young people in the Arctic, complemented by the experiences of one of these young people. The handbook concludes with an example of the planning schedule of a model expedition (and as a member of that expedition I can guarantee its good organisation) and some information on the two major British institutions whence further advice on polar matters can be sought.

All the articles are light-heartedly written and humourously illustrated, turning the potentially gruelling task of reading a handbook into an engrossing occupation. My congratulations to the editor and contributors for achieving this. I do feel, however, that there is a slight imbalance in the space allocated to each subject. Safety, and particularly advice on river and meltstream crossing, is neglected, while photography is rather over-emphasised. *Polar Expeditions* is certainly worth £5.00 of precious expedition funds. However, it does not contain general information on expedition tactics such as how to carry out the initial research, fund raising, the procurement of equipment, packing and freighting, insurance etc and directories of addresses associated with each of these topics. A further outlay of £6.00 is required to gain this information from *Expedition Planners Handbook and Directory 1983/4*, also published by the EAC. This is a mine of information, to which *Polar Expeditions* should really be regarded as a supplement for potential polar travellers. I was delighted to note that production costs on both have been kept down to allow annually updating, an essential feature of any good handbook.

Pat Langhorne
Department of Engineering
University of Cambridge