

Dip Flat – Mountain Safety Council (MSC) Bush 1

11th - 20th January 2012

Wednesday 11th January 2012 saw the arrival of 4 NZCF officers at Dip Flat. Set apart from the officers staffing the Cadet Bushcraft course, these 4 officers were leaving behind the small comforts of being staff members. Attending as students on the Mountain Safety Council Bush 1 were NZCF officers; MAJ Rodgers, Ashburton Cadet Unit, FLTLT Lamb-Marrow, 38 Wigram SQN, FGOFF Dixon, 28 Gore SQN and LT Murcott, Western Bay of Plenty Cadet Unit. The students were launched into 3 days of instruction from SQNLDR Dunn, 23 Nelson SQN, followed by 6 days in the field with assessor FLTLT MacKinnon, 33 Westport SQN.

The instructional days helped the students gain new knowledge in off-track navigation and compass work. The students enjoyed the challenge of extending their river safety skills to include pack floats and how to manage entrapments. Dampened by appalling weather during these teaching sessions the students benefited from the extra challenge. FLTLT Lamb-Marrow reported that the rain required them to maintain a high level of preparedness particularly with clothing and equipment.

When the four students were asked about their expectations and hopes for the field all replied that they hoped to pass the terminal objectives of the course, with friendships building and knowledge extending in the process. After 3 days bonding, tackling scenarios, enjoying multiple mornings of pancakes for breakfast, and at times being swamped by the challenge of tramping off-track, the students and their assessor were sighted taking a quick water taxi across Lake Rotoiti to join the Officer Outdoor Leader course. For the remainder of their course the students were shadowing the assessors of the OODL, this will benefit the students if they wish to staff the OODL course with their new Bush 1 qualification.

The students had a wonderful 10 days at Dip Flat covering a wide area of the surrounding terrain. They are now looking forward to a hot shower, a good feed, and a sleep with a roof over their heads. The main objective of the course was achieved by all students. The officers are now qualified to take people, including NZCF cadets, off marked tracks with no maps, providing they remain below the snowline. The newly qualified officers will be of unprecedented benefit to their units and NZCF.

NZCF Under Officer Surin McGrory
38 Wigram SQN ATC



Students setting off for 6 days in the field. From left to right; FLTLT MacKinnon, FGOFF Dixon, MAJ Rodgers, LT Murcott, and FLTLT Lamb-Marrow.



The students help MAJ Rodgers out of a swamp.



The students camp close together after another cold night.



The relief at the realization that setting up camp is only minutes away.