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ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION

Training in the heat for the icy wastes

The Star's Pretoria Bureau

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For these men, the next 20 days will be a nightmare of exertion and hard labour.

Known as SANAE 7, they are all members of South Africa's seventh expedition to Antarctica, due to leave on board the R.S.A. on December 30.

Till then, they will undergo intensive training in fire-fighting, cooking and knot-tying when the P.T. course ends.

They have already been trained in dog-handling.

Under the leadership of Mr. Sean Kavanagh, the team will stay in the frozen wastes for 13 months where they will conduct scientific experiments.

Meanwhile there is nothing ahead but hard work.

Every day their programme comprises road running, supplemented by hours of physical exercises specially selected to toughen them up.

They are taught to pick up 44-gallon drums in certain ways so as to minimize the amount of effort spent on tasks, and to lift weights similar to those to be used on the trip.

The main object of the training period is to build up reserves of endurance and strength.

They will have to be fit indeed. Although tractors are often used, dog teams are an important means of transport and

the loading and unloading of these teams rests on the shoulders of the members.

In Antarctica, the men will camp 15ft. below the ground. Access is gained through vertical shafts leading to the surface.

All huts are constructed of laminated wood beams and plywood panels.

DIGGING UP

In the first week at camp, the members will have to perform a tremendous amount of physical labour, digging up drums of diesel fuel and equipment which has been covered by snow.

All the equipment has to be transported from the ship to the base by sledges.

While in Antarctica, the group will co-operate with scientists from other nations and exchange data and ideas.