



Sitting down during a break.

Date: March 23, 2009

Location: N84° 32.676' W074 40.639'

Time Traveled: 9 hours

Distance Traveled: 6.1 nautical miles

AM Temperature: -22°F

PM Temperature: -22°F

10-13 knot SW wind, overcast

328 nautical miles to the North Pole

By: John Huston

{play}images/stories/32309hustond22.mp3{/play}

Audio Transcript:

"So Tyler and I, we ski for 90 minutes to 2 hours at a stretch and then we pull up and take a break and I will describe what those breaks are like in this dispatch. It's not like a coffee break or anything; it's more, I'd say, cold-food-on-ice type break. And in about 10 minutes, we ski to a stop, take off our skis real quick, it's quite easy to do that, reach into our Bergans outerwear and pull out a truffle bar, which is a fudge bar, which is our favorite thing to eat on break. And we also then go into our sleds, unzip them, and pull out our lunch bag. Tyler calls his his "nasty sack" because he has all his lunch items open in one bag. And I have a bigger bag that I have individual stuff sacks of my food in. And we then sit on our sleds or just stand there or if it's windy and we've found a good spot that we crouch behind an ice hummock or big piece of ice to get out of the wind.



Hydration is vital to keeping warm.

Then we proceed to eat as quickly as possible so our hands don't get cold and the little perspiration that we have generated over the last 90 minutes doesn't start to freeze. And this is a challenge. And we eat truffles and we also eat macadamia nuts, Brazil nuts, and pecans, a mix that's salted that we really like. We really like the macadamia nuts. Those are the best. And then, of course, we also eat some butter and bacon. The butter in my mouth leaves a nice salty film of fat for the next 20 minutes or so and it feels like I have a small IV in the back of my throat of butter for the next half an hour or so and I really enjoy that feeling after a break.

And we also, during a break, most importantly hydrate and drink half a bottle of water, which is a liter in size, a half a liter to a liter of water every break. That keeps our circulation going and keeps us mentally into it and our muscles performing well. So by that time it's about 10 minutes and we can be very quick at this. Our fingers are getting cold and we proceed to the sleds, zip up our Bergans clothing, check our Victorinox watches to make sure we know when to take the next break, and we also often take a peak at the DeLorme GPS so that we know that our bearing is on track because it's quite easy to get thrown off when we're navigating around and over all these ice ridges.

And then ensues a whole bunch of arm flapping, which looks quite funny, but it's really vigorous attempts to push blood into our hands. And then we proceed to ski off, which is really the only way to get warm. It's very easy to stay motivated to ski when your hands are cold and your body is cooling down quickly and there is no tent to go into, let alone a house or anything. So that is the short synopsis of our breaks. So when you're at your coffee break at work or taking a break from classes at school, you can think of us behind some ice hummock, cramming nuts down our throat, drinking water, and flapping our hands."

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