



John takes a bearing to the north.

Date: March 31, 2009

Location: N85° 31.933' W074 46.189'

Time Traveled: 10 hours

Distance Traveled: 5.0 nautical miles

AM Temperature: -32°F

PM Temperature: -30°F

clear skies, gusting, puffing S/SW winds, 8-10 knots

By: John Huston

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Audio Transcript:

"Today the Arctic Ocean kicked our butts a little bit. We expect that to happen from time to time but it doesn't always feel good. For me, sometimes I have trouble keeping my hands warm. And also I just have trouble generating enough heat to feel warm while traveling, especially

while we're stopping and starting all the time.

When we're traveling continuously on a nice flat terrain and I could ski for a few hours I can wear just a few layers of long underwear and my Bergans outerwear and stay warm, no problem at all. But when we're dealing with rubble or open water leads, as we were today, and we're stopping and starting and talking, that can get quite cold. So, I had a quite frigid morning and I put on my Bergans fleece and I was fine but it was very frustrating to have to work so hard to warm up my hands quite often today. And that's what being cold is all about really. It's a little pain, or a lot of pain, sometimes and a lot of hard work to warm back up and a lot of persistence. We don't get frostbite, we just work hard to stay warm but it can be frustrating sometimes.

So we traveled over some rubble, a few open fields, and then we came to a mist and, lo and behold, our first area of open water - open water lead running from the southeast to the northwest. It was about 60 meters across in spots to a little narrower in other places, so we traveled along it going northwest also to counteract the eastern drift that's been happening quite heavily now. And Tyler poked through. Both feet went in the water. He went over a little space of sketchy ice that he knew he shouldn't have but wanted to test. He hopped right back out of the water, no problem at all. He didn't even get his socks or his boots wet, just the outer part of his boot gaiters. But it was a good wake up call that we're now having a change in the expedition in that we are dealing with open water more.

So traveling along that lead took some time and crossing it took some time. And we also saw three seals pop their head up out of that lead, right through the ice. That showed how thin the ice was in the middle of the lead. It was too wide to swim across and too wide to find a place to cross. So we eventually found a place with some rubble and got over there no problem. And we are camped now by another lead that we hope will freeze overnight and it looks like it should do that but it also depends on the wind and how much the ice floes around us are moving, which they are quite a bit. We're moving east at 0.2 nautical miles per hour right now.

Okay, well thanks for listening. We're tired. We're ready for bed and we're ready for another day tomorrow. So good night and thanks for listening."

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