



John standing in front of an open water lead on Day 30.

Date: April 6, 2009

Location: N86° 30.177' W074 57.139'

Time Traveled: 10 hours

Distance Traveled: 9.7 nautical miles

AM Temperature: -22°F

PM Temperature: -20°F

sunny all day but hazy, light undefined cloud cover

210 nautical miles to North Pole

By: John Huston

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Audio Transcript:

"Today, by far, our highlight was crossing a mile wide lead. It was sunny. There was no wind, very little ocean current. The coolest thing that we felt, I mean there was a lot about it that we

really reveled in, was that we saw the ice moving. In other words, we saw our drift that we've been talking about happening. And what that was like was, and sounded like, was one huge sheet of ice slowly (just a thin sheet of ice) pushing underneath a thicker sheet of ice and like incremental grunts. So our drift has been a little bit to the northeast, mostly to the north recently, so we actually got to see our drift happening.

We felt quite safe on this huge lead. The ice was very good. We skied quickly across sections that are thinner and the ice actually has a rubbery feel which is quite fun as long we are moving but it's very safe. And we were on that rubbery ice for about 100 meters, 150 meters. And then we were on thicker ice for the rest of the crossing and quite safely we could stop and talk to each other and just appreciate the sunshine, the windless area and the stunning view of being on such a flat area and seeing all around and the mist in the distance and the rubble in the distance.

And the skiing was quite good. The ice was very good. We felt very fortunate to encounter such a lead on such a perfect day. To encounter this lead on a day where there was a lot of action due to high winds or increased tidal effect, we might still be at our camp waiting for it to freeze over. So we're quite happy to have crossed that. It was the high point of the day.

It slowed us down a little bit because we knew we needed to test the ice, but we feel that we have added to our experience level on such leads and that we are going to encounter more like this and we hope that we are as lucky as we were this time, as far as the conditions.

The moon is waxing, increasing, getting towards a full moon. The tidal action will increase and that affects the ice quite a bit. We're seeing more cracks as we progress north and we know that there is one more big lead right after the 87th degree of latitude, at least in the near future. So we'll see how that turns out. So you can look forward to that.

The leads are becoming more and more a part of our story and we're encountering them more and more everyday. I think we crossed 5 or 6 little, smaller leads and then that one big one. And we feel quite safe with our decision making around them.

Today was also a big day. We boosted from 6700 calories to 7500 calories per person per day. And that is in the form of an extra truffle for lunch, more cheese and milk powder at dinnertime and a little other additives. So those extra calories will have no problem getting into our stomachs and we are quite happy to have a little more energy going into us as we ski to the North Pole. All right, everybody. Thanks for listening and talk to you next time."

