



Tyler heads north over some open terrain.

Date: April 9, 2009

Location: N87° 03.306' W075 13.153'

Time Traveled: 10 hours

Distance Traveled: 9.7 nautical miles

AM Temperature: -22°F

PM Temperature: -18°F

clear, light N/NE breeze 4-8 knots

177 nautical miles to North Pole

By: Tyler Fish

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Audio Transcript:

"Well, our day was spent weaving our way among the rounded features of hills and hummocks of older sea ice and around and over some pressure ridges that were newer. We also crossed

6 frozen leads, gliding like silk over the frost flowers. It was a day that John and I like to call "heavy" but "steady" because we try to keep the pace so we're moving all the time. And during our day at some point in the mid-afternoon, we crossed 87°, our next degree of latitude, and so tonight we are celebrating and we are really happy that we made 87°.

So how far to the North Pole? It is 175 nautical miles or 210 regular miles that you are used to thinking about or 340 or so kilometers. That's to the North Pole in a straight line. Well how far is that? Well, I have 3 examples for you.

If you were to get on the freeway and drive 70 miles an hour, which the speed limit on some freeways is, if you drove for 3 hours you would be at the North Pole. That's if you're driving a car.

If you're biking on a road bike, you could do a century ride. A century ride is where you do 100 miles in a day. Means you woke up in the morning, did 100 miles and camped somewhere, got up the next morning, biked back home, you'd be at the North Pole. That's one way to get to the North Pole.

Then to stay with the cross-country skiing, there's things called ski marathons and John and I have a favorite. It's called the American Birkebeiner. It's named after a race called the Norwegian Birkebeiner, or the Birkie. The American Birkebeiner's largest such event in North America is very much looked forward to by all sorts of people. It's a 50-kilometer race (about 30 miles). Well if you did 7 Birkies you would be at the North Pole. That's one a day for a week. Now if your average time was about 3 hours and 30 minutes, which is a very respectable Birkie, if you did 7 of those, that would be about 24 hours. So you can think that, from a certain perspective, we have 24 hours left of skiing. Of course this would be if you had enough light all the time, you had groomed trails, easy food and water and if you were a little bit crazy.

Well John and I are, perhaps, a little bit crazy and we do have the light of the sun 24 hours, but we also have obstacles: rubble, open water, drifting ice - that kind of thing. So, it's not quite the same. It's not going to happen. And at -20° Fahrenheit no ski race happens. But we do keep skiing to the North Pole. So, you can choose however you want to relate the distance that we have left to go. But, that's how close we are and how very far away."