



John maneuvers the sleds after bridging a small lead.

Date: April 14, 2009

Location: N87° 50.579' W070 42.310'

Time Traveled: 11.5 hours

Distance Traveled: 11.0 nautical miles

Drifted 2-3 nautical miles E/SE

AM Temperature: -16°F

PM Temperature: -10°F

W wind, W/SW wind, 10-15 knots

Clear, high thin clouds, excellent skiing

130 nautical miles to North Pole

*John and Tyler are committed to raising funds and awareness for [CaringBridge](#) .*

By:John Huston

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Audio Transcript:

"We had a big day today. We are happy with it. We are very happy with our distance and we had a few events. So, here's a quick rundown. Last night, Tyler and I camped on the shores of a lead that was open, hoping that it would freeze overnight and it did not. It got bigger, and was more open when we woke up. So, we skied northwest along it, hoping to find a place to swim across, ski across, or a narrows. And luckily we found a narrows. It wasn't totally frozen, so we put on our dry suits, which cover everything completely, boots and Bergans outerwear, and they're quite warm. And we swam through some kind of slurpy, slush-like ice with some chunks in it and pulled our sleds, which float nicely like tops and corks right on top of the slush so nothing inside gets wet, right across. And that was great to have a first successful swim and to get in the water and feel the warmth of the water compared to the air. So, that's two events right there: our first successful swim and also crossing a lead which was stalling our progress.

At that junction, where the lead narrowed where we swam across, we encountered two people, if you can believe it. A guided expedition that had put in at 85-degrees north and was skiing a very similar route to the North Pole. And we shook their hands, Keith and Sebastian, and wished them good luck, and talked for a few minutes. It was good fun and it was really nice to share in someone else's experience and to know that they are having similar successes and struggles as we are out on the ice. So, we are ahead of them now and we will most likely stay ahead of them due to different travel schedules. So, good luck, Keith and Sebastian. It was great to run into you.

Another event, which are ongoing events, it has been windy out of the west for the past 3 or 4 days. And we like the wind at these kind of warmer temperatures, right now it is -10 Fahrenheit with a lot of sun, because it makes it easy for us not to sweat and maintain a nice even temperature all day. And more importantly that wind is packing our snow surface just beautifully. And we've experienced the very best skiing conditions of the expedition yesterday afternoon and almost all day today. And the terrain, thankfully, is nice and flat with some rubble inclusions and little ridges here and there, but nothing compared to the beginning and this is the stuff that we dreamed of. So, we love that hard-packed snow.

However, that wind is also pushing us east-southeast at a very, I guess, pretty quick drift and we don't like either one of those directions, south or east. Historically the more east the

expedition is the more southerly drift it has to deal with. And south of course is the opposite direction of the North Pole. In our case, we are drifting today .3 nautical miles per hour east-southeast. Last night, we drifted almost 1 mile south. So, in 24 hours or so, we lose 2 miles of northern travel. And that definitely impacts us negatively. And we are now over at the 70-degree longitude which can be the danger zone as far as too much southerly drift. We're not experiencing that yet, but it makes us a little nervous about what we might have in the future and these winds are supposed to keep up for the next few days.

So, it should be very interesting. The finish of the race is on. We are upping our travel hours to 13 tomorrow cutting our sleep a little bit, but we feel excellent. Our legs feel good, our pulks are getting lighter, and the skiing conditions are fantastic, and we feel very good about being on schedule. So, hopefully, we will get to the North Pole in 10 days or so. So, stay tuned. The race is starting. Pedal to the metal. Thanks for listening."

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