



Dreams Come True, Part I

Date: May 1st, 2009

Location: Oslo, Norway

John and Tyler are committed to raising funds and awareness for [CaringBridge](http://CaringBridge.org) .

By: John Huston

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Audio Transcript:

Hi, everybody. This is John calling in from Oslo, Norway on May 1st, 2009. Well it has been what Tyler and I can safely say it's been one of the most intense weeks of our lives. Last Saturday, although the days are quite blurry, we arrived at our destination of the expedition the North Pole at 5:30pm CST, almost exactly 10 hours before our April 26th deadline of being picked up at the North Pole. The last 66 hours, or roughly 4 days of the expedition, Tyler and I slept only 3 hours. What had happened, which is still quite emotional to think about, is that around day April 21st, Day 51 or 52 of the expedition, Tyler and I realized that the southerly drift of 6 to 8 nautical miles per 24 hours was just too much for our current travel schedule and that we needed to do something extreme if we were going to succeed in our mission of becoming the first Americans to ski unsupported to the North Pole.

So, after a whole lot of deliberation, quite a bit of stress and a little bit of fear of failure which always comes with expeditions and the kind of "do or die" moments on expeditions as that moment was, Tyler and I decided to travel for 12 hours, put up the tent and then sleep for 1 hour and have a meal and then about 4 hours later continue on our way toward the North Pole. So that's roughly 12 hours of travel and 3 or 4 hours in the tent with only 1 of those hours sleeping.

Our food resources, which we had rationed just perfectly, held out and we were actually able to up our calorie intake to 10,000 calories per 24 hours for those last few days. Our fuel situation, which we were worried about the entire expedition; fuel is our lifeblood, without fuel we can't cook and we can't turn snow into water. Our fuel turned out just perfect as well. We reached the North Pole with over 1 liter of fuel left, which is roughly 2 days of fuel.

Knowing that April 26th was the deadline because of the Russian company who operates an airstrip near the North Pole during the month of April, we were in communication with this logistics base the entire race for the last week. They knew our position and if we had failed to reach the Pole they would pick us up at the location we had reach by April 26, short of the North Pole.

Not sleeping was a huge challenge, especially for Tyler whose body kind of shuts down at 10:00pm to 2:00pm everyday. So, it's safe to say that both Tyler and I did some sleepwalking, although very safely. We were looking out for each other quite closely during those last intense 66 hours to make sure that we felt safe and that the decisions we were making were well thought out and not impacted by sleep deprivation.

We reach the North Pole exhausted and without enough energy for a jubilant celebration. In fact the moment didn't warrant such a celebration in that we were more so awestruck and humbled by the power of the Arctic Ocean and the immense energy output it took every single day, culminating in 66 hours with only 3 hours of sleep in order to race the drift to reach the North Pole. It's hard to describe all the emotions coming together at that point that are still affecting us. But I think humility and I think a bit optimism that we are able to reflect upon our strategy successfully. It's an extraordinarily proud moment. I feel fortunate to have succeeded when there's so many odds against us there at the end.

And we felt absolutely, I think, most jubilant for our supportive network: the wonderful folks at Victorinox Swiss Army, Bergans of Norway, Delorme, our friends and family, our office, the CaringBridge network, and just everybody out there rooting for us.

It's been half a week in Oslo now. There's more to come in the next blog about "Dreams Come True" in Oslo. It's kind of a full circle story of our original inspiration, which started our spark toward the North Pole - that's coming in the next blog. Tyler and I have started to fatten up a little bit. We are really reveling in the proximity to our friends and family who are here with us in Oslo. I'm wearing shorts and a t-shirt - that feels so nice to be warm without having to work. But my hands are bit tingly, and so are my quadriceps, or upper leg muscles, from a cold exposure and just over use in some ways.

It was fantastic to see Tyler reunited with his young family. And we are really looking forward to just returning to simple normal life back at home and telling our story to the world and whoever is listening. We feel a good deal of gratification in that the unsupported, unassisted ski expedition to the North Pole by Americans is such a positive story and has received quite a bit of interest from the media. So that's a pleasant surprise.

So stay tuned, thanks for following and Tyler and I will continue to blog about every other day and continue the Week in Reviews until further notice. So the story is over as far as the mission but the story continues as far as the transition and positive effects of our success. Thanks for listening and on behalf of Tyler, talk to you soon. Bye.