



John standing by the first open water lead on Day 30.

Date: April 4, 2009

Location: N86° 11.503' W074 50.097'

Time Traveled: 10 hours

Distance Traveled: 11.2 nautical miles

AM Temperature: -20°F, (in sun 8°F)

PM Temperature: -20°F

clear and sunny, winds calm, NE puff

By: John Huston

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Audio Transcript:

"April 4th, Day 34 of the expedition and this is the 'Week in Review'.

Welcome to the Victorinox North Pole '09 Ski Chalet where optimism abounds, complaining is not allowed, and good vibes spread throughout. In this tent, you will find two people sitting with the satisfied feeling of having just skied an honest ski day and had a nice, honest workday and that creates a very relaxed environment.

We're always thinking of the people at home and those who support us. So if you are one of those people, thanks for checking our website and thanks for your support. We really feel the positive vibe up here. It's a big, big boost to know that people at home are thinking of us.

This week was quite eventful and I will run through some of those events right now. Our setting was marked by 24-hour sunlight with increasing warmth throughout the week, culminating with some very warm skiing today and yesterday. And that sun felt most warm when it is high in the sky, and when it is baking down on our warmer tent and those warm midday ski marches and of course when there's no wind. We've been very lucky to have a nice high-pressure system with clear skies and very, very little wind. Earlier in the week there was a bit of wind and that was really quite chilly.

Perhaps the biggest event of this week was that we encountered our first open water lead on Day 34 (*note -John is referring to the lead they encountered on Day 30, not Day 34). It was running northwest and it was too wide to swim across and not frozen enough to ski across. So, we traveled along it for three miles and on it a little bit and Tyler tested some ice that he should not have tested and got his feet a little bit wet. Not his actual skin wet but just the outside of his boot gaiters. But it was a good moment and a little bit of learning that we have taken with us and that was a hard day. We were battered by wind all day and really kind of felt it. We got our butts kicked a little bit by the Arctic Ocean that day. But we were up early with the warmer weather the next day and skiing north and set some good mileage towards the North Pole. We take from our mistakes and we learn and we always move forward.

We are traveling 10 hours per day these days and that feels very comfortable. We will up those hours down the road but we are on schedule for our expedition and that feels really good. We crossed 86° yesterday evening and that was a big high and we really try to celebrate every possible moment on this expedition and to cross 86° on schedule and with a big travel day, 10.4 nautical miles in only 10½ hours of travel yesterday, that was a really, really good feeling. And we really try to take advantage of that by celebrating such moments and really kind of congratulating ourselves and telling ourselves that we feel that our execution of our plan is going right according to what we hoped it would. And that's a great feeling. We believe in ourselves, we believe in our ski methods and our travel methods. And we have a lot of confidence that we can make it to the North Pole on time. So, that sort of feeling is the high that we still have today, one day later.

We are in love with our food on the Arctic Ocean. Our favorite meal is literally what is in front of us. Perhaps we enjoy dinner the most because it comes at the end of the day and we're relaxed and we don't have to rush through anything. We like to eat it really hot so it warms up our hands; it warms up our bodies and leaves us with a little bit of a glow. It's pemmican stew for breakfast and dinner and we spice it differently each time and we're not tired of it at all, we just love it. And we have truffle fudge bars, Macadamia, Brazil and Pecan nuts for lunch along with butter and bacon and we love that as well. And feel like we could eat about ten times as much but we feel like we're getting enough calories and that we're satisfied with the amount of food that we bought.

This week, wrapping up, was a good week for wildlife. We saw two, possibly three, seals pokes their heads up on that first open water lead that we encountered on Day 30. That was quite fun to see them looking at us. And we saw two separate sets of fox tracks, Arctic Fox tracks. One was heading north that we kind of followed a little bit and one was heading to the southeast, I think.

Well thanks for all the support. We know that you're thinking about us. This week is dedicated to our friend, Thor Pakosz, who crashed his airplane a few weeks ago in Northern Minnesota. And he is in critical condition still in Duluth in the hospital. And our thoughts go to him every day and his friends and family, and his girlfriend. So, Thor we're thinking about you buddy and if you're a friend of ours you can go see how Thor is doing on his CaringBridge page and there are updates on his condition at that site. CaringBridge happens to be our charity partner and it provides free websites to people in health/illness crisis or treatment. So, it's good to know that the charity we're working with is supporting our friend in need.

Over and out and we will talk to you next week."
