

Aaron Lidsau daily blog

Source : his website

3 Nov, 12 - 18:13

Hello from Antarctica...

This is Aaron, day two, camp position, South 80 degrees 01 decimal 055 minutes position west 080 degrees 11 decimal 396 minutes. I crossed the very first crevasse field, did ok in it, it was a little bit scary, but I survived. Thank you very much everyone for sending your Solara messages. Jason asked, what it's like, absolutely incredible. The silence when the wind does stop, which it rarely does is absolute, no matter how much you yell and scream, there's nothing, really quite strange and eerie, I like it. I've traveled 4 nautical miles today, over 7 hours and going up hill, was like towing my tire loaded with rocks, incredibly difficult. I noticed that my skis are starting to slow down the sled, so that hard ice is grinding the wax off very quickly. I also had to take my skis off because I kept falling down, the snow is so hard, it was nearly impossible to pull safely, so I've been running it, it's not ideal but better than breaking a wrist. I'm now out of the lower part of Hercules inlet and making my way up to the Wilson Nunatak. Today the sun was out all day and it roasted me. I had to completely change my gear and everything. Can't believe even though the air is minus 10 degrees the sun will completely make you sweat. I did also drop something about a quarter mile back from my camp but I was able to find it, even in that hard snow so I'll definitely have to alter my design a bit. Having a good time here, the sun is out the air is still probably minus 10 minus 15 but in the sun it kinda cooks you so it's a little weird in the tent with that cold air cutting like ice and yet still sitting here slightly warm. Over and out.

4 Nov, 12 - 17:14

Hello from Antarctica...

Another very difficult day of travel, the surface was hard, so skiing was not possible causing me to walk. All the experts said I don't need yaktrax or crampons or anything well I should have gone with my gut and got some yaktrax that would fit my boots. I've been slipping and sliding all day so only making 3 and a half nautical miles, not exactly exciting distance. The wind is in my face all day which is to be expected for the next 2 and a half months or whatever it might be. It's about minus 20 degrees outside and 50 mile an hour hopefully less than that wind in the morning. Bright and sunny out, pretty nice, just could do without the wind. Camping up past Wilson Nunataks. Trying to take a dead south direction here toward Patriots Hills, hopefully shave off a little bit of distance, been trying to watch as much as I can for crevasses. Goggles and everything have been fogging up so it's been quite a challenge. I'll put a little hood on tomorrow and see how far I get with that. Everything is going okay, I'm feeling well, I slept through the night, but it was dead silent, it's incredible when there's no wind here the silence is absolute, it's quite fascinating, nothing at all, I love it. Off to sleep, hopefully get some more mileage tomorrow not as steep of mountain to climb.

5 Nov, 12 - 16:40

This is a dispatch from Antarctica. Day 4 of travel, camp position, South 80 degrees 07 decimal 268 minutes, position West 080 degrees 27 decimal 155 minutes. Distance traveled today 3.5 nautical miles time of travel 7 hours. Conditions, bad very bad. Maybe minus 20 degrees, cause everything is freezing solid so probably minus 30. My thermometer's pretty much bottomed out outside. It was a total whiteout for most of the day, so I was stumbling over everything, I couldn't see anything I fell off of a couple sastrugi's, nothing bad, definitely using my ski poles as walking sticks because I cannot see a thing. Head wind 20 to 30 miles per hour, definitely freezing, not pleasant but that's part of the experience here. Over all doing pretty well. Going to the bathroom, especially number 2 in the wind like that is what you would call an experience. Camp is okay trying, to get my efficiency up. I think I've shaved about an hour off of what I was originally doing. Wake up still pretty rough, but when I'm not getting good sleep that'll definitely do it to me. Other than that, thank you for all the messages. Dad I will definitely try the rope or twine on the boots. I gotta try something because I am dying trying to get going here. The snow was mostly hard all day then I ran into a couple soft patches where I thought, hey, this would be great to go skiing and then I hit hard patches so still no luck on skiing. Barometer is currently at 26.85 inches, definitely indicating weather here. I have increased altitude by just under 500 feet, I still got 2500 feet to go to the plateau, so a long long

way to get up there. Hopefully I'll begin to see Patriot Hills again tomorrow and I finally lost sight of Wilson Nunatak so I am making progress but it is crushingly slow. Other than that, having a good time.

6 Nov, 12 - 16:36

Hello from Antarctica. Day 5 of travel. Camp position, South 80 degrees 09 decimal 704 minutes position West 080 degrees 34 decimal 451 minutes. Distance traveled 3 nautical miles, time 5 hours. Elevation 3200 feet I gained about 500 to 600 feet today. The weather this morning was incredible, I've never experienced anything like that before, the moment I got out of my tent, I'd blink a couple times and my eyes would freeze shut so I had to hop back in and warm them back up, so I put my goggles or glasses on I'd go outside and it'd flash fog freeze in a couple of seconds too. Then I noticed I was getting shoved around by the wind, so I figured out the wind was probably 40 plus knots. I don't know, I've never experienced anything like that to have any comparison. So once the wind calmed down I was able to decamp at about 1 o'clock and start heading up hill. Still was quite cold, it felt as though someone put ice cubes in my right boot, that was not particularly fun and it took a long time to get really warm no matter what I did so I carried an extra jacket and hat on me so I felt a little bit better. After a couple hours the weather calmed down there's only a light breeze, more enjoyable. Couldn't believe the difference from this morning and last night to today it's sunny and quite cold maybe minus 20 degrees based on the thermometer but that wind makes all the difference. Heading on now I can see the mountains that I'm headed North towards or crud not North, I'm headed towards South. I'm not sure if I can see the 3 sails yet but I believe I can see my target so, right now I'm headed dead South and on track. Hopefully I'll start picking up more miles as I start to level out and get on to the plateau there. I've been waxing my skis everyday because the snow is so coarse it tears the wax off of them, so hopefully the 2 tins of paste wax I have will last me 90 days, that should be ok. The type of gear that I've been using, everything seems to be working well. Thank goodness I have a 40 degrees below sleeping bag plus a hotsac from Western Mountaineering. I don't think I'd make it without that. The Cold Avenger mask probably saved my nose and my lips. I've got a little bit of a sunburn just from about 10 minutes in the sun. You spend so much as a minute without your glasses looking at the snow you start to get a headache, couple minutes and get snow blindness, it's fast here. The sunburn happened in maybe 7-10 minutes in the sun, it's a lite burn but definitely happened. Fingers are doing ok, keeping them as crack free as I can. Heading off to bed here, it's about 9:30. Hoping the barometer will stay stable and I can have some good days here.

7 Nov, 12 - 16:32

Reporting in on day 6. Camp position South 80 degrees 12 decimal 687 minutes position West 080 degrees 41 decimal 715 minutes. Distance traveled 3 nautical miles, time, 8 hours. Today was rather crushing, the head wind was 40 knots in the morning, it was ripping off the top surface of the snow and snow blasting me. After about 2 o'clock the wind dropped down to 20 knots, so far more reasonable, relatively. Now I know what it's like to drag 300 plus pounds while driving along Palm Avenue, not exactly pleasant. Hopefully tomorrow will be a little bit better, the sastrugi's, not too bad here but I did attempt to try skiing for about 15 minutes and realized that was a total fail because the surface is hard and quite undulating so it actually took more energy and power to use ski's than it did walking, I can tell that because I actually got hotter skiing, it was nice to be warm but I knew that it was just wasting energy. It's been cold most of the day, minus 15 maybe minus 20 degrees, difficult to tell with that wind chill makes it minus 40 or so, so a lot of times my fingers and toes will go numb, I'll have to of slap around or kick my feet, one time my pinky, man I thought that thing froze off almost immediately so I had to stop slap it around and give it some nursing because man I felt like I smashed it with a hammer. Moving right along, wish I was going faster, I definitely had some fantasies about how quickly I was gonna move here but based on the tracking position, I'm still on track, hopefully. Talk about mileage to make up this is unbelievable. But I actually got to see the 3 sails for the first time ever. If you have a chance, check out a map of Antarctica near Hercules Inlet, near Patriot Hills and you'll actually see 3 sails there. Quite beautiful, it's off in the distance there, maybe 14 miles. Certainly wish it was closer, I'll be going up the hill in 2 days, it will definitely kick my butt, but hopefully that should put me on the Antarctic plateau and smooth out the surface and make things faster. Sure felt like there was something wrong with my sleds, but I shoved them around, no problem. More than once on the surface of the snow the wind actually pushed them back slightly, so I know that the wax job I'm doing on them every night is paying off, but boy it sure doesn't feel like it. Signing off.

8 Nov, 12 - 16:32

Antarctica update, day 7, camp position South 80 degrees 14 decimal 106 minutes position West 080 degrees 45 decimal 107 minutes. Travel time 4 hours, distance 2 nautical miles. That was a doozying of 2 nautical miles I have ever traveled, other than for half an hour when things got clear, it was complete white out. In the morning was a white out and a ground blizzard, that got me a little scared so I didn't get started until 2 o'clock, I didn't want to get wiped out and I have to get used traveling those ground blizzards if I ever wanna make it though. I got to actually see sun dogs, and a sun, it wasn't a sun pillar it was more like a sun pyramid, "that" I came a long way to see, and I was very happy to see it, even though it was only around for 15 minutes and then the clouds came back in. The rest was like walking in a complete white room with white walls and a white ceiling, never have experienced anything like it. Much of the time I had to look at what I thought was the ground and poke at it with my ski poles while I was walking. More than once my ski pole went into the air as I was standing on a serack or 2 above of just space. It wasn't a crevasse but boy oh boy I stumbled and fell several times. I was amazed my sleds didn't eat it more. I notice weight differential in my two sleds is really dragging me down so I gotta transfer a bunch of kilos of butter from one to the other, I think that's causing me some problems, but not being able to see is also a problem. I was able to see the mountains to the South for about a half an hour so that made navigation a little easier. I was told that tomorrow morning is suppose to be 20 knot winds breaking down to 10 knot winds with some clearing, I hope so because I'm headed for a crevasse field and I really need to see what I'm doing before I head over the pass and on to the plateau. These first 7 days and 20 miles have been the toughest of my life hands down. I can't believe I've only gone this far. Hopefully it'll get better. Having a good time anyway, I mean it's definitely an experience to travel in a Lucas film, it was like being blind and only being able to see light and dark, it was the weirdest thing ever. Other than that, having a good time and getting to bed a little bit earlier here, wiped out, that's for sure, I can't believe how much energy it takes. Also, it's very strange, I found this little patch of sand and grit in the middle of nowhere and it was so remarkable because it stood out against that absolute white. I layed down and stared at it for a good minute or two, it was more and excuse to get out of the wind behind one my polks than anything else, but it was kinda interesting anyway. Out!

9 Nov, 12 - 15:58

Antarctica, day 8, position South 80 degrees 16 decimal 918 minutes, position West 080 degrees 52 decimal 000 minute. Distance traveled today 3 nautical miles over 7 hours. I talk to the Dr. Union Glacier and the cough that I've had is getting worse so I started a course of antibiotics. Had a cold when I showed up at Punta Arenas and knocked that off but the cough started 1 day before I left, of course, so that means I showed up, pretty much, sick to Antarctica, not exactly the ideal circumstance. Every so often today I had a power up where I was like, hey yea I feel good, then I start going and all of a sudden I just get zonked and no energy so, at this rate I'll never make it to the Pole and back so the Doc suggested taking a full rest day tomorrow. Not exactly what I want to do but, trying to get over this thing over a course of a couple weeks is definitely not an option, there's no way I'm going to make it in that sort of rate so. I started taking drugs, gonna clock out, take a full day off tomorrow as much as I don't want to. Being sick for a couple weeks or having this turn into pneumonia is worse so. Other than that a real beautiful day here. A light breeze and the white out has burned off into decent day light so. I'll be clocking out and checking in tomorrow.

10 Nov, 12 - 15:29

Dispatch from Antarctica. Saturday, November 10th, 2012, day 9. I did not go anywhere today, I followed the doctor's orders, which is very rare me but, being the consequence of not making it or worse is worth following those orders, I'd say it was well worth the time. Couldn't believe how wiped out I was. I ate something in the morning rolled over and fell right back to sleep for a few hours, woke up drank, ate and fell back asleep for another 4 hours so. I was definitely in the throws going down for the absolute count, not good. But, things are looking better today, I'm coughing far less, gonna take another couple of pills here and get back in business, I'm not going to try and be too ambitious tomorrow but, of course only doing 3 miles isn't exactly ambitious either, ha ha ha, that was a joke. Anyway, feeling better, preparing for rolling out tomorrow and headed for Red Pass Hills and Independence hill. I'm gonna try the pass in between them, that was the advice from Antarctic Logistics. It certainly looks like a huge, huge hill, but hopefully it will put me ahead here. Out!

11 Nov, 12 - 16:15

Hello from Antarctica it's day 10.

Position South 80 degrees 19 decimal 167 minutes, position West 080 degrees 58 decimal 284 minutes. Distance traveled today 2.5 nautical miles, and time 4 hours. I was definitely feeling better this morning so I pushed it fired it up and probably did my 2 miles in the morning there in about 2 hours, which I achieved my 1 mile per hour target then I had to konk out because I ran out of energy. So I set up my tent, konked out for about 3 hours, woke up, about 3, went for another 2 hours and that's probably where I got my other half mile. Terribly hungry and just totally wiped out so not over this bug yet but I'm fighting to get there just trying to be gentle on my body while it does its thing. The wind today was incredible, between 30 and 50 knots. I've never experienced that out in the wild. It was very interesting because about 1000 feet out it look like perfectly flat ground so I thought hey perfect I'll be able to pick up speed, the problem is that it never got any closer. The wind was so strong it picked the snow from the ground and created what looked like a perfectly flat surface, totally untrue. So not exactly amazing progress but still feeling good about it. (coughing) As you can tell not perfectly healthy yet. I'm about 3.5 miles from the wall at Patriot Hills and another 2 and a half 3 miles from the ones at Red Pass. I was warned to watch for crevasses at the top of both of those, so I do have to be careful. I was told that the winds are going to be decreasing tomorrow but snow is gonna be moving in so. I'm not sure which is worse, I guess snow is not as bad even though it creates white out conditions, but 50 knot winds are definitely not pleasant. It made putting a tent epic. I built the Great Wall of China around this thing, about half as high as the tent and I'm still getting burried, the moment I opened the door spindrift fills the tent so. It is a production to survive this. I can see why people quit, my gosh. Weather, punishment, slow progress, discouragement, definitely all adds up to a forget it I'm out thing. But, no way, I'm here for 90 days, until food, supplies, or time runs out. One thing I should've brought were cold medicine and antihistamine. I'll have to remember that for next time. Having a good time, otherwise. Definitely not feeling as bad as I did days previous. Hoping to wake up and feel even better plus some more miles out of this thing, looking forward to it.

12 Nov, 12 - 15:26

Hello from Antarctica day 11. First Antarctic blizzard experience I moved no where, same camp position. At First I felt like a slug laying around all day, I felt like loser figuring out that ahh geez everybody else must go out when it's like this and I'm just sacking out. After I realized my tent was being buried because I couldn't fit in my sleeping bag completely I had to go out about half an hour ago and undig the tent and after I got back in I hacked and coughed a good 5 minutes because the snow is so aerosolized that you keep breathing it in even with a face mask so. Definitely pretty rough conditions it's entertaining, I mean it's so much blowing snow I can occasionally barely see my sleds and only 2 feet away from the tent. Unfortunately the weather forecast says the same for tomorrow so I'm gonna have to get a little cozy here and tidy things, try and get some of this dusty snow out, get ready to clean camp. I always think that other people are out tracking and actually moving forward in these conditions I don't know. I hope not cause I would feel like a real loser but. Maybe everybody else camps out and hangs in this sort of weather we'll see. Anyway, having a good time.

15 Nov, 12 - 17:03

Day 13, Antarctica. Position South 80 degrees 24 decimal 490 minutes position West 081 degrees 03 decimal 803 minutes. Distance traveled a crushing 1.5 nautical miles, in a time of 5.5 hours. Doesn't get any slower than this. Had this interesting dialog all thought up about about calling Hellink and asking requests about my weather, about why it was 40 to 50 knots, head winds straight in my face, complete white out conditions and ground blizzards. So I couldn't see where I was going, but I guess that my standard excuse. Apparently the weathers going to be even worse tomorrow, same winds, but snow so I'll be fighting that. Anybody have suggestions on how to go faster I am all ears. Also, also what?, oh yeah, if anyone has any suggestion how to stop the lens in your goggles from fogging in between the front and the back lens I'm all ears. I put it on in the tent and it does pretty well but the fog happens in between and I can't do anything about that. Through those glasses and since the super hazy, wind blasty, snowy or complete white out, I guess being unable to see doesn't really matter but that's ok. Other than that, starting up hill quite seriously towards the Polar Plateau, I noticed I seemed to drift a little bit West here, I've been trying to correct that out but not having the ability to see and not wanting to wear my compass from Snowsled.com, one of my sponsors, cause I keep stumbling around, I fell several times today, just the towing force can go from nothing

where I go from skiing like "hey this is great" to 60 pounds, where I can't even move that thing for a half minute, gets hung up on sastrugi I never even saw. Pretty amazing the variety of landscape especially with the first snow fall and now it's all wind sculpted, and expecting to be even worse tomorrow so, I would suspect that it's only gonna get tougher. So if you got any suggestions, please let me know. Out!

16 Nov, 12 - 15:29

Day 14 Antarctica, Oh My Gosh! Carmichael warned me that it blows down here but I had no idea. I made four attempts to leave camp and every time I left or tried to leave camp, unburied my stake, walked around to unburied the next, by the time I got that one unburied the other one had reburied. So I tried that three times, naah that was kinda interesting but then the fourth time around 4 o'clock I got out of tent resting for 3 hours and I found that the wind had gotten so strong and it actually had changed the snow drift from snow drift to sustrugi so it actually completely altered the landscape from when I arrived. Also, my snow shield that actually been almost completely ablated away, that really freaked me out, and also my snow stakes have been half dug out by the wind as well so that was really scary. So I piled a foot mound of snow on those things, I double up the wall size and now it's four feet thick and as tall as the tent and twice as wide so hopefully that will work out in full. I was told yesterday the wind was suppose to drop down, so I'll actually be able to travel again. I had this fantasy about doing nine miles today but since I didn't move a half inch, I don't know, it's pretty strong fantasy so. Tomorrow somehow magically the track, what I'm suppose to do, I've gotta do something like 9 or 10 miles. It is getting insane. Well, anyway bad whether bound here. I mean with 20 miles per hour 20 knots 30 knots, I can deal with it but I tried to walk and I think I got about 50 yards, turned around I almost couldn't see the tent cause the wind was so strong, the wind had actually act as a snow slag and couldn't see the mountains. And then also I couldn't hardly even walk, I was walking maybe a half a mile an hour on hard back surface, so. I don't know maybe 60 knots I guessing I don't even have any clue. I think I'm kind of stuck in what's called a killing zone here, near Patriot Hills, Red Pass Hills and Three Sails and just get destroyed so getting stuck here is just an absolute horror. I hope to make good distance tomorrow, better than 2 or 3 miles, It's getting embarrassing, I'm making Scott look good that's for sure. Maybe I've already earned a nickname, who knows. Having a good time just wish I could be bombing away in miles. In fact my sleds are half burried already and actually watched them in a half an hour go from nothing and uncover to completely burried, it was insane, so I went and had to shovel those things just to get my supplies here. Just mind blowing. Oh well, pray that I make some mileage tomorrow. Out!

17 Nov, 12 - 17:31

Day 15 in Antarctica. Postision South 80 degrees 28 decimal 593 minutes, position West 081 degrees 03 decimal 582 minutes. Distance traveled a whopping 4 miles in 8 hours. I pretty much collapsed at the end. The entire area around here is covered in sustrugi, unfortunately it's running perpendicular to my line of travel, as a consequence it's like dragging a tire up a curb for 8 miles straight, needless to say it's pretty devastating on your energy and your speed. This is the first time I was able to power down and entire dinner, I was actually quite hungry, so that was good. My fantasy is kicking out 9 miles but until surface conditions improve, that's about all it's gonna get out of me. I don't know how in the heck I'm gonna pull this out of my butt. On the plus side, the weather was actually pretty good between 20 and 40 knot winds mostly in the 20's so, for the most part I was able to keep cool, only problem is going like this you generate so much heat, that you gotta stripe most your clothing off, problem is the moment you stop you freeze in 2 minutes and you start shivering. It is not conducive to what ever it may be. Let see, headed up hill getting passed Red Pass, I don't see how anyone could go up that pass, oh my gosh, that's insanely steep. Maybe walk up with snow shoes or skins. Speaking of that, going on a sustrugi, in a crevasse zone, it must have snowed heavily here, it just ripped up that surface so. I pretty much have enjoyed walking on styrofoam sustrugis the entire time, which means low speed, low pulling power, everything. I did wax up my one set of skis cause another pretty devastating event just happened, that thing seems to slide a bit better, also had to change my rig to having the heavier sled in front that way it yanks around the lighter sled in back rather than vice versa. Hopefully that will work a little bit better for me. Let see, on the other plus side, I've been able to get to my feather weight pannels to actually charge inside the tent, because I cannot put them outside in 20 knot winds, it'll just tear em apart and ruin them and it will be instant show over for me. The problem is not the spindrift blowing in, it, actually and sun has to be out, full sun. I actually figured out how to set these things inside the

tent and charge and run the phone so, that is a huge Boone for me. On the down side, I've learned that Hilleberg, the tent is awesome, the snow stakes do not last, I've already cranked one, two others are slightly tweaked so I've gotta be extremely careful. Once I loose all my snow stakes, I'm done. Nice design concept, I gotta find something tougher. Stuff is just not lasting out here. The big devastating event is the shovel, the Eddie Bauer shovel broke, I do not recommend it except for noncritical, light use and a good mechanical engeneer could've looked at it and said, yea, it's gonna break right there, just watch here you'll bend it and sure enough it did. I've still got the blade to work with, so it just makes digging and undigging extremely slow. Thinking of that, from having my tent ensconced in snow and protected from 60+ knot winds, it took me two and a half hours to dig that bad boy out this morning in 40 knot winds, oh my gosh, that was pretty rough, but I got it out. Fortunately the shovel didn't break then, it broke now where I'm at a better camp position and the winds aren't so bad that I had to create a mountain of snow, that would be really rough. So, I have actually got a skean to repair the shovel, but without the right tools, I'm using pretty much prison implements.

Dispatch got cut off...

18 Nov, 12 - 15:42

Hey it's Aaron in Antarctica, day 16. Camp position, South 80 degrees 32 decimal 954 minutes position West 081 degrees 01 decimal 011 minutes. Distance traveled 4.5 miles, hey an improvement biggest ever, time 8 hours. Things are going pretty well all though I'm camping well called the Doom Valley. When I came over the hill I thought I was gonna continue going up, then once I realized I was going down it was too late, and the surrounding walls were actually quite steep, that forces me to drop down into the valley and go back up, that was real bummer to find out but. The path and camp line that I chose kinda forced me in here otherwise I woulda had to have directly East or West and add a day or 2 to travel so instead I'm gonna take the punishment of going up hill. Things are going well. A little bit of speed increase, waxing the skis definitely helped. Sure wish I woulda had another set of Madshus instead of my down hill Bone skis, they seem to fly better but, can't change that now. It's gonna take me definitely a lot longer to fix the shovel than I thought, takes forever to boar a hole with the edge of a file, primitive to be sure. Things are not going so good, I got a heal crack on my right foot, think it's from dry skin, so I've been pretty aggressive about filing it down using the rasp side of my multi tool and then putting some O'keefe's on it, and I think it's caused me to walk funny on my left foot a bit so. Hopefully I can get that dialed in and under control. Weather is suppose to be the same tomorrow, sunny and 20 to 40 knot winds, down to 10, if I'm lucky, that's pretty good. The solar charging through the tent still working well cause there's no way I could put those pannels out there, they would get destroyed and then I gotta go out there and freeze anyway. Other than that, little intestinal thing going, not sure what that's all about but hopefully I got it under control with some pills. Having a good time. Wish I was moving a bit faster but, hopefully once I get up to the Polar Plateau that will change. Actually quite beautiful here, I can see the mountains start to rise now that I'm coming over the hill. Going well, just quite freezing this morning cause it was so much power required to get up those hills and it will be the same tomorrow that I can't use aerobic energy to generate heat. So I'm using my ski pogies, I notice on one the elastic seemed to have failed on the pogie so I gotta be real careful cause boy the tiniest thing you drop that's light it blows away 20 to 30 miles and hour and it's gone in seconds. Only a dog can catch that bad boy, and I'm a dog but not that kind of dog. So, hopefully I'll get clocked out here pretty quick. And also the Solara is definitely a thing that keeps me going, when I recieve the indications on that thing that's really good. And you go Aunt Nancy, you keep walking with me, I hope you power around Miller a bunch of times and your writing your distance and steps on the calendar, you'll probably be amazed. Hope all is well with everybody, hope to power out another day tomorrow in same conditions and having a good time. Out!

19 Nov, 12 - 16:18

Hello from Antarctica, day 17. Camp position South 80 degrees 37 decimal 536 minutes, position West 081 degrees 00 decimal 117 minutes. Distance 4.5 nautical miles, time 8.5 hours I was able to get it going a little bit earlier this morning. Although I had a horrible night of sleep, kept waking up having to use the toilet, and just generally not sleeping well I don't know what that was all about but haven't exactly been sleeping great here. Maybe it was getting caught in Doom Valley, definitely sucked, between Red Pass Hills, Three Sails and what looks to be the Plateau. There's a huge valley that you get suckered in to going into and the Eastern wall is incredibly steep, I mean, walking up is yea but going up is, no way, not even possible so. Definitely the place to avoid, problem is it's

directly in the path of (whoop water boiling) where I wanna go. So been having a good time, fortunately I hit a flat area where I can actually pick up speed, I was able to go aerobic today rather than anaerobic like I've been doing almost 2 miserable weeks. I think I only had one day where I was able to go aerobic so, gotta say that was nice. Hoping to kick up some speed tomorrow, actually cover a little bit more distance, since I was actually able to walk much faster up here. Sastrugi was so bad in Doom Valley that I had to kick my skis off it was absurd, it was totally pointless, I kept falling down, no reason to get injured, ski up the hill pretty much sucked that's for sure. Looking forward to tomorrow, hopefully be able to break out, we will see. Still working on the shovel, I finally was able to punch through the first hole, it's not totally rounded out yet but it'll get there, so at least a week to get that thing repaired and it definitely started cutting and prying or not prying, cutting and lifting but not prying with that shovel cause after having that one thing break I don't have a lot of confidence in that blade so. If the blade goes it will be expedition over and I don't want that to happen. Other than that, the crack in the bottom of my right foot seems to be feeling a little bit better, going to go after it more tonight, hopefully get that all fixed up. And then also there was so much sastrugi and stumbling today that my left toe started bugging me cause I kept stumbling and wacking it and that wasn't very pleasant, so hopefully I won't do that again tomorrow and I'll make better distance. Other than that, the weather is suppose to be clear, think up to 20 knots, which for here isn't bad at all and having a good time. Out!

20 Nov, 12 - 16:49

Hello from Antarctica. What day is it? Day 18. Camp position South 80 degrees 42 decimal 044 minutes position West 081 degrees 02 decimal 055 minutes. Distance 4.5 miles, time 8 hours. I'm up on some sort of Plateau, I'm stinkin headed for a head wall, difficult to tell. The scale of the distance here is unbelievable, you think somethings real close it could be a quarter or a half mile or a mile away, it's just very difficult to judge distance here cause it's so clear and everything is flat. The plateau is actually quite fascinating, you look around and just almost infinity but then a couple mountains still visible. One thing that was neat is I was actually able to see the moon today, it's half full. Not sure of waxing or waning, I'll have to look that up. So that was kind of a neat experience and I was able to ski all day, finally able to have a good surface where I could do that and get up to maybe 3 miles an hour if I'm lucky. The one problem I figured out is my travel speed is so bad is my travel efficiency is just junk, I'll maybe go 10 minutes and I'll just totally poop out like I run out of energy so. I stopped, tried to shovel down a piece of chocolate or a cookie or 2 and then keep going but, I'm just dying here. I think it has to do with how I'm eating, trying to put too much in my mouth, chew on it and then not feel good, not want to swallow it down so gonna test some things out tomorrow, sit down, I'm gonna actually stop and eat more per stop. See if that helps cause otherwise this stopping nibbling, stopping nibbling, is just not working. I mean I should have easily cranked out 6 or 8 miles today based on my speed but from having to stop every 5 or 10 minutes I'll never get it done so, I've got a problem, if that wasn't clear I don't know what is. So that's kinda crushig but at least I think I've figured it out cause, I mean when I was skiing, I like, man I'm doing great but the time I'm stopping is terrible. One thing I did activate is I got my snowsled.com compass chest mount and boy that saved me huge amount of time trying to navigate versus my other compass that I was using, all I have to do is glance down and yep I'm still on target. That thing is awesome! Probably should have gotten it out before but I was stumbling around on so much sastrugi that I was affraid something would go wrong. On the plus side, I did punch through the first hole on the shovel, I've still gotta bore it out the right side so I've gotta start scratching another hole, probably take me 2 days plus the boring time to get that guy and then I'll be able to get them aligned and keep the pins ready. So that's a good thing, and then, what else happened? Yea it's quite fascinating being here, I mean your absolutely by yourself with your thoughts. I don't know how anybody listens to an Ipod, I'm so panicked trying to get some distance and get some speed here and just totally falling apart, that I can't even possibly think about that so. We'll give it a spin. Oh boy! I'm done. Out!

21 Nov, 12 - 17:01

Hello from Antarctica, day 19. Camp position South 80 degrees 47 decimal 439 minutes position West 080 degrees 57 decimal 390 minutes. Time of travel 7.5 hours, distance thank goodness 5.5 nautical miles. My expedition manager, Kelly, gave me some serious advice about my eating, that's the thing that's been totally killing me down here. I mean for 18 days straight I've been gagging on my food, it's been horrific. I thought about how I was traveling in Yellowstone, I never had this problem. I realize it's when I'm eating and how I'm eating, when I'm under load, I just can't do it, it just feels

horrid. It's all I am is zapped on energy and dying. I probably ended up with half hour breaks to try and get that dialed in, so my total travel time was maybe 5 hours, so I actually get that magical 1 mile an hour mark which is a huge Boone for me so I know about how to dial it in, I was moving about as fast as I could possibly move when I was skiing. Got an hour straight of skiing by before 1 2 3 4 5 times a day 4 breaks, yea that was awesome to be able to ski straight for that long, I mean for the past entire trip I couldn't do it, I'd just bonk out, feel like puking, it was horrid. So, gonna keep doing this and I think might dial it in somehow magically, I gotta get to that cache in 6 days, holy cow, that's still a long ways away. But, maybe 8 miles a day, that's not unreachable, it's getting over that 5 mile mark was huge for me. And yesterday I definitely enjoyed a total breakdown, that was spectacular. Good thing no one was here to watch it, that was ugly. Oh yea, all these mental aspirations, and all this junk, you think yea yea no problem, you get here and you just get destroyed. My gears getting destroyed and Oh actually I got 2 holes drilled through the shovel handle repair, enlarge them, then I gotta put a screw or 2 in that thing, it'll at least be half way usable again, geez, the caveman scoop thing sucks. One interesting tid bit I'll try give you about Antarctica is, do you really think I brought enough toilet paper for 3 months, yea of course not, you know if you think about how much toilet paper and wet wipes you power through in 3 months, it will blow your mind. Also think about how much food I'm eating and I'm eating 2 and a quarter sticks of butter a day, lets just say you gotta do the toilet thing more than once, usually 3 times a day. So basically the snow is very absorbant down here you just gotta make sure to use the one without the super sharp ice crystals. A little interesting living thing here but. Just one of those things that existing down in Antarctica, certain things you just can not bring enough of, so you gotta make due with something else. Not particularly pleasant but it works. The worst thing is just yanking the drawers down and being in a 20 knots wind even when you dig a hole behind your sled, Ouch. So, hope to crack out more miles tomorrow, maybe looking up here, it was looking pretty bleak. Alright, out!

22 Nov, 12 - 16:02

Hello this is Aaron in Antarctica, day 20. Camp position South 80 degrees 53 decimal 634 minutes, position West 080 degrees 58 decimal 123 minutes. Time traveled 9.5 hours, distance 6.2. Finally I've broken the 6 mile barrier. I pretty much figure I'm a week behind other teams that have done this before and well there you are, I guess getting sick for a week with a lung infection and getting wiped out in the killing zone between Wilson Nunataks and Patriot Hills was pretty much devastating for me but, I am learning how to eat properly and time everything. So between all that mess hear I am, I'm just about to hopefully breach the 81st degree tomorrow. I'd love to be at degree 82 today and dropping the first cache, but still probably a week away, so not too bad. I'm gonna call this area the area of steps because where I camped yesterday was flat, probably went a mile and then went up a good mile and then I've gone flat for a couple miles now and now I'm just about to hit another grade to go up, do another plateau, so this is a step area. Let's see, got up at 5:30, that worked pretty well, I was able to get my breaks down to about 15 minutes, got much better eating and not wanting to yack. I did have a half hour lunch break. Let's see, what else, oh today's Antarctic tid bit, it takes 6 liters of water for me to barely not fall apart, make dinner and breakfast. It's amazing how dehydrating it is here. Before when I wasn't making that much water my fingers were cracking and feet were cracking, I was literally falling apart, so. The problem is, to make that much water it exceeds your usual fuel allotment of 220 millileters, so what I figured out is I only get the thermos, the very good thermos, boiling hot and the first 2 liters pretty close to boiling and that warms up all my electronics so I can actually use them cause when they're cold the battery dies, I have no phone then I'm in trouble and then the rest of the water bottles just get to pretty warm, otherwise I'm just wasting fuel, in fact I don't need them that warm, I'm gonna throttle it back even more to conserve fuel cause everything here is at a premium, even toilet paper, as I discussed. One thing I did notice, I had my first leak in a Nalgene ever, I'm not sure what's wrong with the lid, but probably one of the threads is cracked so. What you do is when you fill those things up and close them, tilt them, make sure they don't pour out, casue a sleeping bag full of water would be a pretty big disaster. Also, once I make that water, it's interesting that in order for it not to freeze cause it's probably minus 10 in my tent at the moment, fahrenheit, is I've gotta put all those water bottles in my bag, so it keeps them warm and keeps my feet warm which is real pleasant. And then also when I'm traveling, it could be minus 10 to minus 25 outside at least without the sun, it was cold today without the sun. So I actually keep all my water bottles I'm gonna use during the day in my sleeping bag jammed in my bag, in my tekking bag, otherwise they freeze solid and they just become worthless rocks to me so. Managing your water not freezing is a huge,

huge deal here. It usually takes me about an hour and a half to make those 6 liters of water. I'm trying to knock that down as much as possible so I can get to bed earlier and not waste so much fuel but. For as much snow and ice as there is here, it sure takes a lot to get it going. Plus side, the shovel, I have 2 holes set in it, I probably could use it but I'm gonna play it conservative and drill another hole and put a screw that I have for my sled rig and hopefully that will be a much more solid shovel than what I have and I gotta just be gentle on that thing, if I bend the blade it's all over. Let's see, what else, just wish I was covering more distance, but at this point there's not a heck of a lot I can do so other than that, waking up earlier and going earlier and....dispatch disconnect.

23 Nov, 12 - 16:09

Day 21 Antarctica. Camp position South 80 degrees 58 decimal 136 minutes, position West 080 degrees 57 decimal 203 minutes. Travel time 10 hours, distance a crushing 4.5 miles. The wheels came off today. I received my first cold injury called chilblains, it's on my hips, ummm, I don't know what it's from, I'm trying to figure out how to avoid the problem. Fortunately I purchased some fleece to protect the fuel tanks in my sleds, now I will be sewing them into my wind pants. My polar thigh guards actually worked really well, but what I'm doing and have to take the pants down in the wind, boy, torn up. So as long as I keep them from cracking and becoming open sores I'll be ok, but I gotta keep them warm and out of the wind somehow. Then about 2 hours in to it going up the second slope of steps, incredibly steep, didn't look like it, one of my ski slipped, snagged the skin and partially ripped it off, I was gonna try and repair it but realized because it was wet, the glue wouldn't stick so I ixnayed that and it was windy anyway and there was no way I was gonna fix it. So that was livable, I had to walk, that kinda sucked. But then crusher of crushers, one of my 2 sled rigs broke, the ski mount actually busted clean off. I looked at the design and realized that, it was great for flat tracking but crunching through harden snow and ice, it was destined to break so I think my other is gonna break. The sleds tracking better now which is an advantage but has a higher drag which is a huge disadvantage to me. Let me tell ya, that was pretty freaking crushing. So, um, just kind of having a serious reck of a day and especially 10 hours getting up at 4:430 to have all that happen. Oh my gosh, wow, I never expected that, but I guess you never do. So I'm on some sort of plateau area cause it looks super flat, you can actually see the curvature of the earth, give or take. I do see another rise ahead, I'm sure that will be another butt buster. Fortunately the weather is very nice at the moment, sunny and just a touch of light breeze, maybe a couple knots. Just gonna take some anti inflammatory for those chilblains, I don't know what the heck I'm gonna do about that, boy that sucks, I gotta figure out what to do about that. Yea, let's see what else, positive things, it's a nice day (laugh). Hope all had a happy Thanksgiving to those in the states. Take care. Out!

24 Nov, 12 - 16:41

Aaron in Antarctica, day 22. Camp position South 80 degrees 59 decimal 344 minutes, position West 080 degrees 57 decimal 108 minutes. Travel time 1 hour distance 1 mile. I spent the entire day sewing a huge patch on to the back of my polar thigh guards because I've developed a case of chilblains, and I don't want them to break open and get infected cause that would be bad. So that was actually kind of exciting. I've never sewn a project that big and doing it by hand it looks like a fifth grader did it but it is the middle of Antarctica so I can't feel bad about that. Got a chance to talk to Hannah, she's probably the best polar skier out there and giving me some pointers on getting my miliage up cause I'm just dying and not making it here. So I'm gonna implement those tomorrow and hopefully bust a move and make things a little bit better. Other than that, not having that parasled on skis is pretty much crushing. It's just so much more drag, it's like being here on day 1, so yea. Hope all is well with everybody. Out!

25 Nov, 12 - 16:07

Hey Aaron in Antarctica, day 23. Camp position South 81 degrees 07 decimal 271 minutes, position West 080 degrees 53 decimal 796 minutes. Time traveled 10 hours, distance traveled 8 miles. Thank you very much to Hannah McKeand for giving me some suggestions on how to travel, made a huge difference on what I did today. I'm hoping to make a little bit of improvement tomorrow. Discussing what to do with ALE about my circumstance since I'm just not cranking it out here. I don't know what the deal is, sleds broken, people seem to do just fine, I don't know if it's me or what, but we'll find out pretty quick here. Landscape this morning was rolling hills and that kinda sucked and it's broken away to less rolling and a little bit flatter so it's much easier to deal with. 30 knot head wind

for most of the day, was a little bit bitter but I think I broke it down and figured out my clothing finally for this sort of travel and it's actually surprising, I just gotta shirt a jacket spun in front like a skirt and my parka and that's about it cause it just gets too hot for me, so. Looking better, still trying to figure out how to make this happen so. I get to enjoy some real neat ice shaves and pencil thin arches and loops not very big but definitely beautiful so, enjoying my time on the plateau here. Out!

26 Nov, 12 - 16:24

Hello from Antarctica, day 24. Camp position 81 degrees 13 decimal 960 minutes, position West 080 degrees 57 decimal 183 minutes. Travel time 9 hours distance 7 miles. Not as good as yesterday, but, yea you know we do the ground white out thing here and we suffer 30 to 40 knots winds in your face and make you blind, yea we got that here. So definitely a butt kicker of a day, but even though it was a butt kicker I still did more miles than I'd ever done in similar conditions, again thanks to Hannah's stage advice there, most extreme skier in this route in the world. So it was actually a pretty good day even though about noon I started bonking so I started hitting the chocolate and then, boy by three, four o'clock I was draggin butt. So I'm gonna try and get a little bit better sleep tonight, I slept horribly last night, trying to make some decisions, gosh dang, need some advil pm or some such thing here. Not too bad today, I mean, fortunately even though it was total white out, I uh, the ground was actually quite smooth, so I probably only fell over maybe 3 times, I mean, when I fell into a hole, it was funny, until I was in the hole I couldn't see it, I got back out of the hole to where I was standing I couldn't see it again, I mean it was incredible. Sleds crashed a couple times, uh, no surprise there. Waxed up Charlie Red, Charlie's the name of both my sleds, ones red and ones blue, cuz of bag color. And I noticed the brackets are starting to bend, so hopefully it holds on for maybe another week or 2, before it breaks and before I get really crippled here. I'm gonna keep forging on as a unsupported, having a good time even though I'm totally gettin worked and I'll probably be the slowest time to the Pole since the 90's but, I guess when you show up to Antarctica with a lung infection and not exactly knowing how to travel properly here, yea well, I guess that's the way it works. An Antarctic tid bit, there are what I call ground white outs and complete white outs. What I experienced today was a ground white out, where the cloud cover completely obliterates the perspective on the ground with no shadow. A complete white out is where the cloud cover matches the ground and you literally see nothing but white. So the ground white out I experienced today is like, imagine going through a construction zone that's rebar, concrete and rubble all sticking out all covered in ice, you gotta go through with skis on and your dragging your heart lung machine, even though you wanna pitch the heart lung machine cause it weighs a lot, if you do you die. So put some hazy goggles on, paint everything white make no shadows and try spitting through lacy zone, that's pretty much what traveling through a ground white is like, it's very disorienting, it looks like your skis are hovering in space it's the weirdest thing ever. So needless to say it slows you down, it's extremely frustrating and emotionally taxing, I mean, not being able to see where your going, I mean it's, it's a least as, actually no worse than foggy goggles, it would if I could switch to glasses but. Ground white out, oh gosh, I hope the sky clears, right now it's a total white out, I can't see the horizon at all so. Hopefully the weather improves for me tomorrow, just continuing forging South here. Having a good time, hope all is well and uh, I guess everybody's starting to get in that holiday mode again so enjoy it. Out!

27 Nov, 12 - 16:41

Hello Aaron in Antarctica. November 27th 2012, day 25. Camp position South 81 degrees 20 decimal 869 minutes, position West 080 degrees 58 decimal 807 minutes. Movin along ok today, 7 miles in 9 hours, didn't feel nearly as bad. The surface was really soft, it wasn't softly fallen snow but wind packed snow I can punch my baskets of my ski pole in almost 4 inches as I was poling along so, definitely not an optimal surface, not a lot I can do about that but you know, that's ok. Um I actually felt pretty good, the first 2 sessions are really rough, I finished them and I was wasted so I decided to throttle it back and not do jack rabbit start for the last 4 sessions and felt a lot lot better, granted it wasn't as much ski but I wasn't wasted. So I think I can eek out probably another half mile to a mile tomorrow as long as the condions stay the same as this morning, probably 20 knot head winds and pretty over cast is difficult to see the surface, in the afternoon it broke open so. As long as that condition fairly holds tomorrow I should be able to eek out just a little bit more. I'm moving ok just not exactly warp factor 8. But things are going pretty well past that. The shovel repair is going well, I'm 3 holes away from converting it from a neolithic scooper to something a modern man might actually bother to use. I'm gonna actually put 2 screws in the thing instead of 1,

cause if something else breaks I'm totally toast and I'd rather spend a little more time and beef it up. Speaking of that, the polar thigh guards are working really well with that new sewn in seat, the one problem I have now is I actually over heat even with my legs in the shell pants totally undone. So uh yea (laugh) which problem do you want to have? I'd rather not take the cold injury personally. So what I'm gonna do is knock out one pair of long johns tomorrow so I don't freeze my back side off, we'll see how that goes and maybe that'll allow me to power up, cause otherwise once you start over heating man you gotta take your parka hat off and then the fur rough doesn't keep the wind out and it blasts your face, burns your skin and you wanna unzip your jacket but it burns your stomach even though I got a, even though I've got the polar thigh guards stomach guard up and a fleece jacket as a apron protecting against the wind, it still burns your stomach so. It's really a battle to not to get wrecked here that's for sure. Let's see, today's Antarctic tid bit, random silence, it is always windy here, I think of the 25 days here I've had maybe one and a half days of no wind where it's just dead. Right now it's super super calm, I mean the tent is just barely ruffling, so when you go outside, silence is unreal. No matter how much you yell, no matter how much you clap your hands, nothing happens. Quite fascinating. One thing to please check in is stop by my website and check out the link to gonedigging.net. The guy that runs that over there, Doug Bradstreet, has some of the best mineral and fossil specimens I've ever seen. His shark teeth are by far the best in the sales network, they've got the little dent in them and they're perfect samples. Usually when you order from him, he ships in one day. And as this is the holiday season, it might be worth stopping by to go check out the products and see what there is to see. Again, just stop by my website, click on the sponsors link and check out gonedigging.net. You definitely won't regret it and some great gift ideas. Thanks! Out!

28 Nov, 12 - 16:42

Hey there Aaron in Antarctica. Camp position, day 26, position South 81 degrees 27 decimal 971 minutes, position West 081 degrees 04 decimal 722 minutes. Time 9 hours distance 7 miles. Actually that wasn't too bad considering it was a white out this morning and then later in the afternoon became an absolute white out. Actually I stumbled into massive sastrugi pile so. After fighting for an hour or two I realized that, after falling a couple holes and stumbling around and cranking on my joints, I actually kicked off my skis because I worried that I only had to break me or them and after walking for an hour and a half in that stuff, realizing how brutal that actually is, I'm gonna have to hand props to Correne Coetzer and Todd Carmichael cause they walked, Carmichael actually walked the entire thing, I don't know how the heck he did it, shear will power. Correne stuck to Thiel Mountains. So, one suggestion I received was to make sure to kick off the skis when your going up hill, especially in heavy sustrugi cause the footing is more important than the efficiency, you don't want to get killed that's for sure. And, so far so good, and I noticed the sleds are starting to head towards the sliding rather than dragging or plowing mode, which is really good, much less suffering for me. Unfortunately I was predicated on Charlie Red maintaining his skis, once he gets broken and gets converted down to a regular non transformed sled, it'll go back to being very difficult so I'm trying to avoid sastrugi patches like the plague cause I do not want to break him, oh man I hope I don't break him. It'll last as long as possible especially with this snow at 88 degrees, it'll be pretty rough. Let's see what do we got going here, Oh yea tid bits, oh my gosh, skin care in Antarctica is a monster, got the chilblains on my hips and they're getting a little bit dark, I'm hoping they don't start cracking, I'm gonna watch it real careful but it's really difficult to maintain cause without keeping the stimulates away, cold, haha, especially when your doing the toilet action, it's almost impossible, I don't know how people actually deal with it. I know exactly a couple times when it happened. Then you get horrible cracks in your fingers cause of hydration, I'm pretty hydrated but barely keeping on top of that. Maybe a little foot fungus, you gotta be hyper careful with that bad boy cause you do that, normally you wash your hands but here the best you have is antibac gel. Other explorers have actually transfered it to their face and just got thrashed, you get pimples and that's not necessarily a big deal but you get them on thighs and your backside. What starts as a small deal can actually turn into a total infection, I mean it's unbelievable. Then there's of course frostnip and the horror of horrors, frostbite so, personal maintenance is a major production here. (Cough) excuse me, Antarctic polar cough. Hoping to kick off some more miles tomorrow if the weather conditions are better, if it's a white out I don't think I can do much more than that cause it's like walking around drunk when your blind, I mean it's just pure stumbling, you have to look at your ski tips to make sure your actually stable, it's weird, you get dizzy after a while. Alrighty, hope for better conditions tomorrow. Out!

29 Nov, 12 - 15:04

Hey it's Aaron in Antarctica, day 27. Camp position South 81 degrees 33 decimal 263 minutes, position West 081 degrees 05 decimal 175 minutes. Distance traveled 5 miles, time traveled 7 hours. Rippling conditions today. Other than for 1 hour it was an absolute white out all day so that really slowed things down. There was a good 10 to 20 knot head wind. There's always a wind here but driving directly in your face is another special deal and then the worst of all is last night the storm brought 1 to 2 inches of fresh soft snow to coat the ground, which means the sleds turn into snow plows, that was pretty rough. I can actually move ok in white out conditions, I can move ok in head wind but boy you put that snow on there and it just adds huge weight and drag to the sled and I guess that's just the way it works. But definitely made tough. Fortunately the sun is coming out so I'm hoping that it'll kinda bake down the snow a bit and the wind will pack it down and make it a little bit easier to travel, otherwise it's gonna be a slow couple days here til I can get out of the zone where the snow is. That made it a little rough. Equipment wise, I noticed the zipper on my charlie blue is starting to tear occasionally, no surprise, line zipper not a core zipper and these even a Norwegian product. My

kartankers, the wool liners for my boots, little tore at the heels, exactly to spot where I didn't have, didn't have duct tape, I was warned by one of the Norwegians at ALE that, yea you better duct tape those bad boys and sure enough. So I taped them even more, hopefully they'll last I do have a back up pair, just a shame those things aren't woven a bit tighter. Let's see what else, I put a couple 4x4 bandages on my backside and hip cause I don't want those chilblains to get any worse that's for sure. I developed a small rash on my, I guess you could call them fat rolls on the back side of my hip, my shirt had hiked up and my towing harness had chewed into me a bit. Other than that, ending to be a nice day but the rest of the day was really long, that's too bad. Tid bit on battery life here, normally people stuff their electronics in their shirt or jacket to keep them warm and keeps them going ok but I found if I do that for a half an hour or even an hour, like the phone, boy that thing kills low and the battery doesn't last long so what I do is I fire up a hot water bottle or two, get them in the sleeping bag and surround the electronics around that in their bags definitely via water proof bag and that makes a huge difference in battery life for me. Otherwise my phone was dying immediately no matter how much I kept it in my shirt and jacket. So in order to keep your batteries going here they gotta be warm so couple boiling hot water bottles, Nalgene, in their little sack and just pile the electronics around it actually works quite well so that has been quite good. It's taken the pressure off me keeping the phone charged and the ability to charge the phone through the tent when the sun is fully out is definitely a huge bonus here so. Hoping for better conditions tomorrow so I can start crackin more miles, that's for sure, gotta lot of miles to go. Alright thanks. Out!

30 Nov, 12 - 15:15

Hey there Aaron in Antarctica, Day 28. Camp position South 81 degree 40 decimal 685 minutes, position West 081 degrees 06 decimal 810 minutes. Distance 7.5 miles time 9 hours. Oh my gosh what a rager, or almost a rager, if I knew the wind was gonna get that bad today, I probably wouldn't have gotten out of the tent. It wasn't too bad in the morning, maybe 15, 20 knots, the sky was clear, the sun was out. I thought I better crack it and see what I can do about this thing. So, got out started going, about an hour into it I noticed the horizon got hazy, and that is not fog here folks, that means that the wind is really picking up and yanking that snow off and throwing it around. So as soon as I saw that I knew I was gonna be in for a wallaper and it probably got up to I don't know 40 knots and at the highest 50 knots, usually I consider that a rager down here anything above 50 knots. How do I know it's 50 knots, well get up to freeway speed, stick your head out and that's what it feels like. Once the snow goes from ground blizzard to start kicking into the air, that's the absolute edge I can tolerate then it becomes difficult to breathe. Above that, when you got a tent set up and you've got a block wall to defend you, block being snow, above that level of wind actually tears apart your wall. I had that happen a couple weeks ago, oh my that was scary. So definitely butt kicking conditions, so I was actually pretty happy about the mileage, I was hoping for anything above 6. Also the surface conditions are still soft, the snow there isn't as bad it's been patches but it's just all over so. Been going along, can't figure out where my sleds were dragging at, I look at my skis and they're actually an inch or 2 inches of snow so, my sleds aren't going to do any better that's for sure, oh my gosh, Right now I'm running on solar again so that's kinda nice, takes the pressure off the battery situation. I don't know, not too shabby. Let's see what else do we got here, Oh yea yea, Antarctic tid bit, talking about wind, something you have to have here is a fur rough around your hood, that thing creates this little neat micro climate where all of a sudden it doesn't seem windy outside at all and yet you yank that hood off and it is roaring. Fur people aren't

all into that, California of course, but when your down here, it is an absolute must, you can not live without that fur rough. Everything went well, actually the wind got so strong I started to feel it come through my boots and that was a surprise, I've never had that happen before so I knew it was pretty severe. Speaking of my boots, they're actually working quite well compared to last year, last year my heels got shredded and bloodied. So this past summer I stopped by Jackson Hole Boot and Shoe Repair over on North Cache, mountain side of town, and Bill Dillon there he actually set me up with a sponsorship and got my boots all upgraded and repaired and now they're working much much better. Actually I went to a couple shops in San Diego, three clowns, and they suggested, "hey we'll just line that thing with carpet" or the best one was, "hey just stuff a bunch of cotton balls in the toes, that works every time", I was like, "are you kidding me, I'm trying to a thousand plus miles and you want me to stuff cotton balls in the toes" yea yea yea, no no no we're fine. So thank goodness for Jackson Hole Boot and Shoe Repair, oh man he saved my butt, now the heels aren't shredded and everything works well. Stop by and tell him I sent ya.

1 Dec, 12 - 16:42

Hello Aaron in Antarctica. Camp position South 81 degrees 48 decimal 326 minutes, position west 080 degrees 58 decimal 821 minutes. Time traveled 8 hours, distance 8 miles. I finally scraped on the magical 1 mile per hour mark. Doesn't sound like much but let me tell ya I've been dreaming about that for oh about a month. Everythings going pretty well, I was hoping it would be a little bit easier day but the wind varied between 20 and 40 knots so it was kinda punishing. There were areas that were almost sastrugi free that made travel easy and then right where I am right now is loaded with it, so it's definitely much slower, doing ok there. Everyday i brush the snow off my boots to keep those guys dry and intact and naturally I noticed a tiny bit of separation in the front of one of the soles in the three layers there, that would be absolutely show over. So fortunately the ultra smart guy, Larry, at mountaintools.com suggested I bring a toob of seem drip, I had them send it to me and thank goodness I did, so I smeared that on that little bit of crack. But I can't sit there sleeping all night holding that thing, so actually I have some since Charlie Blue went down I have some broken aluminum parts, I was able to get a tiny bit of clamping force out of that guy, so I've got that kinda half clamped, definitely MacGyver operation with duct tape and a swiss army knife, but It'll work. Oh boy, let's see, I got a shout out to my totally awesome nephews, Justin and Jake down in Imperial Beach. I hope that you listen to these posts. I'm having a good time in Antarctica even though it's really rough going. It's an alien place, here is what it's like, as far as from a grocery store then you are from a grocery store in New York from San Diego, really far. It's always at least zero degrees fahrenheit or colder. The sun warms your back when it's out but the wind freezes your front and face. The sun keeps your tent warm but it will blow cold wind and blind you in minutes without protection here. There is always wind and it blows hard. There are no plants or animals anywhere near me, it's all snow and ice. I have to drink a gallon of water and eat both a bar of chocolate and 2 sticks of butter a day just to stay alive. You get to camp every day standing on a mile thick sheet of ice. My sleeping bag is as big as your bed to keep me warm. Big stroms and wind will tear through a three foot wall of ice and snow in a half an hour, it's scary. It's an amazing place though your always on the edge. I hope both of you get to have a chance to have an adventure as big as this when you grow up. Whatever your dream is chase it with all zeal, don't give up. It's taken me 10 years to get here, one quarter of my life. Over a 100 people have helped me make this dream a reality. Don't wait until your too old to do it, just remember, later in life you'll only regret the things you didn't do. Dare to dream, discover and explore, I promise it's worth it. I love you both! Out!

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2 Dec, 12 - 15:34

Aaron in Antarctica, day 30. Holy ragers batman, sustained winds at 35 knots adjusting up 45 and I don't know maybe 50. It was brutal and just non stop wind, unbelievable. Apparently it was exact same at Union Glacier and it's gonna be like that til tomorrow until the afternoon when they're suppose to drop, oh my gosh. So camp position 81 degrees 56 decimal 899 minutes, position West 081 degrees 03 decimal 006 minutes. Time traveled 9 hours, distance 8.5, pretty much 9 miles. But I destroyed myself doing it, I mean I powered up, went as hard as I could, I mean I sweated, my kartankers are soaked, my boot liners are soaked, my shirt sinks and my achilles hurt, knees hurt, quads are strained or threatening to be strained. I was at absolute max with weight load and drag I've got, I'm just not gonna get there. So I gotta do something dramatic here unfortunately. Not exactly ideal but I guess that's the way it works. Yea the wind today, I would actually stop for a break, turned around, let my trace line slack and Charlie Red, the sled still on skis, the wind was actually pulling it back several inches every time I stopped, and every time I stopped and turned around, the wind would shove me on my skis so, my sled was being shoved around that was right at the limit, man when I was putting up the tent, it was so scary. So I put both main lines that went to the sled and then they put the stakes down, thank goodness they did, boy once that tent set, I mean it went live, that thing popped like a parachute, both sleds yanked around, fortunately I had a pretty close tension on the stakes cause of those guys would of busted then oh man that would of been bad. Speaking of stakes, I slightly bent another one. Hilleberg tents are great but those stakes, I don't know where they get them from, but they're not gonna last here, no way, no matter how careful I am. So it's only partially bent...so that means only a matter of time, um yea that was great. Antarctic tid bit, whenever I'm making water and I pour it into a bottle I always always put a water proof glove on that are attached to my glove liners, why?, because your pouring boiling water into a nalgene bottle or thermos and how are you going to handle having a really burnt hand, finger, thumb or whatever out here, you aren't. I didn't follow my rule twice on this trip and sure enough, each time I poured some boiling water on myself, so I jammed my thumb into the ice but every time I follow procedure I never get hurt, my gloves get a little moist but that can be taken care of pretty darn easily. So definitely a project of a day, oh my gosh. I don't know how in the heck those guys ever did 16 miles on days like this, I just, I can't figure it out, can not figure it out, maybe they're all Norwegian power skiers so. So anyway, it'll be pretty rough tomorrow too, skis all waxed so it's easy as possible but still, til the afternoon, it's gonna be a real ripper. Alright out!

3 Dec, 12 - 15:51

Hello, Aaron in Antarctica, day 31. Camp position South 82 degrees 03 decimal 736 minutes, position West 081 degrees 05 decimal 201 minutes. Distance traveled 7 nautical miles, time 6 hours. I was only able to get in 6 hours today cause I was so destroyed from yesterday I had to get some extra sleep and rest, man, yesterday was a death day. Feeling much better today, kinda tired at the end of the 4th session but not too bad. Uh, a little change of plans here, what I'm gonna be doing is

heading directly East tomorrow for hopefully only one day as long as I can travel well and what I'm going to do is actually drop a cache at 82 degrees 04 minutes West 079 degrees 57 minutes and what ALE is gonna do is push those 2 caches forward to 85 degrees for me and also 87 degrees for me. Not the exact perfect spacing I was hoping for but it's definitely a potential bacon saver because I'm just barely breaking into the 10 mile days. If I do everything well and there's not 40 mile an hour winds, but I've had so few good weather days here that I can't rely on anything I can only assume it's gonna stay bad. Today actually, right now is maybe 2 or 3 knot winds, I mean it's completely silent, it's one of these erie days. So it's gonna move me East quite a bit, so my little break time trail is gonna look funky with a dog leg in there, but I'll be able to drop a lot of weight and actually, hopefully allow me to move and get up in to the 11, 12 mile mark and maybe that'll save me cause it was looking pretty dark here for a while. Other than that travels pretty good today, the wind was pretty light. The sastrugis constant, it's not bad but just slow going and constant. So that's hopefully a good thing for me, we will see tomorrow. An Antarctic tid bit, when you get your boot liners wet, your kartankers wet and your socks wet and everything else, from sweat an your shirt, how the heck do you get things dry here, well you actually sleep with them. You generate enough body heat, as long as they're not dripping wet and sopping, you can actually dry quite a few things out in your sleeping bag so. Usually I'm sleeping on quite a rubble heap at night, it's a little bit annoying but having wet everything and being freezing cold for the next day is far far more annoying that's for sure so, but it's a little weird to do but definitely works that's for sure. One thing I wanna do is send a shout out to It's Jackson Time in Jackson Hole WY, Ted, the owner and proprietor there set me up with a great adventure watch, this thing gives me compass direction, barometer, altimeter, timing, world time, gives me tracking with that barometer is doing, actually right now it's telling me that the barometer is actually been rising slightly which it hasn't been for a long time. He's located under Snake River Grill, just off the square, he's kinda tucked in the corner there. Stop by if you got a chance, tell him I sent ya. He's got a fascinating selection of animal mounts, I've never seen such a collection as his. Pretty cool collection of knives and of course great watches so, if you could, he's a good sponsor of mine, also a really nice guy, please stop by if you get a chance. Thanks. Out!

4 Dec, 12 - 18:03

Hello Aaron in Antarctica day 32. Camp position South 82 degrees 04 decimal 179 minutes, position West 079 degrees 56 decimal 947 minutes. Time traveled 10 hours, distance 10 miles. Oh my gosh what a punishing day, fortunatley the weather was super nice, the slightest breeze from the South West, but I had to travel to the East to get out of a real dangerous zone, cause about 60 nautical miles to where I was headed was a known crevasse zone so. I didn't want to end up there and also this is where I'm actually gonna drop my only cache on this trip, I'm gonna drop a cache to be deposited at 85 degrees and 87.4 degrees. That will allow me to drop a huge amount of weight here, probably 60 to 70 pounds and get rid of some trash and what not which is really nice. This is all an attempt to get my speed up as I head towards the South Pole cause well....do 10 hour days to get 10 miles and keep doing that so this should make a big big difference for me. That'll actually be pretty nice. It's amazing how difficult it is to travel across sastrugi rather than with it or against it, I mean going across the grain of that stuff's unimaginable cause you can't see when it's good and when it's bad and if it's easy to travel across or not. So yea, it definitely pumpled me going. Fortunately Charlie Red transformed sled with skis didn't die yet. And also being over here allows me to travel on what they call the road.

5 Dec, 12 - 15:56

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 33. Camp position South 82 degrees 11 decimal 191 minutes, position West 079 degrees 57 decimal 097 minutes. Time traveled 5.5 hours, distance 7 miles. That is huge for me. That means that if I put in a full day tomorrow given the same conditions I should do 11 plus miles and has a huge amount to do with the cache I dropped today, that took a good 2 and a half hours to dig out, bury, locate and build a 3 foot pile of snow and snow blocks on top of it with flags that was hurting with my piece of junk blade shovel that I've got. It just means it will work even tougher cause I was hitting the hard ice and snow with my hands, which is never good and I'm sure I'll pay the price later but until I get a shovel from ALE at 85 degrees, that's all I've got.

6 Dec, 12 - 15:37

Hey there Aaron in Antarctica, day 34. Camp position South 82 degrees 21 decimal 493 minutes, position West 079 degrees 59 decimal 788 minutes. Time traveled 8 hours, distance 10 and a half miles. Holy cow, you really gotta power the whole day to get real miles here. I missed a good hour

towing cause I noticed that my, even though I'm wearing Arc'teryx Beta AR super shell pants, the zipper in the lower leg, fortunately not the upper leg, has actually disintegrated. It's not that the zipper is torn but the teeth have actually peeled away from the base material. So, I put some duct tape on it to keep me through the day but I'm gonna have to give that thing a couple stitches, I definitely wish I would have brought some everyday sewing needles cause the ones I brought, these auto threading things, I don't know if they're going to survive this and I only have a few so, I don't want to break those things. So the expensive equipment destruction derby continues. Also my left ski binding, the cable attachment, it kept popping open cause it was too loose, no matter how hard I crank that thing it just would not spin so I couldn't tighten it. I would loath to possibly even break that thing, no way. So I got it off the ski, got it in the tent, everything warmed up and now it spins freely, go figure, probably just choked with ice. So I got that thing set and hopefully tomorrow I'll be able to dial that in cause it definitely affects my stride. Also, for whatever reason both boot laces come loose and that gave me some hot spots on the pads of my feet, so I stopped and had to bandage those guys up. Not too bad but still another 15 minute intermission so really I gotta, I gotta really have to hit 9 hours to get up to 12 miles mark to really make things not so pressure bound here. Which is not that bad but still. You have a couple rough days, the weather is actually nice today. Developed a couple chilblains on my chest cause it's, I'm so warm I have to unzip my jacket but the wind bites in so. It's a constant fight, it's really weird, I just get too hot, ironic for being in Antarctica. In fact in my tent it's probably zero degrees or warmer it's, to me it's really hot. So that's all kinda interesting. Travel today was interesting too cause I went over this massive dome, I mean you couldn't really tell you were going over but you notice there were objects in the horizon sitting there and as you rolled over you look back and you saw hey there's some odd landscape there, which is quite neat. So it's not just this continuous plain there actually is subtle undulations. Which means your going up hill and down hill and variation. The sastrugi in some parts are almost non existant today allowing me to really open it up, as much as you can say opening it up and then also some of it's really bad so it slowed me down. So sometimes your marching quick and other times not so quick. And a shout out to Aunt Nancy here, hope your still marching around Miller Park, probably in the green of winter instead of the white of winter of Jackson right now. I really think about you being here with me in spirit and going along in Antarctica without all the suffering and challenges. Hope all is well with everyone and we'll leave a message tomorrow. Out!

7 Dec, 12 - 16:20

Hello, Aaron in Antarctica, day 35. Camp position South 82 degrees 32 decimal 416 minutes, position West 079 degrees 45 decimal 797. Time traveled 9 hours. Distance traveled 11 nautical miles or 11 miles. Holy cow, that was beyond my absolute max. I spent half a day going up this massive ice dome and I think coming down the other side, it's difficult to tell it's, until you actually get to where you're going and look back, you're not exactly sure if you've actually gone over something, it's really weird perspective distortion here. Also, I think there's a team a couple miles east of me, I tried to photograph them with my telephoto lens, but I couldn't hardly tell, they were moving so there's something out there. Which is actually kinda neat, figured I had the whole place to myself, but I know that is not true. So I did an experiment, I've been doing, normally I do five 75 minute sessions and then one 90 minute session at the end of the day and that's been okay, but today I decided, ah you know ah, on session four let me push that to 90 minutes that way the last two sessions aren't so bad. Huge mistake, it made the last two sessions absolute punishment and now my pads of my feet hurt, oh my gosh. So I got to throttle it back to the standard polar of six sessions of 75 cause I just I can't take that to get that extra 1/2 mile, it was way beyond punishing. But it was nice to finally touch that and maybe I'll be there again in so many days. I'm projecting hopefully 10 miles a day, about 15 days to my first cache. I've got about 19 days of food, so it's not exactly a huge safety margin out here, especially if horrific weather comes in. I mean I've got a little baggie of food developing that I haven't totally eaten all my rations, I thought I've just been sleeping bad so I'm sure that's been sacking me either. Thinking way too much about this or thunderdome with the tent blasting at 30 knot winds. Last night and tonight it's gonna be too hot so that's also a challenge, I mean irony of all ironies, too hot in Antarctica. Passed some beautiful sastrugi formations, a lot of where I am right now is relatively flat and then you come to these small mountains. It's weird cause you almost can't see them until you're right on top of them. It's an odd landscape cause on the shadow side all the snow looks of ash and gray, and the sunset of course it looks arctic white, but inside the huge hoops of sastrugi, it has this aqua marine, blue glow or even an electric blue glow, it's beautiful. And the landscape here, imagine you got an ocean that's frothing and foaming in a massive storm, there's huge wind blowing the white caps off, just blasting

them off. Now that you've got that vision, instantly freeze it and and turn everything white where it looks like everything is just being blasted away and just frozen. That's kinda actually how it looks here, it's kinda weird. That's on the small scale, but also on the multi mile scale there are massive domes and rolls of ice out here. Weirdest thing ever, it's ah, definitely made it slow going, going up hill and down hill. But not too shabby. Slowly closing in on the cache that I'm gonna have dropped. And more destruction derby, my ah boots, the sewing has come apart, so I seem gripped those, my gloves, the tips are starting to damage, so I seem gripped those. So, trying keep this wagon train going with glue. Alrighty out!

8 Dec, 12 - 15:53

(Dispatch #1 of 2)

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 36. Camp position South 82 degrees 42 decimal 870 minutes, position West 079 degrees 49 decimal 342 minutes. Distance 10 and a half miles, time traveled 8 hours. I am still alive! Actually it was a real comfortable travel day, all things considered. The wind was light, surface was decent. For the first two there was medium sastrugi's, so that kinda slowed me down and near the middle of the day that kinda cleared out but, it was weird that it actually felt like subtle load it's starting to cause the snow to mush out a bit, makes the skiing a bit tougher but I guess I won't complain, there could be far worse conditions that's for sure. Speaking of worse conditions, I've been watching the barometer drop to 25.4 inches of mercury right now, normal level's at 26.1. And looking to the West there is definitely some sort of front coming in or heading my direction. I sure hope it skirts me cause that means I'll probably have ground white out conditions which makes travel even slower.

(see dispatch #2 to continue)

9 Dec, 12 - 16:15

Aaron in Antarctica, Day 37. Camp position South 82 degrees 52 decimal 302 minutes, position West 079 degrees 52 decimal 958 minutes. Distance traveled 9.5 miles, time traveled 8 hours. Oh man, station to home base, field station to home base, over, home base go. We have suffered a major equipment failure, Charlie Red is down, repeat Charlie Red is down. Home base, details please, white out happened today and we had to crash directly through heavy sastrugi and as a consequence I think Charlie Red was weakened and by the time we got into an open field he suffered an ignominious death, simply rolled over and died. I was towing in a very flat zone, it was complete ground white out, all of a sudden the drag increased and I felt the sleds drag around, I looked back and one of the skis on Charlie Red was completely flopped over. Failed in exactly the same way as Charlie Blue. Both sleds are down off skis, they are now plastic tubs. So, oh boy, needless to say that was not very good. I did set up for a test today to see if tracking verses drag was more important and, well I guess it doesn't really matter now. I also did a test when I got to camp and set up and put some wax inside the plastic to see if it glided or was worse and of course it sticks to the snow way better so, however these sleds slide is however they're going to slide now. Definitely a major bummer. One thing about them too is now I've got to work as much as I can to keep the weight in them exactly equal, that way one particular sled does not dig in more than the other and thus cause me slower progress. And actually with the ground white out I was very surprised to get as far as I did today cause it takes a full half hour to fully unrig the sled and break it apart and mount the skis. Also, I did suffer a little damage to my left toe, my liner sock got bunched up somehow and started to dig a divot out, it was just like a hang nail but dang it, wasted a good 15 minutes on that so, how I ever eeked out that much distance is beyond me. First session was amazing towing the sun was slightly out and then that cloud cover came and everything went from shapes to absolute blank and you end crashing into sastrugi's, things you could have easily avoided and you get to instead waste spectacular time going through. So, that was definitely a challenge. One neat thing I found out is two nights ago in the East of me or to the East of me, I saw what looked like people blobs moving along the horizon, couple black things, and they weren't moving very fast, tonight I found out that was a field traverse, there was a crew out there headed towards the Theil Mountains, probably to drop a cache, couple vehicles towing some sleds and apparently they must have picked up my cash already cause they're way way North of me. So that was kind of interesting. I talked to Union Glacier and they said, yea last year one skier said "forget it" and hopped a ride, this thing gets in your head, oh my gosh, the emotional rollercoaster's unbelievable, it's nothing I've ever experienced. So, last night I got actually half way decent sleep, I hoping to clock out tonight and just knock myself out with a hammer or something, we'll see. So hopefully no white out tomorrow and allows me to see how my sleds are gonna do. Out!

10 Dec, 12 - 16:13

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 38. Camp position South 83 degrees 03 decimal 235 minutes, position west 079 degrees 55 decimal 023 minutes. Time traveled 8 hours, distance 11 nautical miles. Today was actually a decent travel day, I found a very hard packed section of ground to travel, I guess if you could call it ground, 3 thousand to 4 thousand feet thick of ice and snow. I did run in to ground white outs all day and then sunny and then ground white outs. A storm of some sorts is moving through, fortunately it's not doing too much to me, it's suppose to drop a little snow tomorrow and the next day, the wind suppose to be light but the contrast will be really poor so I'll suffer some more ground white outs, hopefully I'll be able to do something about it. I thought I got the left toe issue under control, apparently not, going along in the second session all of a sudden it really started to bug me so, I had to make to stow stops to get it dialed in and bandaged up. I thought it was going to be better off than that but apparently not so I'm gonna have to patch it up a little more solidly this evening. I wish I brought a little bottle of second skin to paint on that thing and fix it right up but didn't have that, that's for sure. On Charlie Blue, the stitching on that poor guy has started to tear apart on one of the strap X marks so I seem sealed it and hopefully it will hold for a day or two only til the weather gets better here and I can get that guy in and sew him up and get him a little more solid. Yea, that things built in Norway too and it's suppose to be solid but apparently not. Hey if anybody's got a question about what I'm doing down here, what it's like, or anything you'd like to know, please shoot a message to either Kelly my Expedition Manager or my parents or my Aunt Nancy and they'll be able to relay the message to me and I'll be able to answer your question in this blog so. Anything you might think of or wondered what it was like hear or what ya think, just shoot me a message and let me know. I'm hoping for a good travel day tomorrow, it's suppose to be a real light wind, partly to mostly cloudy so kinda ground white outish but, the area is covered in sastrugi and streaking but hopefully I'll be able to find a hard patch and keep cruising here so. Just keep forging on here, slowly slowly grinding towards the South Pole. Out!

11 Dec, 12 - 15:40

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 39. Camp position South 83 degrees 14 decimal 182 minutes, position West 080 degrees 03 decimal 303 minutes. Distance traveled 11 miles, time 8 hours. Ran into some really nice hard packed ground here so I was able to make some really really good time. Although, around here was a crushing amount of sastrugi and the worst part is it's headed dead South. So instead of being paralell which is just work or oblique where you could cross it, you stay in the sastrugi and it's like an ankle and knee buster all the way cause your on these constant razor edges, it's really quite miserable traveling. Didn't figure that the sastrugi would all head South. There's been a storm and complete white out or ground white out all day, so it's been tough travel, I mean psychologically the white out of the ground white out is by far the worst cause your constantly worries your gonna fall into a hole, stumble on something, smash something, wreck one of your rigs, I mean it just messes with your head like, I never expected that. And when the wind's up to 40 knots it's just kinda miserable and rough, punishes you physically and kinda gets in your head but you can deal with it. But you can't see where your going and several times today, I wouldn't say I got dizzy but just unknowingly disoriented, where your going along and all of a sudden you just start to fall over like somebody shoved you, with no orientation and essentially no horizon to see. It's the weirdest thing, you'd be cruising along and all of a sudden, whoa whoa whoa. Just stumble over for no reason what so ever so. That is extremely frustrating. It's definitely part of the experience down here, I mean everybody has to travel in white outs and ground white outs and bad winds and such but you definitely wish you didn't have to, I mean, I'd rather have stayed in the tent today but I'm under now constant pressure to try and keep the miles as best as I can. Repairs on Charlie Blue, the bag where the strap sewn X is completely or half disintegrated, so I seam seal it this morning or last night to hold it intact until the weather got better. Weather being better means it's not windy as heck so I can deal with this thing. So I brought the bag in here and I'm sewing through and I actually, fortunately my needles will punch through the double webbing on that pretty well so the RayWay sewing thread that I have from Ray Jardine, that stuff is used to make back packs, so it's ultra tough so I'm confident it will stay, I doubt it'll get cut at all and I'll just go crazy happy on the stitching there so I expect that'll be ok. Boots look ok, I inspect my boots everyday. When I get in to the tent, get everything going, the moment I can kick those bad boys off, I brush off all the snow with my little bicycle gear cleaner, grind it off, chisel out the ice or snow in the three pin holes, clean those guys up and make sure there's nothing falling apart on them because other than my stove um boots boy if those fell apart or something happens, you are absolutely toast here, I mean you can not go anywhere. Not like you carry a spare pair of boots so that is a critical must do item everynight, I can

blow off some things but the boot inspection, brushing, getting all the snow off and ice is ultra critical to me. Hope all is well. Out!

12 Dec, 12 - 15:37

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 40. Camp position South 83 degrees 24 decimal 072 minutes, position West 080 degrees 03 decimal 516 minutes. Time traveled 8 hours, distance 10 miles. Oh that was one of the craziest days I have ever had here for travel weather that's for sure. I got up, there was some sun out, I thought, awe this is gonna be perfect, it's cool, the sun's slightly obscured, I'll get going good, I hit the road and within a half an hour, that little halo area where the sun is, that I thought, oh the fog will stay away, wrong, the fog completely closed in, I got a ground white out for about one session and then a complete white out descended on me. I kept checking my goggles to see if they were fogging and waving my hand in front of my face and no there was nothing wrong with my goggles, it was just pure white out. So needless to say a lot of tumbling and feeling drunk and everything, kinda rough there psychologically but since I already suffered through it yesterday it wasn't as bad to deal with, but still definitely slows you down. Then about session 4, 4 and a half, the sun started coming out and that made things easier. I did have to go nuts on my goggles cause once the sun started coming out I got warm and I could not get the fog out of my goggles, it was driving me bezerk, I got so frustrated, I wanted to take them off and stomp em into oblivion, very mature activity, but of course the whole motivation of being blind in probably 2 minutes prevented me from doing that, plus they're really nice photochromatic goggles, so I didn't want to do that. So as the day wore on there was no breeze what so ever, which is extremely rare here. And the sun came out full force, it was weird, it was minus 15 degrees here, but the sun load is so strong on you and it feels like being in the tropics like Hawaii in July, I couldn't believe it. I got to the point where I even took my Event REI jacket off and put it around my neck as a travel cloak and even then I was still too warm, I mean it just absolutely baked me off. So all of a sudden I have a better appreciation for the wind, that's for sure, just a little bit to take the edge off, so I definitely survived there. Questions I received, one was from Roy and Debbie Takeda, my uncle and aunt out in Santa Rosa, they asked what a sastrugi is, a sastrugi is wind blown snow that is shaped by both the wind and the sun, if you've ever seen a photo or been to Sydney Opera House where you see those arched sail shapes, imagine those flipped upside down and hollowed out, they look like these weird alien space ships that are scooped and hard edged all around and some of them look like jaguars out of Guatemalan sculptures of inca era, just the craziest things ever. They can get huge, up to 10 feet high. I haven't run into those, although I found the four feet ones and stumbling over them is miserable cause it's all hardened snow, not quite ice but definitely tough. How much distance do I have? each degree I cover equals 60 miles and that's nautical miles, just a touch longer than a regular mile, so at 6 and a half degrees to go I'm still staring at a good 400 miles but closing in on the halfway point so hopefully I'll start feeling better about that. The other question was from Joann Luu over in Salt Lake about life here, there's tons of life on the Coast of Antarctica, penguins, seals, whales, birds, everything but in the interior where I am, I am literally the only life form around for 100 miles, unless there's another team near me, I'm it. The only indigenous life down here is a little bit of lichen and patterned ground in the mountains here so not a lot of stuff here. Out!

13 Dec, 12 - 15:52

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 41. My camp position is South 83 degrees 35 decimal 384 minutes, position West 080 degrees 04 decimal 816 minutes. Time traveled 9 hours, distance 11 miles. Still enjoying crippling 3 to 4 inches of 2 day old snow, boy that stuff is just crushing to pull through. Apparently a lot of other teams are suffering through it right now so I don't feel as bad but never the less, I could do without it personally. Travel day not so shabby, there was just a little bit of wind to take the edge off the sun, because here if there is no wind, it is like being in Hawaii in August without the humidity, that sun just burns you to a crisp. Let's see, questions I've had posed to me, how many cravasses have I crossed and didn't look down? When I first got here a couple days in, I had a couple real real small cravasses, I scooted over no problem, I punched them and sure enough I broke through, but that all worked out ok. I haven't been aware visually that I've crossed anymore cravasses, although I've heard heavy wump sounds that I've skied along especially in white outs that I've hit something, that's for sure, it's very very disconcerting, that's for sure. Let's see, someone said give a run down of my daily activities, all righty, I wake up at 6am, write a little bit in my journal, go out usually do a toilet maneuver, I usually do that twice in the morning. Then I get up make breakfast, and breakfast always consists of cold cereal, powdered milk and cane sugar,

there are five different types of organic cereal that I've got in here, I have no idea which ones which and my rule for choosing my daily rations is once you grab it you got it, so if you end up with having two days straight of macaroni and cheese for dinner, that's just the way it works here. So I usually get up at 6 and roll out at 9, I have to get up to do that, eat, usually cause the breakfast has a full stick of butter and then besides the cereal, it takes me a while to eat that, it is really heavy. Then I roll up my air matt, ram down my sleeping bag, jump up and down on that, make sure that I brush my teeth, although I don't comb my hair, always gotta brush the teeth out here or you get wacked. Then I try and roll out by 9, usually takes me, once I get packing the Charlie sled from the moment I start chucking stuff out the door to rolling away it's usually about 40 minutes. Once I get going, in 40 minutes I do, like today I do 6 towing sessions of 75 minutes each. Usually my breaks are 15 minutes, everyday I eat the exact same thing in the exact same order. I eat a Lara bar and butter then a chocolate bar and butter then a Pro bar and butter, then 5 pecan sandies and butter and then the last one are almonds and shot blocks and maybe some butter depending how I'm feeling. Once I'm done at 5:45 to 6 o'clock, I set up camp, usually once I find the site it takes me about 10 minutes to get my tent set up, once I'm rolling, that's assuming good weather conditions. Then I ram it all together and get everything in, my number one priority is getting water made, that takes forever and then getting my boots off, cause my pads of my big toes have been killing me. Then do my sched call in to ALE to let them know where I am and how things are going, do this call, call Kelly my expedition manager and beautiful girlfriend and then try and get to sleep before 10. Out!

14 Dec, 12 - 15:51

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 42. Camp position South 83 degrees 46 decimal 096 minutes, position West 080 degrees 06 decimal 101 minutes. Distance traveled 11 or 11 miles, time traveled 9 hours. Today was roughly about the same as yesterday, although the decent little breeze just enough to keep me cool. When the breeze drops below about 3 knots and you just roast here, mind blowing. I was going along just fine and all off a sudden, man why am I getting so hot? and all of a sudden I realized, oh, that's right the wind died. Fortunately it was right at the end of the day otherwise I would of been cooked. Snow still around, I'm hoping or at least was hoping that the sun was gonna bake it down, apparently it doesn't work that way. So unless a good 20-25 knot wind shows up I'm going to be slogging it out in soft snow for the foreseeable future which is a real bummer. There's a slight breeze right now which is nice, it's just enough to where it's slightly cooling, I mean being in the tent you actually can just kinda hang out in your pants and shirt, it's pretty crazy. One person asked or said "don't resent every boring mile here", I have yet really to have any boring miles, there's always something, today I'm just fighting for every mile, my, the middle joint on my big toe is all puffy and sore on both feet, it's kinda annoying. I wanna knock back a bunch of advil but I'm afraid that if I power that all down and I run out I'm gonna be in worse trouble should something else happen. One neat thing, super neat thing, I got to see yesterday, set up in the clouds were Von Karman Vortices, it's super beautiful, evenly spaced swirls that happen, they maybe lasted half an hour and then disappeared out of existence. I've only seen those two other times in my life and the chance and opportunity to see them in Antarctica was super super special to me. Yea mom posted a question about the color of the top of my skis, is brownish, gray metallic sorta color, if you go to Neptune Mountaineering in Colorado on their website, look up Asnes Nansen skis, that's ASNES and then Nansen, NANSEN, you'll see exactly the skis I am using right now. So uh, I'm not sure what that's all about but that's ok. Let's see what else, definitely no boring miles here, it was a fight today and I suspect it won't be easier tomorrow so. Hey big shout out to my nephew Jake there, it's his birthday today, hopefully you guys are partying out and since it's Friday he'll be able to stay up til what uh, 6 years old, stay up til, you know 2-3 AM, rocking out (laugh) probably not. Hope all of you guys are getting ready for Christmas and starting to enjoy that time of year here. It's as snowy white as it was yesterday and I expect the same tomorrow. Hope all is well. Out!

15 Dec, 12 - 16:36

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 43. Camp position South 83 degrees 57 decimal 141 minutes, position West 080 degrees 07 decimal 388 minutes. I'm only 3 miles away from the 84th parallel, WooHoo! Time of travel 9 hours, distance 11 miles, 1,1 miles. Holy crud what a costume changing day today was, the wind varied almost a thousand percent through out the day, from anywhere from basically dead still to about 10 knots. Unbelievable! It started off a little bit breezy, it was perfect, got dressed up for that, I thought, oh man I'm gonna be able to rock this thing. Going along, going along and then, whoa I'm getting hot, air stopped, so I probably changed my clothing and shifted my gear, I don't know, 10, 12 times easy. It's weird here, must like how it is in space, where the radiation

from the sun is so intense that you roast and yet it's freezing. Case in point, I'm skiing along trying to stay cool, cause there's absolutely no wind, I take off my jacket, I'm literally down to a long sleeve wool, which amounts to a 6 tee shirt but expensive as heck, I've got my jacket draped over my neck and shoulders so they won't get incinerated cause they will get burned to a crisp, second degree, no doubt. And yet I'm skiing along and on the shade side I pull up my long sleeve about 4 inches to try and bleed off some heat, maybe 5 minutes, 7 tops, my skin is steering cold, I say probably minus 15 I'm guessing, I have no idea, the thermometer in the tent is always crazy off cause it gets hot in here but. So I can actually be just about to break out and sweat, my feet get that hot feeling, my fingers get that hot feeling like awe crap I'm gonna sweat, and yet the skin on my arm is on fire because it's frozen, it's the weirdest thing ever here. I mean really I need an umbrella for days like this, maybe one of those sun shade parasol umbrellas, that would be awesome, but not, too windy here anyway, normally. Got to watch some cirrus and cirrostratus clouds roll through, normally in North America that portends bad storm. Here, uh based on the weather forecast, it doesn't portend a heck of a lot, however there is a fog bank to the East I saw slowly rising up and apparently it's gonna hit me tomorrow and punish me. Which means white out, the probably second most difficult travel experience I have here, number one being 40, 35-40 knot and above winds, then white out and then no wind at all, crazy. I spoke to Rob the Union Glacier doctor, the joints in my big toe on both feet is really sore, a little bit puffy, it's not hot, I guess I just crank on some of the advil. Apparently when your traveling on harder track like I am, it's very common to have that happen. I hadn't had this happen until I hit the hard track. The whole time over that variable sastrugi, probably about 60 more miles of that hard track and I'm out and towing through the wilderness again. Let's see what else, oh if you get a chance check out, go on you tube and check out the sunscreen song, try and find the original, the remixes aren't that good and just listen to it cause that thing goes through my head a lot, maybe you will, maybe you won't, it's really weird the things you think about out here. And since my ipod only lasted half an hour, I wanted to try cause it's, since I can't keep a jacket on cause it's so fricken roasting, well uh yea things in battery power just die so, that's a really tough one for me. Anyway, hopefully be able to pound out some more miles even with that fog tomorrow and it will keep me cool. Out!

16 Dec, 12 - 16:12

Hello, Aaron in Antarctica. Day 44. Camp position South 84 degrees, 06 decimal 938 minutes, position West 080 degrees 11 decimal 646 minutes. Distance traveled 10 miles, time 9 hours. Weather continues to be kind of tough to deal with, it was breezy in the morning and then kind of dropped down with the clouds marching across, there's fog, all sorts of variety and interesting things happened today, that's for sure. Ah, man, the track I was running burned off, I had a navigational snafu, shall we call it, headed South East for about a half an hour getting way off where I needed to be so I headed back over the main line. Caught it or well caught it, got to where my GPS told me I needed to be and then continued South. This must be at least day 5 of soft snow, unless a big wind comes up, it's gonna be the way it's gonna be for quite awhile. It does save my feet from the pounding cause my heels, my toes, the joints in them, especially the big toe, are just sorer than heck. Also I got into a big rush for a minute and went all out and sweated up a bunch of stuff and there's actually ice in my kartankers, it was a dumb thing to do but there you are. I'm currently at 9 days rations and probably about 60 miles from my next cache. That's a little tight for me so, I've got some left over food, I've just been kind of packing along and I'm gonna do that tomorrow and not eat into any of my ration cause if I get hung up in a white out or something happens, I'm gonna be in a world of hurt that's for sure. Definitely don't want to do that. Oh gosh, um, everything is doing okay past that. Man it is way colder here than it was farther north, either that or I'm just fatigued and wiped out, I don't know, but the cold biting through a lot of my gear all of the sudden so. Maybe it's just a storm coming through or it was the icy fog last night, who knows but ouch ouch. I want to give a shout out to RLS Technology, makers of the Pill Minder. When you're getting to that time in life where you need to start taking pills but you have a little trouble remembering them, the Pill Minder is definitely the product to have. I've used it before and I've known and seen other people that used it and really enjoy it. I really appreciate their sponsorship, so if you get a chance click on over to sponsors and check out the link there if you could please. Hope all is well, thanks. Out!

17 Dec, 12 - 16:07

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 45. Camp position South 84 degrees 19 decimal 177 minutes, position West 080 degrees 17 decimal 511 minutes. Time of travel 9 hours, distance 12.3 miles. Finally

cracked the 12 mile mark, probably won't be able to do it again cause it was perfect today. Sun was out but there was a good breeze to keep me cool. The track for the sled was absolutely, no not absolutely but nearly resistance free making things exceedingly easy. I did go over a dome, a huge dome in fact, so much so I didn't even realize it until I came over and saw the massive plain on the other side. For some reason seeing a vast empty expanses from up high is kind of scary and I don't know why, kinda weird. But, let's see it was a nice day, hopefully it's just as good tomorrow that would be really nice, I'm about 46 miles North of my cache so. Probably 4 and a half days if everything goes well, no white outs or ragers show up. A question, does the sun go in a circle around me? from my dad. Yes, absolutely the sun literally stays at roughly the same altitude and spins around me 24/7, it's the weirdest thing ever and right on December 22nd it will be at the highest, been watching it rise in the sky slowly so that's been kind of fun. A shout out to James, Jim Clinkscales and the kids at Pilgrim Lutheran School, thank you very much for following me and I hope to be able to stop by and maybe give a little talk on what I've done here. Also a shout out to Jim's wife and kids, Trudy and Candace and Daniel, thanks for following. Another question that came in from Lory and John over at Human Edge Tech, is it easier to pull the sleds now that the skis are off? no definitely not. The skis cut down drag force, 30 to 50 percent so having the skis on there is a definite advantage. The disadvantage, two of them, is tracking is much poorer, without doing testing and equipment it's tough to tell but I can just tell it's easier with skis on and I did the measurement with a luggage scale so I know the exact percentage. But also, with skis on and the tracking is poor, especially crashing in a sastrugi can become much more problematic cause they'll slide into the holes a bit worse so I'm not exactly sure how that all works in the evenness. Another thing, pulling a sled is once that thing starts to sink, instead of running it actually becomes a plow so there's a certain weight per sled where it goes from great to totally horrible depending on the track. The other question is, how did I choose my diet? Uh it's pretty complex, I went through what other people have used and I've tried out different diets in three expeditions across Yellowstone and also on a trek across the Tundra in Greenland and I definitely miss vegetables. I mean I usually eat pretty well so this diet of cookies, Lara bars, Pro bars, chocolate, shot blocks, dehydrated food and cereal, I could do without it but weight for weight, that's about the only way I can really figure out how to get better calories. I take Emergen-C to make up the vitamin short fall so. Actually I didn't bring a multi vitamin but oh well. Um yea the food thing, that's definitely a complex question to answer. I mean how do you get 6,000 calories without carrying huge huge weight, really the only way is fat. I mean if you look at how many calories are in pecan sandies and shortbread, you'd be blown away how many things those bad boys have. Plus butter of course and I don't like almond butter at all so regular butter is it. Hopefully I answered your questions. Shoot me an email if you have more, please. Thanks. Out!

18 Dec, 12 - 15:53

(dispatch #2 of 2, Day 46)

Aaron in Antarctica, day 46 continued. Like I was saying, there's a question that came in from my Uncle Roy about how do I keep my boot interiors dry from day to day, he had to ring his out, if I got to the where I'm skiing and I got so hot that I had to ring mine out, I'd probably already have frost bite and I would have been done long ago. I have to be ultra careful about not sweating things out, I've done it once or twice unfortunately, it was a warm day otherwise I would have paid the price. Case in point, several days ago I had to push to get somewhere, when I stopped and finally made camp my feet were pretty cold, I'm like, ah that's not good, got in the tent, got them off, the liners are wool, there's actually frost on the outside of the liners and they were pretty darn moist, definitely a bad thing so. What I do is make sure that they're not super soaked, but I haven't had that yet and I put the liners in my sleeping bag with me every night. In the morning they're good and dry, just make sure I don't sweat them out myself. So it actually works pretty well. Yea it's uh, if you're having to ring out your boot liners skiing or cross countrying or whatever, you need to change your clothing, you're way too hot. My difficulty is I have to tow just on the edge of being cold, cause by the end of the session, I get pretty darn warm, in fact even now when this weird icy fog came in, all of a sudden the sun came out and oh my gosh I got hot, so I had to stop and refit and do costume changes, it's kinda tough. My dad asked about how the sun is here and yes it literally circles around your head, it doesn't ever set. I'm towing 7 days a week and have been for the past month so, for at least another 30/33 days I'm going to be towing day in day out, there's no day off on Saturday or Sunday for me, it's all out, everyday, 9 hours, get up and let's go. How many days do I travel? Seven days a week. Rest? Pretty much soon as I can get to bed here and I wake up at 6:00. The sun, yes it is bright, right now it's foggy so it's not so bad but never the less when you wake up in a dark

sleeping bag it's amazingly bright outside so I have to wear one of those funky eye masks. I didn't do that for a good portion early in this trip, used just my hood and pretty much just had constant insomnia, could not sleep. Think of the function of having the sun in your eyes actually activates the chemicals that wake you up, so you never really get to sleep so, with that eye mask it really smashes it on my face it's really improved my sleeping and I've felt a lot better that's for sure, so, that's been pretty nice. Yea it's kinda weird when this weird fog came in, it surprised me it reminded me of that old bad monster movie, The Fog (laugh), kinda creepy cause when it came in, you think, oh no I'm gonna lose the track and you have to fight some more, fortunately it was relatively thin so the sun still comes through and I can navigate, but. Gonna keep pushing it, gotta hit those caches, I only have about 4 and a half days of reserve food so, my mileage drops to dramatically I'm in trouble. Hope all is well. Hope the holiday's is starting to march for people. Out! (See dispatch #1 of 2, Day 46 for beginning of story)

18 Dec, 12 - 15:53

(dispatch #2 of 2, Day 46)

Aaron in Antarctica, day 46 continued. Like I was saying, there's a question that came in from my Uncle Roy about how do I keep my boot interiors dry from day to day, he had to ring his out, if I got to the where I'm skiing and I got so hot that I had to ring mine out, I'd probably already have frost bite and I would have been done long ago. I have to be ultra careful about not sweating things out, I've done it once or twice unfortunately, it was a warm day otherwise I would have paid the price. Case in point, several days ago I had to push to get somewhere, when I stopped and finally made camp my feet were pretty cold, I'm like, ah that's not good, got in the tent, got them off, the liners are wool, there's actually frost on the outside of the liners and they were pretty darn moist, definitely a bad thing so. What I do is make sure that they're not super soaked, but I haven't had that yet and I put the liners in my sleeping bag with me every night. In the morning they're good and dry, just make sure I don't sweat them out myself. So it actually works pretty well. Yea it's uh, if you're having to ring out your boot liners skiing or cross countrying or whatever, you need to change your clothing, you're way too hot. My difficulty is I have to tow just on the edge of being cold, cause by the end of the session, I get pretty darn warm, in fact even now when this weird icy fog came in, all of a sudden the sun came out and oh my gosh I got hot, so I had to stop and refit and do costume changes, it's kinda tough. My dad asked about how the sun is here and yes it literally circles around your head, it doesn't ever set. I'm towing 7 days a week and have been for the past month so, for at least another 30/33 days I'm going to be towing day in day out, there's no day off on Saturday or Sunday for me, it's all out, everyday, 9 hours, get up and let's go. How many days do I travel? Seven days a week. Rest? Pretty much soon as I can get to bed here and I wake up at 6:00. The sun, yes it is bright, right now it's foggy so it's not so bad but never the less when you wake up in a dark sleeping bag it's amazingly bright outside so I have to wear one of those funky eye masks. I didn't do that for a good portion early in this trip, used just my hood and pretty much just had constant insomnia, could not sleep. Think of the function of having the sun in your eyes actually activates the chemicals that wake you up, so you never really get to sleep so, with that eye mask it really smashes it on my face it's really improved my sleeping and I've felt a lot better that's for sure, so, that's been pretty nice. Yea it's kinda weird when this weird fog came in, it surprised me it reminded me of that old bad monster movie, The Fog (laugh), kinda creepy cause when it came in, you think, oh no I'm gonna lose the track and you have to fight some more, fortunately it was relatively thin so the sun still comes through and I can navigate, but. Gonna keep pushing it, gotta hit those caches, I only have about 4 and a half days of reserve food so, my mileage drops to dramatically I'm in trouble. Hope all is well. Hope the holiday's is starting to march for people. Out! (See dispatch #1 of 2, Day 46 for beginning of story)

19 Dec, 12 - 15:48

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 47. Camp position South 84 degrees 42 decimal 454 minutes, position West 080 degrees 31 decimal 290 minutes. Time traveled 9 hours, distance 11.7 miles. That's about as good as it's probably ever gonna get. The conditions were super nice today, I can not remember the last time I had 3 good towing sessions in a row, that was so pleasant. This morning was pretty cold, pretty breezy but inconsistent and then things lightened up. There was just enough breeze to keep me cool so I didn't totally roast out and it's pretty amazing, at this point the air is cold enough that I can't even go out without my shell jacket towing at all because that breeze cuts right through my wool shirt, it's kinda rough. I mean it's weird, I feel fine with it on but when the breeze stops it's real challenging to deal with. I'm about 22 miles from the cache, it's suppose to go out tomorrow so

hopefully if everything stays exactly the same I'll be there in 2 days and be reloaded and forged on, that'll be really nice. Kinda going up and down hill right now, I think the elevations about 4,200 feet, I'm quite surprised it's dropped back down this low. I haven't been able to see Thiel Mountains or the Transantarctic Mountains yet, I'm rather surprised about that as well. One unique feature out here is, yesterday I was crossing a bunch of sastrugi fields and I noticed there is an extremely hard edge between the wind blown areas and not wind blown areas, that was actually quite surprising, I have to talk to a couple of the fluent dynamics people I know why that would actually happen, that way considering the landscapes so slow and undulating and the wind didn't seem too severe. Let's see questions that have come in from Peter and Emily Ligotti in Encinitas, How do I plan celebrating when I get to the South Pole? You know honestly I haven't even given that a thought. That's so far from my mind and myself it's still 318 miles away, but if you got any ideas I am all ears. When I'm heading down hill, relatively down hill, do my sleds hit me or carry their momentum? that's from my dad. No unfortunately they do not actually. It leads me into the next question, What do I wish I had with me right now? that's from Joann, actually one of my trip sponsors, thank you very much, out in Salt Lake. What I really wish I had is some repair gear to replace some mounts on my brackets to my skis to Charlie Red and Charlie Blue, my sleds, because then the sleds would actually slide that easy that when I do go down these little hills they would run into me, that actually would make me happy because that actually cuts my drag force. Been thinking about that a lot but without a lot of spare hardware and some serious tools and a bunch of other things, that is not gonna happen unfortunately. Peggy Wilson out of San Diego asked, How do I bathe out here? (laugh) Bathe, what's that? just kidding, actually I enjoy using, after I have my tea, actually use the tea bags when it's actually warm and sunny to wipe myself down, so I ended up smelling like lemon ginseng, english breakfast or camomile. It's actually not too bad, I mean you just mash the water out of it, rub it down, it's absorptive and absorbs some of the grime and oil, not much but I won't complain about it and also I have a camp towel to clean myself down every so often cause obviously when your powering around you do get pretty greasy that's for sure. Hope everything's going well for everyone, it's the 19th of December. Take care. Out!

20 Dec, 12 - 15:39

(Dispatch #1 of 2, Day 48)

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 48. Camp position South 84 degrees 54 decimal 140 minutes, position West 080 degrees 39 decimal 364 minutes. Time of travel 9 hours distance 11.7 miles, elevation about 4,500 feet. My cache is currently 10 nautical miles to the South of me at 184 degrees South, it wasn't dropped today cause apparently there was bad weather for the landing for the continuing, hopefully it will get dropped tomorrow otherwise it's gonna be kind of an interesting experience. I knew that I was going up this massive hill, I didn't even realize it was a hill until well into my second session. I was going along and all of a sudden felt weak and dying, like gosh dang it now what's wrong with me, and I look back and a couple miles back like ooh this is the thing I was looking at all day. It's crazy, it's such a long hill, you look at it and it makes it look so far, it's kinda discouraging, I mean sure, yea yea, I am still 300 mile to the pole, but my gosh, that was crazy to grind up. But the huge payoff, I finally see the Transantarctic Mountain range, holy cow that looks awesome. They're extremely stark, steep and they're so far away that actually look a little bit orangish even though the air is perfectly clear here, at first I thought it was some sort of base just because of the shape and size, but as I'm going along I realize, ah man no way, but then a couple other peaks started showing up and I realized, dang that's finally them, I can't believe I had to get that far to actually see them, but I came up a huge rise headed towards the Theils corner so that was kinda weird. Got a couple questions here, have I had problems with frost in the tent? well, since I'm pretty much roasting at the moment, falling asleep, no, no frost in the tent, uh if I do accidentally let my water steam over, yea I get plenty of frost in the vestibule but not in the tent. I had frost problems probably the first week til I dialed things in.

Dispatch cut off.

(see dispatch #2 of 2, Day 48 for continued story)

20 Dec, 12 - 15:59

(Dispatch #2 of 2, Day 48)

Aaron in Antarctica, day 48 continued, where was I, oh yea the frost in the tent thing, and I've learned to leave the doors quite open, maybe a foot, foot and a half and the back vented as well. There's nothing I hate worse in the morning than frost days where you riggle around and frost pours on you, not pleasant. I actually learned that in boy scouts. You just can not keep a tent absolutely

closed up, ironically, you gotta keep that thing quite open. Let's see, the bungee still good on the tow rope, yes it is, it's not as strong as a fresh bungee, I could probably convert it over, but why mess with something that's working? This design is much better than the loop style because there's no hard shock and impulse on me loop style trade so. That's actually still working well, if I didn't have that bungee on there my back would of been trashed a long time ago. Berry Pittman asked, what day do I expect to reach the pole? Oh yea, probably mid January right now probably the 18th/19th we'll see how it goes. As long as I can keep up my mileage 10, 10 plus, it'll all go pretty well, but if I start slogging out, well we'll have to see. Other than that just actually hoping for a tiny bit of breeze really, funny, and that wind punishes you, you think, oh my gosh I can't stand this stuff and then when goes away, your like ohhh, I actually do need that, takes a while to get it stablized usually the first session's full of trash. A shout ot to Kelly, Kris and Lynn, hope you had a good time at Ignite in Jackson Hole there for a birthday there. Hope all is well with everybody and your holiday plans are going well. Out!

(See #1 of 2, Day 48 for beginning fo story)

21 Dec, 12 - 15:45

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 49. Camp position South 85 degrees 05 decimal 948 minutes, position West 080 degrees 51 decimal 064 minutes. Time 9 hours, distance 12 miles. I was able to pick up my cache today, that was a huge load off the stresser. I've got 14 days worth of food and I've got 5 back up days on me so. As long as I'm able to keep up 10 mile days or better, I will be ok. That being said, I have run off my hard track and am now in soft packed snow, that sucks! The sleds being about 15 pounds heavier a piece, they actually seem to perform pretty well. Thank goodness ALE was able to come through and deliver both tent stakes and a shovel. The tent stakes are actually just heavy duty tent poles, I'll keep running with mine until they totally crap out, then I'll switch to theirs. And the shovel is a Voile Avalanche shovel, far better than the cheap piece of toy I brought, oh boy. It was so nice, I got the tent shoveled in maybe 3/5 minutes, normally takes me 10 plus with that little piece of junk blade I've got but. I'm gonna keep the blade just for the internal shoveling or making water, it's actually pretty handy, it's not big ole shovel. Things are actually going pretty well, and a huge differnce I noticed today is it was quite overcast, the sun wasn't beating on me at all and man I was able to ski so much better, I could not believe it. It was weird, about session 4 the sun came out just a little I'm like oh my gosh I'm on fire. I'm running with my thinnest long underwear possible, and I have to go with the heavyshirt cause the lighter shirt is just too cold at this point. So that was pretty good and I crossed the half way to the pole mark, at roughly 1 o'clock this afternoon. Yea then I'm just over half way to the pole, gotta long ways to go but I'm getting there. Current distance to my next cache is 134 miles, uh and that ah is more like eating the elephant one bite at a time so. Right now I'm headed about 194 degrees dead South because there's a crevasse field about 100 miles, 120/30 miles South of me I have to avoid so, I have to track West quite a bit, which is no big deal, better than dying in a crevasse that's for sure. One thing I did notice is that where the tips of my skis occasionally cross each other when I crash into myself, I shaved the top off to the would core, son of a biscuit. Oh boy, so soon as it's hot I'm gonna JB weld and seal that guy up cause that wood core being exposed means, gets a little warm, gets wet, gets in there, delaminates, skis broken, expedition over, that would not be good so. It is definitely JB weld time to seal those bad boys up. If it goes too long I will seam seal it but I prefer not to use that because I've been using that to hold my boots and all my other gear together. Got a question in from Edgar Rodriguez, I actually went to high school with him at Southwest High and graduated in 92', super good guy, he was joking and said if the scheduled end of the world shows up, the poles shift, will I be sitting on a beach, well no since I'm sitting on some 5,000 feet of snow and ice at least, that would be a very swimming experience for me. The biggest problem I would have as pole shift is, I only travel by compass during the day, I never use my GPS, I don't want to loose that thing. I don't know once I set my compass baring I travel just fine with it. The only beach I'm planning to be on is Hawaii or Tahiti after I get this thing done, holy cow. Hope everthings going well, looks like tomorrow is the first day of summer in Antarctica and it'll be minus 15 and overcast. Out!

22 Dec, 12 - 15:26

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 50. Camp position South 85 degrees 17 decimal 948 minutes, West 081 degrees 22 decimal 156 minutes. Distance traveled 11.5 miles, time traveled 9 hours, distance to next cache 123 miles, current elevation 4,600 feet. Traveling actually went well surprisingly after getting off the hard track, I've been traveling in soft mushy or dusty snow, 1 to 3 inches all day

and I'm absolutely stunned to have to actually cover that kind of distance. I'm heading slightly West here to get on track to get away from a crevasse field farther South of me and so far so good, it looks like I'm on track, I'll be going about 190 degrees tomorrow towards the next way point. Pretty nice today it was kinda weird it was real hot in the morning and then breezy and then slightly cooling in the afternoon and by the time I set up camp I'm headed towards a ground white out. One thing I did make a mistake of, I've been able to travel so, I guess relatively easier the last week and a half is I really powered it up the first session and oh stupid. Little bit sweaty, sessions 2 and 3 were pretty rough because of it I gotta get back into them and...of level loading things a bit, I just got so excited I decided to open it up but I guess that's the way it works. Finally had a cool day an overcast day, I actually got to clean out my tent. The way I clean out my tent is after I set it up, and unfortunately it was all wet inside because it was so warm today, is I throw a bunch of dusty snow inside the tent, crazy as that seems, yes I actually throw snow in the tent and then rub it all around things, I've little crumbs and nuts and sunflowers, it's kinda gross so, yea you don't want your home, man this place has actually psychologically become my home, to deteriorate in some rot fest or sleeping in food that's disgusting. So you just throw snow in there, dust it around and amazingly the snow pretty much soaks everything up, including that water that was sitting up here, then you just take a few minutes to dust it all out, scoop it out, throw it out and voila clean tent, not so disgusting anymore, really happy about that. The new shovel is working amazingly well, get the tent done, get the shoveling done in maybe 3 minutes instead of 10 and I'm not dead at all which is a real pleasure. I was super hungry today, it was kinda weird, and also, (laugh) I made a dumb mistake last night, I enjoyed tea but gosh dangit it had caffeine in it, of course I don't know which tea bags which so and I couldn't get to sleep til almost midnight, that sucked, huge mistake. I was warned about that by somebody and yea it finally bit me in the butt that's for sure, but I won't do that again. I don't want to have another bad night sleep it does affect performance that's for sure. Had spaghetti and meat sauce for dinner tonight, real enjoyable. It's actually my 39th birthday tomorrow, kinda crazy to be in the absolute, have to call it waste land of snow and ice celebrating it but that's how it worked out and in a couple days it will be Christmas as well so I guess that's how it works out here but. I gotta couple of cards from loved ones so that'll be good to open. And hey Dad, yea I know I'm trying to enjoy this thing as much I can cause, I remember when you told me in the boy scouts that these are the good ole days and well that's over 20 years ago and you were right, once this is over it's over. Thank you very much for the reminder. Hope all is well. Out!

23 Dec, 12 - 15:36

Hello Aaron in Antarctica. Camp position South 85 degrees 27 decimal 483 minutes, position West 081 degrees 50 decimal 032 minutes. Time traveled 9 hours, distance traveled 10.5 miles. I got a good strong 15 to 20 knot head wind, it's really starting to blow snow around which is actually a great birthday gift for me cause that means it's packing everything down. Bad thing of course is the head wind but we'll take it. Amazing how much more that head wind seems to cut in here than it did 2 weeks ago or even 3 weeks ago, man it's quite surprising. Went down a huge hill, I've been going up a huge hill and I'm still on that huge hill. Still can see that Transantarctic mountain range which is totally cool can not complain about that. Things have been going pretty well, doing some gear repair right now, one of my, my right ski, the front edge is quite chewed up to the wood core which is never good, that means water can get in there, fracture and broken ski and instant trip over. Like everything else, oh this happens trip over, this happens trip over, I don't want to do that. I got it all covered in JB weld, actually the ski fits in the tent just perfectly thank goodness I can keep it warm and safe and it doesn't get wet while the epoxy sets up, of course I just rolled over and put my shell pants good in it so I'm sure that'll be very nice. Let's see question came in, how did I learn about tea bag baths? There's actually a book out in 2012 called Polar Exploration by a european, this guy has 10 plus years experience, I got quite a few tid bits from there other than him saying to bring a better shovel than the junk I bought. Yea the tea bag bath is actually is really handy. Another question from my mom is how long is summer here and how warm does it get? Summer started yesterday and it'll end on March 22nd or whatever it is. So summer here lasts just like up in the Northern hemisphere, it's just called the Austria summer just like Australia because it's the... So while you guys up in Wyoming in the Northern states are freezing your butts off, we're down here, well if I was in Australia I'd be sitting on the beach toasty warm but down here yea no definitely not. Right now it's probably minus 15, minus 20 outside it can get pretty icy here. On the coast 2 months ago I noticed McMurdo Station was reporting 5 degrees but 1 month ago Vostok Station was reporting minus 40 as the high. So right now I understand Union Glacier is reporting about minus 10 and I expect that once I get to the South Pole I was warned it could still be minus 35

so. Yea the warmest it ever gets is about 5 degrees above zero fahrenheit but in general it stays minus 10 to minus 20 most of the time unless a storm comes in or something so it's definitely not warm that is for sure. One interesting tid bit is the sun rises and the sun sets exactly once a year, so the sun will actually set on March I think it's 22nd on the solstice, so that's the last time you'll see the sun here until September 22nd when it rises so. Exactly one sunset and exactly one sunrise, granted it takes a while but. The sun is about 25 to almost 30 degrees up in the sky where as up in higher latitude would actually be dead over head so it's as high as it gets and now it only gets colder. Out!

24 Dec, 12 - 16:22

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 52. Camp position South 85 degrees 39 decimal 100 minutes, West 081 degrees 59 decimal 357 minutes. Time traveled 9 hours, distance 11.7 miles. Distance to next cache, 100 nautical miles, current elevation 5,400 feet. Current distance to South Pole approximately 260 miles. I enjoyed a mac-n-cheese for Christmas Eve dinner. Now last night I got to enjoy one of probably the best birthday presents I have ever received, ever, thank you so much mom and dad for putting the montage of so many people calling in and telling me Happy Birthday, letting me listen to everybody sing happy birthday, I mean I was just absolutely floored, couldn't believe you guys were able to put that together and man that was so special, being out in the middle of nowhere to hear so many voices, people in my life and people I care about and love, that was just, man, totally awesome. Yea actually my dad cuts videos, his company tvlvideo.com, there's a link on my website, (under sponsors) he's actually quite good at that, he happened to run up a gold panning, gold searching show. He can actually produce webmercials, special interest videos, school videos, just about anything you possibly need, is a good guy and well worth working, so if you got a chance go check out his website and give him a talk, you never know what kind of product your company or your person you might need to sell and video is a great way to do it. Today was actually quite unique in more ways than one, years and years ago I read about a place called the dead zone in Sahara in Northern Chad in Southern Libya and the author in National Geographic Adventure, now dead unfortunately, said that the place was so flat and so empty he could get his motorcycle up to speed, put his hands out, close his eyes and not have to worry about hitting anything. For just about an hour I found a place just like that, no sustrugi, no undulation, just tiny pockmarks, I was actually able to ski for up to 30 seconds with my hands out just scooting along and I could only do 30 seconds cause I'd start to lose my balance and fall over but that was awesome, I've always dreamed about doing that and never expected to be able to do it, it was so cool. Today started out really warm, then the wind cut to ultra icy and I had to put a wind skirt on cause man it was burning the heck out of my stomach, that was not comfortable. Then about the end of the day the air literally warmed up, the weirdest feeling ever so I had to change costumes again. Here's the weirdest thing on Christmas Eve, almost Santa stopped by, Vilborg Arna Gissurardottir from Iceland, I'm sitting here cooking my dinner, cooking the boiling water and I hear my named being yelled out, I thought ok I've finally gone off the deep end. No there is actually another human out here who saw my tent and headed over here for a full hour, it was crazy, yea she's actually out here skiing to the Pole, expects to be out here 55 daysish we'll see. She can do about 26 kilometers a day, I can only do about 20 so, I'll be several days behind her, but it was so neat to actually run into another human out here. It doesn't ruin the experience at all, I mean it's been gosh 50/52 plus days since I've seen any humans and it was neat to chit chat. Her rig is exactly the same as mine so (laugh) I have no excuses of why I'm so slow but oh well. Just chit chatted a bit, learned a little bit more about what she's doing and what she's raising interest for so that was super neat. What a neat Christmas Eve present. Alf I hope you, Sarah, your parents, Lance, Danny and everybody are all having fun. Out!

25 Dec, 12 - 16:12

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, Christmas camp, Merry Christmas to everyone! Camp position South 85 degrees 52 decimal 274 minutes, West 082 degrees 02 decimal 575 minutes. Time of travel 9 hours, distance 13 miles. Huge thank you to Vilborg Arna Gissurardottir of Iceland for showing me how to crash through sastrugi instead of going around it, it made a difference of about 1.6 miles, 15 percent, let me tell ya that was such a huge boost to the spirit on this holiday, I can't even begin to describe it. It was actually a very beautiful day to travel, just a light breeze at 5,600 feet elevation. Actually starting to get kinda cool, cooler. The sun was out but I wasn't cooking cause there was a light breeze. I'm about 87 miles from my next cache, 248 miles to the South Pole currently. I hope everybody's enjoying their Christmas and that, definitely a white Christmas here that's for sure. Special thank you to Mom, Dad and Kelly for the cards you guys got me for Christmas, that means a

lot to me to have gifts all the way out here on the bottom of the globe. And Also Kelly I got your message there what you're getting me for my birthday and Christmas and I'm speechless, thank you so much. Oh gosh, Merry Christmas to Mom, Dad, Kelly, Jason, Nicole, Justin, Jake, Aunt Nancy, Grandpa, Uncle Buddy, Aunt Debbie, Esther, Ray and the kids, Uncle Tom, Aunt Diane, oh boy keep going down the list here buddy boy, Alf, Sarah, Alfonso, Carmen, Lance, Danny, Jessica, boy um let's see who else do I got here, not exactly sure who's following the blog here but I really appreciate that. Ok what do we got, questions, how do I put up with the daily grind to put up and take down the tent day in and day out, tolerating six 75 minute straight sessions of dragging the sleds across the snow? um yea that's a good question, I don't have a particularly good answer other than the motivation of running out of food and fuel, that's always very high on the list, I only have right now 29/30 days worth of food and fuel left so if I don't make it by roughly then I'm going to be starving, of course ALE will probably bail my butt out. Yea having to make a location by a certain date and running out of food and fuel before you get somewhere is highly motivating to get you up, even though sometimes I lay around and thrash around for a few minutes, I know I have to get going by 9 otherwise I just don't get there, I like to stop at 5:45 otherwise it makes the day quite lengthy. A shout out to all the men who are 40 and above, hey uh, when you get a chance, right after New Years if you haven't done it already, stop by your doctor's office and ask to have a blood check for prostate cancer. Tiny little blood draw, no big deal, it's a cancer that with early detections 99% curable, of all the dumb things to get wacked by that is not it, it saved my dad and could save you or somebody you know. If you get a chance, check out the Prostate Cancer Foundation at pcf.org. That is one of the things I'm trying to raise awareness for, I've met so many people that have been affected by this cancer it's just blown me away. Don't let it go, don't put it off, all you do is get your blood drawn and your done. Merry Christmas! Out!

26 Dec, 12 - 15:33

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 54. Camp Position South 86 degrees 06 decimal 045 minutes, position West 082 degrees 03 decimal 268 minutes. Time of travel 9 hours, distance traveled 14 miles. Pretty blown away I was actually able to scrape it, it was actually 13.8 but I won't complain. The surface was super easy and after learning how to travel sustrugi a lot better I've been a lot more efficient, also trying to get more fission on my breaks, I don't sit down on my sled anymore cause I notice my muscles get stiff and tired, I'm getting old. So Now I just stand for my breaks, and it's actually kinda nice, I actually feel a bit better so my hips don't get all cranked out, getting funky and I don't risk breaking something else, seems like every week I've got new impressive breakage report. Distance to cache number two 73 miles, elevation 5,900 feet, distance to the South Pole 234 miles. It was a very beautiful day to ski Antarctica that's for sure. Light breeze, sunny, couple clouds just kinda floating around making things really interesting so it was very enjoyable. I noticed too at this altitude that the air is starting to get chillier and chillier as amazing as that can be so, eventually I'm gonna have to modify my clothing here. Still when I'm skiing the side of my legs are fully unzipped, I'm only wearing one pair of long johns, light ones. Still got shirt, just one short, my jacket is unzipped and sometimes I can slightly zip it up so. I suspect as I go in farther and penetrate the very interior of the continent and also the altitude it will finally catch up with me. Let's see what do we got for today, oh yea Peter Ligotti asks, what am I gonna do to celebrate the Pole and I finally figured it out, I'm gonna walk around the Pole clockwise enough times to reverse my age just enough so I can enjoy being 38 for a few more days. The only place on the planet I suppose you can reliably do that since the North Pole floats around too much. So that will be kinda cool, probably take me, I don't know, (laugh) probably 30 plus times walking around the Pole to reverse my age back to 38, but hey, not that you could do that everyday that's for sure. Happy Boxing day to all you balmys out in Australia, Canada and wherever else you guys are that celebrate that holiday, it's a little weird to us Americans but hey it's your holiday, enjoy it. And a huge shout out from Antarctica to Sarah Bradstreet of Jackson Hole Wyoming, I hope you and your loved ones and friends and people you care about enjoy your 15th birthday, hopefully you don't party up til 4 am but ya never know. Hope you guys have a good time there and hopefully it's snowing so you can actually get out and do something. I've got plenty of snow, I'm standing on probably 7,000 feet of ice and snow so if you'd like some I definitely can share some. Hope all is going well post holiday, watch out for those credit card statements. Talk soon, Out!

27 Dec, 12 - 15:39

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 55 Camp position South 86 degrees 19 decimal 152 minutes, West 082 degrees 07 decimal 836 minutes. Time of travel 9 hours, distance 13 miles. Distance to next cahch

60 miles, distance to South Pole 221 miles, current elevation 6,100 feet. Got the 12 rations remaining so I look pretty good there. Definitely learned there is a reason why I always bury the valance and to... last night I went to bed and... woke up today and the tent was booming... white out...blowing by, 20 knot winds uh yea, I noticed my barometer on my watch said, whoa hey better watch out, thanks, great. So even though it looks beautiful when you go to sleep, everything looks calm, horizon looks clear, you always put chunks of ice and snow, dusty snow, all the way around the tent because otherwise this whole place would have been filled with wind drift and I would have been choking out, it would have been a total mess and everything would have been wet so. Always always do that it was definitely a critical detail which I know it but getting burried is far far worse that's for sure. Today the travel was quite good, there was only on super long rise, took about a session, session and a half to get up it then massive dead zone, two and a half sessions, each session 75 minutes, I've got a 15 minute break in between so. I mean it just went on and on and on it was crazy, actually after a while I kinda wish I had the ipod set so I could listen to an audio book, I mean it was just like wholly cow does this flatness ever end, it was kinda weird. Now the snow up here is wind packed so when I hit my ski pole on it the basket mushes in, I mean it's probably gonna be like that for the rest of the trip, which is kind of a bummer cause it just keeps slowly getting softer and softer which of course slows you down and gives you more work. Looks like there's a little sastrugi ahead, no such a bad thing cause ... session 3, so I'm going along everythings all warmed up, just fine, all of a sudden the wind shifts slightly, it gets super cold, my regular medium gloves, I mean one minute my hands are searing and wanting to the ..., so turn face away from the wind, put my heavy gloves on, had to power it up for a minute or 2, out my hood back up, I mean just weirdest thing, the wind before felt relitively warm and just ice out of nowhere, it's the weirdest thing. I've had that happen several times, I haven't figured out the correlation between eating or anything, I just think the wind shifts but a terribly cold pocket of air comes along. Also, I've started to notice I can feel a little bit of the altitude now after coming up this last hill, maybe it's psychosomatic, I'm not totally sure on that one but I'll roll with it and know that I can't just lack the first session otherwise I get wacked. Somebody asked, how's the beard? uh it's there, it looks like crud, definitely not my look. My mom asked, did I take my passport? yes I did, cause apparently you can get your paasport stamped at the South Pole so absolutely want to get that done that's for sure. Camped right now, right before a hill, excited to get to my next cache if I can sustain this rate, it will be about 5 and a half days, that'll be really nice, then I'll have tons of food and fuel and safety to make it to the Pole. One thing is my left foots really, like left toe pad is really starting to bug me so I'm gonna swap out for my new kartankers and also switched out my bungy too cause I think that's starting to wear out so doing ok otherwise. Out!

28 Dec, 12 - 15:50

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 56. Camp position South 86 degrees 32 decimal 032 minutes, West 082 degrees 05 decimal 401 minutes. Time of travel 9 hours, distance 13 miles. First things first, wholly crud I did not mean to make the insult or make the forget, a very belated Merry Christmas and thank you oh oh oh so much to Wendy Davis of Tokyo Japan, I'm super sorry I forgot you on my Christmas wish list there, I really apologize for that one, just a total mental fubar on my part. Wendy is actually one of the major supporters and private sponsors of this expedition, she really helped out getting a lot of info, especially the travel set up for this thing to figure all out how the heck to even get my butt down here and down to Chile in a very timely and efficient manner so. Definitely didn't mean to miss you there Wendy, I really apologize. Hopefully you guys have a roaring New Years in a couple days and get drunk, unfortunately I have no liquor with me what so ever, and you can't take enough advil to do anything interesting without killing yourself so we'll skip that part. Let's see, camp information, distance to cache 47 miles, elevation 6,800 feet, distance to South Pole 208 miles. Let's see, it has been cold, whoo boy, I noticed the chilblains on my stomache expanded a bit yesterday, and it's cause that wind just starting to cut through my Event jacket, so today I put my stomache chilblain skirt on, that is my fleece jacket, I just tie it around my waist and use it as an apron skirt, that seemed to cut the edge off , cause there's a good 15 knot wind almost the whole day so. Snow shifted around, sastrugi dusted a little bit, things that were here aren't here, gone, it was kinda weird, you can watch my tracks blow in right behind me so, Even if I had to follow myself back, I'd be in real trouble so, thank goodness for compass and GPS. Left foot, oh boy that's starting to hurt, that's not a good sign so. What I've done is broken out my new kartankers put them in my boots and I'm jamming them in there to shape them so I can use them in the next day or two cause oh man, and it's usually the big problem I have is when I get in these huge flat runs like today, the valley I cross where I camp, man it takes me 3 hours to get across that

thing, then add a flat area of 4 and a half, boy, I mean it was huge and I've been going up a hill for the last hour and a half, hopefully I'll top out here pretty quick. Weather conditions, pretty good, just even in my tent it's starting to get cold, just the sun and barely a light wind so. The altitude is starting to catch up that's for sure, I can start to feel it, I barely made 13 miles today and I suspect it's not gonna get any better as time goes on and I've been told that bad sastrugi is gonna be heading my way in probably one degree, I don't know. I understand ground conditions are gonna get pretty poor real quick here so It'll be interesting, It'll be good to get to my cache so I can supply up and also been notified that another expeditionist has decided to bail out so there's a cache there as well waiting that if I need some extra supplies I will be able to use those, hopefully it all works out for him but that cache has been abandoned so it is available to me, which is good, maybe there'll something interesting in there to eat besides Lara bars, Pro bars, chocolate, pecan sandie, uh what else do I eat? almonds and shot blocks, that's all I eat all day other than breakfast dust and dinner dust. Hope all is well with everybody. Out!

29 Dec, 12 - 16:31

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 57. Camp position South 86 degrees 44 decimal 994 minutes, West 081 degrees 59 decimal 288 minutes. Time traveled 10 hours, distance 13 miles, distance to next cache 34 miles, distance to South Pole 195 miles, elevation 7,200 feet. Ended up crossing two big domes and in it went through a place dubbed Valley 7 and in the bottom of that place is the place called The Pit now. Oh my gosh, as I began descending in the hill, I thought ah this isn't bad and then it gets steeper, steeper, steeper and then the sleds, Charlies, starts scooting by themselves a little bit, oh not a good sign. So um yea, kept getting steeper and steeper, all of a sudden I noticed a sastrugi that usually you see them not too far away but boy this stuff did not get close forever telling me it was huge and sure enough there were small mountains inside this Pit, the sastrugi was over 6 feet tall, scooped out in bowls so it may be 8 feet tall in total. It's actually kind of a scary place, I was able to win my way through it but once I got to the bottom I realized, oh man, the only way a sastrugi this big is with really bad wind. Sure enough at the top of the hill everything's pretty good but once I got in there that wind really started ripping, that was kinda miserable so. I knew I had to get out there and unfortunately I had descended the Pit in session 6, normally my last session of the day, ending at 5:45 and I started getting up the hill, then I was like I gotta get out of this thing, the only got worse and worse as I started pouring down that hill. The east side of the hill was at least as steep as the one in Doom Valley, boy that thing sucks, so I'm headed up the south end and I'm camped about three quarters of the way up but man this thing goes on and on. The hill was so steep coming out of that, there were just no camp sites, I mean just nothing, it was icy and crunchy. So I rested for about 5 minutes, didn't take a break, didn't eat or get a sip of water cause I knew the longer I took the longer it was going to take for me to get a camp site, so I plowed for gosh another 45 plus minutes looking for even a vaguely suitable place. Right now I'm perched on a, it's not a shelf on the cliff sense of it, the only shelf I ran into in the last 15 minutes that was even viable and I mean around me it's all hilly so the Charlie sleds will take right off on me, ah geez. So I'm looking at another grind tomorrow. Hopefully the sastrugi I'm suppose to run into isn't as big as that stuff down there cause oh my gosh I couldn't believe how big that stuff was and certainly hope I don't run to big valleys and pits like I've been cause it took me an extra hour to eek out that 13 miles and if it's like this I'm in trouble. I took the extra advil at 2 o'clock to keep the pain at bay and definitely helped but the sastrugi also probably helped, so if it starts getting rough like this the mileage will definitely tick down. Hope everybody's doing well, I'm not sure what your plans for new years are but shoot me a message and let me know and I'll toss it out. Out!

30 Dec, 12 - 15:32

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 58. Camp position South 86 degrees 56 decimal 376 minutes, West 082 degrees 04 decimal 930. Time of travel 9 hours, distance 11.5 miles, elevation 7,600 feet, distance to cache, I'm not exactly sure around 20 miles, distance to South Pole 183 miles. It's a good thing I checked on my cache position cause what I was given to where the aircraft actually dropped it was, crud, almost a mile and a half almost 2 miles difference I would've totally missed it. And unfortunately looks like a storm is skirting me right now which will really suck cause I hit the notorious sastrugi section, holy cow, this stuff's 6/10 feet tall, I head east west and that means you gotta go laterally through it. Man if my sleds were on skis they would've gotten pulverised if not destroyed here. I'm doing my absolute best to make sure I don't wreck my skis otherwise it's gonna be a horrible walk, I mean that's the one big stresser for me is making sure I keep my skis in tact. Not too many people I understand break them but man if they do that's a long sucky walk. The

sastruis super beautiful, but the, I had two major sections that each took about an hour and a half to cross. I noticed my mileage dropped quite significantly cause you just slow down a heck of a lot. I did get to photograph a few but the last section I hit of course was in session 6, I had no desire to stop and fool around, I want to get to camp and set it up, cause it takes a while to get through there and there are no real good places to camp in there unless you want to throw yourself a hole and wrap a sleeping bag and hope everything somehow magically works out, which of course never does here. So right now that edge of the storm is kinda skirting, it's sunny it's dark it's sunny it's dark. I'm hoping it blows through tonight, I'll have ok conditions tomorrow just a light breeze, did totally die for a little bit so man it got hot again, I'm being relative at minus 15 degrees. I had to wear my jacket as a cloke and I'm still wearing my stomache skirt, my fleece jacket, my chilblains on my stomache are bothering me, I haven't broken skin or turned black but it's something I gotta be really careful about now. It is December 30th that means in Japan it is Happy New Years Eve to Wendy there, hope you go out and have a bunch of fun with friends and just remember those 3 advil after you get home cause you know how it is a day later. And then all of you who are still on the day before time zone, I don't know what your new years plans are, mine are pretty much to ski ski ski, I wish I would've brought a little bit of, a vial of rum with me, that would've been some serious forward thinking but oh well sometimes it doesn't work out that way. Having fun, going across that sastrugi my ... really bug me, it's so stressful holding your arms up constantly, fighting them, it's kinda challenging. And the hills here are getting pretty crazy too and I think that's what's causing the sastrugi, I can't believe the steepness of the hills, I don't know, really strange I figured it would've flattened out but guess you gotta gain elevation somehow. I have this delusion it would be this smooth incline (laugh), guess that's a delusion. Hope all's well. Out!

31 Dec, 12 - 15:57

Hello this is Aaron in Antarctica, day 59. Camp position South 87 degrees 06 decimal 056 minutes, West 082 degrees 11 decimal 087 minutes. Time of travel 9 hours, distance 10 miles, distance to cache two 11.5 miles, elevation 7,800 feet, distance to South Pole 173 miles. Holy crud it's starting to get cold here, woo boy. Tomorrow I'm gonna have to put my vest back on under my shell ... I've been traveling, it's annoying cause I'm pretty much freezing and still my goggles are fogging up cause I'm steaming up, it's a hell of a battle. I actually had to wear my goggles all day even with my alpine gloves on so that's been kinda crazy. Definitely getting colder but one of the problems is I'm crossing these massive sastrugi fields where I'm just kinda going under anaerobic power and just can not get the speed to warm up so between slow and fast, very difficult to manage that heat. I've been told the sastrugi classically lasts til 88 degrees 10 minutes, not exactly what I wanted to hear, real bummer, Also I was told that Hannah McKeand, most experienced skier on this entire route, has reported the sastrugi is worse then she's seen in many many years and she has a lot of experience doing it so, this is gonna suck for about maybe 60 miles, oh man, that's gonna be really rough. I can't imagine somebody riding their bike through this stuff, I mean I can barely ski and stumble through it. Let's see questions, will I eat chocolate and cookies after I do all this? from Stephanie B. in Cincinnati, and yes I am taking picks, Stephanie is also one of the major supporters of this expedition, thank you so much, I really appreciate it. I hope you guys are having a good time out there in the mid west, should be midnight fairly soon for you, hope your not just clocked out in bed. Nancy will be counting steaks and peas for new years, I gotta say I would love to have steak and peas right now. New years eve dinner is chili mac with beef uh yea. Let's see what makes sastrugis so tall? I'm not exactly sure why they get so big at the 87 degree mark, I have no idea, all I know is that the wind really whips around and it drives it, just the right condition. For one thing I noticed, there are a lot steeper hills here that roll up and down rather than the light rolling hills I've experienced and there are a lot more valleys here. So right now actually this is a valley, I'm gonna call new years valley, whatever I want to call it. Out!

1 Jan, 13 - 16:38

Hello Happy New Year 2013, Aaron in Antarctica, day 60. Camp position South 87 degrees 17 decimal 404 minutes, West 082 degrees 39 decimal 525 minutes. Distance traveled 11.5 miles, time 10 hours, elevation 8,000 feet, Distance to Sout Pole 162 miles, I think, something like that, that doesn't make sense, well whatever. Anyway, yea kinda having some higher altitude challenges now it's like being up in Yellowstone, the water bottles are starting to freeze in Charlie Red, so I'm gonna have to keep them in the sleeping bag again, that's a real pain in the butt. Stomach chilblains, they're getting worse, I'm gonna have to wrap my other jacket around my waist. It's just generally colder here, I mean one of the problems is I'm not powering up hard enough to generate the heat

cause I had a good 6/7, 6 and a half hours of pure sastrugi crossing, just pure punishment and apparently it's suppose to be like this for another 45 miles, oh my gosh, that's gonna be freaking crazy. I did pick up my cache, everything seems to be here, I haven't gone through the goody bag yet but I'm gonna use a couple of those 4x4 bandages and put them on my stomach right now just to keep the air and the wind off cause that is the number one cause that gives you chilblains, wish I could put more clothing on just to battle it off but still just at that point where I'm gonna get too hot so, uh yea still kind of a challenge. Other than that going pretty well, hope everybody had a happy, good new years and didn't have too bad of a hang over and a good time. Other than that I'm about a mile and a half of the normal track so tomorrow I'm gonna head back at 178 degrees to get back on point. And also 13 miles south is the crevasse field so definitely want to stay west of that bad boy, I don't want anything to happen there that's for sure. I learned that I'm about average for crossing sastrugi so that's not all bad. One interesting here is a correction factor on the compass is now 45 degrees for the declination so if I didn't put the declination in I would end up about 130 miles away from the Pole where I think I would be so definitely something you gotta be ultra careful about, the crazy declination here is pretty wild. Hope all is well with everybody, thanks. Out!

2 Jan, 13 - 16:13

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 61. Camp position South 87 degrees 26 decimal 301, West 082 degrees 35 decimal 456 minutes. Time of travel 8 hours, distance 9 miles, elevation 8,200 feet, distance to South Pole 154 miles. Holy Moly, what I'm calling at 87 degrees 21 minutes south 082 degrees 25 minutes west is Colossal Hills, the sastrugi in there was so insane it was almost impassable. I mean from the hole to the top almost got to 8 feet on some of those things, I mean it was crazy. And no unfortunately I did not take any photographs, the weather was bad and it was super cold, the wind was ripping through and yada yada yada, no, no photographs. I was doing my absolute best not to fall down and break something seriously. The morning started out quite overcast and windy and mean, fortunately it broke through in a couple hours, of course once those clouds go away it actually gets much much colder. So I've been kinda fighting that, I've converted over to my parka, was hoping to wear my vest but I still got too warm with that thing. One of the reason definitely need to stay in my parka now on is I got a little wind burn and freezer burn on my cheek, gosh darn it. Since the winds southwest, it's a little bit weird but I guess it changes somewhere along here. So I've got a band aid over that guy to keep it protected and also use one of those big self adhesive bandages to protect my stomach and the chilblains there so. Trying to hold it together at 8,200 feet, it's much colder here, damn. Uh pretty much I've only had maybe 15/20 minute reprieves from sastrugi the whole time. Apparently all other teams reported, it's just unbelievable. I was told that, it was reported that at about 88 degrees it clears up and goes back to normal so, I've got another three good days of punishment. It's amazing how beautiful the formations are and I can spend hours and hours photographing them assuming I didn't freeze, but I have to make miles and after a while you see the stuff, you start yelling at it, I don't know, maybe that's me but, I just start smashing through and not caring, I'm sure I'll look back and wish I done more but when you gotta make miles and do all that it's about all you can do. Sure hoping every body's doing ok, wishing I could receive some messages from you guys, that'd be really nice. Well hopefully the weather will stay stable tomorrow with a light breeze. I pretty much camped in a patch of medium to light sastrugi so, all you do is just smash your sleds over things all day, I couldn't imagine anybody riding their bike or anything through here, I mean even walking through here is exceedingly difficult, it's so deep. The nice thing about skis is it actually bridges all that craziness. Just trying to stay warm, kinda weird I get super hot and yet there's several points of my body that it bites me so, well do you get chilblains and bites or do you get too hot? I don't know, that's a tough call. Even though everything is cold and I gotta figure out how to run my boots in the morning, my kartanker wool liners are still moist, annoying the heck out of me, can not figure out how to deal with that. Hope all is well. Out!

3 Jan, 13 - 15:29

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 62. Holy crap, more massive sastrugi. One team actually reported 9 feet high, I only saw 6 and 7 but. Anyway, camp position South 87 degrees 34 decimal 755 minutes, West 082 degrees 24 decimal 761 minutes. Distance only 8.5 miles, times 9 hours, distance to South Pole 145 miles, elevation 8,400 feet. Oh my gosh, the last hill I went over 87 degrees, 29 minutes, give or take, the drop off were so insane that I couldn't go down them, actually had to go around them, that murders you on time going around stuff here, just kills you. So that probably whacked me on my mileage there which totally sucks but not much I can do about that. Let's see, just totally

crazy, apparently it's gonna last 3 days, I was hoping to get out in 2 by doing 10 miles a day but not looking good for that so here we are battling sastrugi and apparently all other teams report absolute insanity as well so, I'm right there with them, it'll be over soon but not soon enough. It's beautiful but brutal. Hope all is well. Out!

4 Jan, 13 - 15:30

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 63. Camp position South 87 degrees 42 decimal 198 minutes, West 082 degrees 36 decimal 470 minutes. Time of travel 9 hours, distance only a poultry 7.5 miles. I have not done that since day 28, It's kinda crushing. I've been told that the sastrugis another 2 to 4 days depending on how it goes for me and well uh (laugh) great, I was told it's kind of a self imposed purgatory pushing a boulder up a hill. But I woke up in sastrugi ground for 8 hours in sastrugi, had a partial ground white out blow through with clouds and a 25 plus knot wind in my face so, between all those I actually got blown off course a half mile so I need to correct that tomorrow. Oh man, wish it was a little bit better but. I'm getting this new clothing system dialed in for the new temperature and wind condition, it's a little bit tough, it doesn't take but the slightest unzip of your jacket and inch or 2 and you go from over heating to freezing, it's kinda crazy. So that's kind of Antarctica where you take a lot of punishment that's for sure. Hey mom the pogies are actually working ok but they're holding up just fine, I just desperately wish I would have put some velcro on like you suggested cause when the winds really strong the the up wind one just keeps blowing right down, it drives me nuts. Let's see, Aunt Nancy, I look forward to the steak and peas at the Silver Dollar believe me. Hello to all the staff at the Wort Hotel, thank you very much for keeping up and following me through my odyssey and expedition in Antarctica, it's quite a good time here. My cousin Teresa daughter Elora, mentioned that some of the students at Southwest High School are following my expedition now, that's my alma mater, I graduated in 1992, can't believe it's already been 20 plus years, that is so crazy. And I don't know if they're still up in the auditorium, gymnasium there but if you look up and see 1992 CIF championship volley ball, I was part of that team and helped us win it against Bonita back in those days. I don't know if there are any photos left there from that time, you can actually find me in some of those pictures. Definitely good memories to come back to, I really miss those easier days in school, you think they're tough now but believe me, when you got a cranky boss breathing down your neck daily and projects or whatever to get done, boy that's uh I don't know, enjoy it while you can in the school and maybe if there's a chance I'll be able to come and give a talk or two in some of the classes there if you guys are interested. My dad also asked me to explain compass declination, right now the compass is at, in Antarctica, actually point to, not the geographic South pole but a point off the coast of Antarctica, probably I'm guessing 900 miles away, so right now if I don't correct for that instead of pointing south my compass actually will point southwest, so if I didn't correct for that error. I would actually end up about 120 miles away from the Pole if I kept on that way. Also, the geographic or geomagnetic North Pole is not at the North Pole either so between those two oddities of the magnetic pole being off the coast of Antarctica you really have to be careful about messing that up, currently my declination is at 45 degrees so it's way off. It doesn't take much to mess you up and the compass is very floaty down here, the magnetic field is quite weak so, takes a little bit of effort to use. Hope all is well. Out!

5 Jan, 13 - 15:36

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 64. Camp position South 87 degrees 51 decimal 938, West 082 degrees 38 decimal 198. Time traveled 9 hours, distance 10 miles, distance to South Pole 127 miles, elevation 8,900 feet. Wow! I'm just camped west, in a place I'm going to call Impassable Titan Valley, the sastrugi in there has achieved over 9 feet, almost 10 feet high, the holes are massive, if my sleds would have fallen in there I, uh I don't know what I would of done, probably would have broke things, I probably would have been toast and then there's no rescue because there's no place for an aircraft to land for miles around. Needless to say, a place you don't want to go. Fortunately I found some other explorer tracks and I was warned you gotta be careful about following them cause you never know. But everybody instead of heading south they actually headed southwest and went on a constant contour around this valley and I had to say thank goodness because I would of puddled directly into that thing thinking, oh I better just head dead south, I would have been toast. It was sastrugi upon sastrugi, side by side, it was like nothing I'd ever run into, even Colossal Hill and One Way Hill were not this bad, there were still paths, this stuff, I'm still on the upper rim, and it's barely passable, totally crazy. So yep, passing, right hip is really starting to bug me so I gotta start feeding that thing advil, I don't know. Trying to poke around and prod and figure out what the heck's going on with it, um yea I don't know, hopefully it's not in the joints just the muscles buggin out. To

those in Jackson Hole suffering the 14 to 20 degrees below, hey your right there with me, but don't forget you get to run from your car to your house to your work place, whatever your getting to do. I get to live in this 24 hours a day, you should try it sometime. Go out and camp in it, go out to Yellowstone go camping or Teton when it's that cold, it's pretty entertaining that for sure. Shout out to Emmett, thank you very much for starting to follow me here. Also, shout out to Brandon Stone at KUSI, thank you for doing the original story on me, I really appreciate it. Shout out to Lydia at Hybridge Communications, thank you so much for doing the copy work and creating a very cool business card that you allowed me to make or however you want to say that but I think I distributed over 250 in course of the time you guys making them to the time I left, that's been a really good thing. Hopefully I will be able to crack 7 or 8 miles tomorrow and I'll get to the 88 degree mark and start to get out of this crazy sastrugi. I thought it was bad before but, whoa my gosh. Also it was weird today, minus 20 degrees, I looked like Sid the sloth from Ice Age, I had icicles hanging from my mustache, I mean one inch long it was crazy and yet, because there was no breeze, I was roasting. The only thing I was wearing was my wool shirt and my shell jacket tied around my neck (laugh), fricken unbelievable. Right now there are thin clouds marching past and all I'm doing is praying they do not end up in a white out, if they do I have no idea how I'm gonna get through this jumbled mess, woohoo. Hope all is well. Out!

6 Jan, 13 - 15:31

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 65. Camp position South 88 degrees 00 decimal 457 minutes, West 083 degrees 07 decimal 141 minutes. Distance 8.6 miles time of travel 9 hours, elevation 9,300 feet, distance to South Pole 120 miles. Woohoo, finally dear Lord I am in the 88 degree ring. Oh my gosh, I can not believe the punishment it has been to get here, hohohoho. Today the sastrugi, until about 4 O'clock and I stop at 6, was just pure punishment, my hip is killing me. But what I figured out is because I had to run my traces so short, traces are what attach me to the Charlie sleds, and to prevent the sleds from crashing into things and they did anyway, I even had a turtle where it fully rolled over, that I had so much lifting force and it wasn't balanced, it's just breaking my hip. As soon as the sastrugi started to descend here I've been able to let the traces out a bit and it's felt much much better, thank goodness. Uh it was light sun today, overcast, and a tiny bit of snow right now and boy I hope it doesn't snow anymore, cause that makes things miserable. Let's see, I have the most incredible optical display I think I've ever seen ever, granted I don't live in snowy locations but there was the 22 and a half degree sun bow around the sun, each side had a blazing bright sun dog of rainbow color, then there was a much rarer 45 degree sun bow around the sun and dead vertical was opposing 45 degree sun bow. I don't even think I've ever read about that in my atmospheric book, and then there was a full 360 degree white halo from the sun all the way around the sky and I couldn't exactly measure it but it was either 75 or 90 degree there was a bright sunburst as well and I don't remember that ever being in my atmospheric optics book either, so I'll have to look that thing up, I'm sure it was but it's so rare and I got to see it down here, that was so cool. Yea that brings a tear to your eye let me tell ya. Uh yea the punishment level at the 87 degree area, by the time I get home I'm gonna need to see a podiatrist, and orthopedist, a regular doctor, probably the dentist, a psychiatrist, psychologist and a chiropractor all in the same week cause I am gonna be a fricken wreck, oh my gosh. But I'm about 1.5 miles off the scrap track but I found some other expeditionist tracks and I'm running on those at the moment just to save myself a little bit of time cause I really wanna roll this thing, get it done and get home to see people. I saw two twin otters flying South today and also the basler flying South and it was neat, one twin otter flew low, nothing happened, the other one flew high and left a contrail, so looked pretty fascinating there. Questions that have come up, Wendy asked, does my food freezer burn after all these weeks? nope, there's really no moisture in any of the food I have so there's nothing to burn thank goodness, freezer burn cookies would be awful. Poor Kelly my expedition manager is developing completion anxiety for me, uh don't develop that yet until I'm about 3 or 4 days out, then we'll talk about that. Hope all is well with everybody. It is January 6th 2013. Out!

7 Jan, 13 - 16:57

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 66. Camp position South 88 degrees 10 decimal 476 minutes, West 082 degrees 18 decimal 508 minutes. Woohoo, ok, 10.2 miles in 10 hours. Currently I am located in what I'm going to call Four Session Hill. It's going to take me 4 sessions to get over this thing, I've burned up 3 getting up it, had to put an extra hour in that normally wouldn't do simply because there were no camp sites for a good hour and I mean all I need is a 10x10 and vaguely lumpy flat space and boy it did not exist no. I've been told that once I get past this thing the sastrugi's suppose

to thin out, I sure hope so cause my hip hurts, my back hurts, this stuff is really taking a toll on me. Other than that it was actually quite a nice travel day, the sun was out, just a kiss of wind so I wore my stomach skirt, that is my jacket around my waist, one chilblain that's kinda a little chafed so I gotta keep that guy under control. Just having a tough time keeping cool but not getting burned on the skin so I use my face mask to drop it down, breath through my mouth and then put it back up so yes that makes me a lathering mouth breather, oh well I guess that's the way it works out here. My brother Jason asked me if I was ready for a Carne Asada burrito, you better believe it, I think about that place in Point Loma constantly now. I pretty much concluded I'm heading towards hating chocolate at this point, it's not doing a lot for me anymore not just emotionally, I don't care about that but just fuel wise so not too useful. The ipod in my head unfortunately brought up 99 Bottles of Beer on the Wall in the morning, of all things to come across in my head, gosh dang it that sucked. It's been kinda weird cause during the day every so often I'll see these color swatches, just like these ovoid shapes in my lower peripheral vision and usually at least once a day I will see in my upper peripheral vision what I think is a raven, of course it's not but maybe I'm starting to see things, that's not good. If I had real foresight I would have either brought dehydrated rum or dehydrated liquor because man I really need one right now, that's for sure. A shout out one of our sponsors, MicroUSA Inc. and thank you very much Arjun Jain for sponsoring this trip, they are a unique technology company located in San Diego in the Rancho Bernard of technical district, they have a fascinating camera that I had the pleasure and honor to work on that can actually see into and under water from aircraft flying above so. They can see whales, submarines, submerged containers or whatever there might be there. Quite fascinating, it's well worth the quick swing by their website, again thank you very much for your sponsorship and support. Hope all is well. Out!

8 Jan, 13 - 16:32

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 67. Camp position South 88 degrees 18 decimal 773 minutes, West 082 degrees 36 decimal 407 minutes. Time 9 hours, distance 8.3 miles, distance to South Pole 101 miles, current elevation 9,635 feet. I don't exactly believe that because I was told that the South Pole is exactly 9,186 feet so. GPS elevation's always kinda fuzzy and especially down here is quite erroneous and unless all of a sudden I start going down a bunch of hills over the next 100 miles, I'll probably have to correct that out. The hill that I went up yesterday and camp on, I'm now calling that 6 Session Hill, took me a full 6 sessions, an entire day in totality to get up that thing, unbelievable. And then I'm camped on another hill right now, the tough part has been the streaking and sastrugi isn't particularly big but it's exactly perpendicular to my line of travel so you just can't get a good speed and keep moving, you just keep hitting stuff so, it's quite discouraging that's for sure. It keeps making me do static friction in motion in 20 feet and then you stop, just kinda saps your energy. Speaking of sapping energy, I got the enjoyable little gastro intestinal activity this afternoon, I haven't had that in I don't even know how long. I think it stems from my camp cookware, smelled a little funny last night, I poured the usual boiling water in there and I thought it was clean, wrong. So I triple boiled it and kinda worked it over and hopefully will be ok. Naturally of course I ended up with my strongest meal, chili mac beef so (laugh), boy you don't want to be near my tent tomorrow morning that's for sure. Let's see what else do we got going here, any of the newcomers that are following this expedition here, if you have any questions or thoughts or want to know anything about what it's like down here or what I'm doing this for or how I do certain things please shoot me an email on facebook or through my expedition manager, Kelly, my parents or however you know me, then they'll definitely be able to get me the message. And also everybody that sent messages, thank you so much it definitely raises the spirit that's for sure. Thank goodness today was a very nice day, barely any breeze cause man that stuffs now cutting like a razor blade, even just a little 5 knot wind and you're like "oohh". I can hardly use my alpine gloves, I have to wear the pogies. I'm gonna have to break out the mittens and I really hate using those things cause, I don't know the pogies are annoying. I can take off the pogies and then use my alpine gloves to do things but once I've got the mittens on, the only way I can really practically do things is to take out my liner gloves to fiddle things and that really sucks. So uh I mean you just, in this air temperature, it's probably minus 25 minus 30, you just can not have your skin exposed to air, especially the wind, I mean the wind chill's at minus 70 even at 10 knot wind and boy that'll get ya. Hope all is well with everyone. Out!

9 Jan, 13 - 17:03

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 68. Camp position South 88 degrees 27 decimal 240 minutes, West 082 degrees 22 decimal 818 minutes. Distance to South Pole 92 miles, distance traveled today 9

miles, time traveled 10 hours, elevation 9,400 feet. Oh my gosh my feet hurt, oh. Trying to toss in that extra half mile, 3 quarter mile at the end of the day is a real butt kicker, I was desperate to get that 9 miles today. Found out some good news that the team that just made the South Pole said that the perpendicular lateral sastrugi I've been crossing suppose to die at 88.38 so it's just about at a day range for me but. Looking forward to this stuff thinning out cause man my knees hurt, my hips hurt, my feet are searing and it's starting to kill my lower back cause that constant jerking. Even though I've got a bungee in there to take the sharp shock off, still it knocks your whole body around, it pretty much sucks. Boy it is cold here now just a 5 to 10 knot wind picked up today. I can't use my alpine gloves anymore except in just dead calm conditions. All my Outdoor Research gloves have been totally awesome, I highly recommend it, but after 60 plus days of no laundering it just got so filthy that they're no doing anything so. This is the first day I busted out my mittens and man I was glad for it, those things are little toasters, Outdoor Research mittens. They're not sponsoring me but let me tell ya I'd go buy those things again in a heartbeat. Um yea it's so cold that my shot blocks from Cliff Bar products, they don't really chew anymore, they shatter in the little rail, so I have to stick em in my mouth and spin around for a minute or 2 for them to soften up enough, I mean I couldn't even bite through if I wanted, a jaw breaker is softer than those things. A detail note, I always make sure to do fuel transfers outside of my tent, whether filling bottles, putting caps on or whatever cause boy a couple times I've accidentally tapped em and almost knocked them over and I've heard of other expeditions completely ruin gear, so you definitely don't want to do that. Hey a shout out to my brother Jason, Jake and Justin, hopefully you guys do something real nice for your moms birthday tomorrow and then Mark, thanks very much for the message on facebook and thank you everybody else. You have no idea how uplifting that is and I'm glad I can be inspiring to you guys. Hope to meet your wife there Mark, I'd like to meet Joselyn soon. A shout out to Esther and Rays family, Esther, Ray, Jenny, Aiden and Jessa, Thank you very much for the donation and look forward to talking to you guys, definitely look forward to seeing you when I get back. I've had to break out my new kartankers because my feet are just getting too cold. They're actually quite thin now and I've had my new kartankers in the boots which are these mesh wool liners and I've actually, when I got into my tent and I took them off actually I had frost inside my boots, it's just that cold so. Boy oh boy and I had a horrible icing problem in my goggles, I haven't had that since mid November cause of the wind dead in my face so. I gotta try some different things tomorrow cause boy that's pretty miserable. It's suppose to be low clouds coming in I hope it's not ground white out, that'll kill me. Hope all's well. Out!

11 Jan, 13 - 16:14

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 70. Camp position South 88 degree 44 decimal 608 minutes, West 081 degree 54 decimal 712 minutes. Distance 8.3 nautical miles, time of travel 9 hours, elevation 9,000 feet, distance to South Pole 75 nautical miles. I'm really trying to keep it at 8.1 to 8.3 miles per day so I can knock this thing out in 9 days and knocking it out is a relative term, I just talked to one of the staff at ALE and they say I'm kind of a legend and yea a legend in my own mind maybe but, apparently I'm buying or the longest time ever to South Pole and probably not quitting but, that's ok I'll go with that. Finally took some lip and cheek damage, I've had frost hanging off my face for quite a bit and it finally got me, not bad but, gosh darn it. So I antibacterial it and gel it and bandage it. One thing I've run into, until I get some good sun, I just can't wear my face mask breathing through it with my goggles, in fact yesterday I found that a huge ice chunk seemed the breathing holes of that thing so no wonder I couldn't breath I was practically hyperventilating, it was just so cold dead in my face. So today, switched around went with the parka and hood, it was ok other than boy it doesn't take long to get bit, at all. That was kind of a bummer but oh well, as long as I can keep it under control and it doesn't get infected, that's apparently not uncommon, uh yea. Let's see what do we got, oh the Wort crew sends it's best wishes, thank you very much. The crew at the Wort Hotel I really appreciate that. Peter and Emily, thank you very much for the donation, I'll make sure to get the phone call into you guys there, and a special shout out to your three daughters Piper, Sage and Ruby, thank you three so much for following my expedition I really appreciate it, hopefully it inspires you to do something really big and exciting with your life too. Let's see, the surface is kinda mushy at this point, so it makes the Pole even a bigger fight so even though my sleds dropped 2 pounds a day at least, the surface is kinda crunchy and mushy so it really all seems to end up being the same. And also it was near whiteout today so it was definitely zin travel but apparently it's suppose to be not as bad tomorrow but higher winds so I have no idea how I'm gonna deal with that with this whole face thing but, I don't know, I figure it out I just can't have my mask icing over anymore, until I get done there's no way to deal with it. Hope all is well. Out!

12 Jan, 13 - 16:12

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 71. Camp position South 88 degrees 52 decimal 861 minutes, West 081 degree 21 decimal 244 minutes. Distance 8.3 miles, time 9 hours, distance to South Pole 67 nautical miles, elevation 9,000 feet. Oh yea it was one of those weird ones today, even though it was minus 20 degrees, session 2 and 3, I was literally down to my shirt with my parka and jacket wrapped around my waist it was so hot. It's kinda weird it's not hot but the solar radiation here is so intense it just cooks ya and my goggles didn't ice up, they fogged decently but I couldn't break down any farther than that. The interesting thing is I also had a tail wind for those two sessions so that actually made it hotter but the tail wind kicked up just enough where it was cooling on my back and actually gave me a little burst of speed so that actually felt good, kinda nice to enjoy that for once. Then by session 4, just a little puff of wind from the south or east or whatever hit me and whoaaa, I mean just 2 or 3 knots is all it takes and boy jacket back on, go from alpine gloves to mittens, I mean, wooo, doesn't take but anything to slice and dice ya, that's for sure. So it's definitely a weird place um your in minus 20 degrees and yet your on absolute fire just hanging out, so definitely a problem there. Not too bad of camp ground, the surface continues to be soft and mushy, I've been warned that is pretty much the way it's going to be all the way to the Pole. I did get a chance to speak with Hannah McKeand last night, gave me some pointers on how to try and maintain my goggles and get that all up and at this point I'm just having challenges trying to maintain and keep that and I think I'm just gonna cover my face with band aids and hopefully that'll all do it so I'll actually will look like Bossk the Bounty Hunter from Empire Strikes Back, that'll be an interesting look that's for sure. Other than that I've currently got eleven rations and assuming everything goes ok, I'm gonna keep doing 8.3 miles a day, I'll get to the Pole in about 8 days. Uh yea, I'm having to put an extra half session at the end of the day to get past that 8 mile mark and that's a really butt kicker, my achilles, my feet, my knee and my hips and my back really don't like it but I don't want to drop too many miles cause there's a massive cloud bank hanging off to the east here, been told it shouldn't visit me but you know how weather forecasts are they can be instantly different so pretty much pray for me that I have good weather coming into the Pole. Definitely still 64/67 miles, it's not next door that's for sure. I hope all is well with everyone. Out!

12 Jan, 13 - 16:12

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 71. Camp position South 88 degrees 52 decimal 861 minutes, West 081 degree 21 decimal 244 minutes. Distance 8.3 miles, time 9 hours, distance to South Pole 67 nautical miles, elevation 9,000 feet. Oh yea it was one of those weird ones today, even though it was minus 20 degrees, session 2 and 3, I was literally down to my shirt with my parka and jacket wrapped around my waist it was so hot. It's kinda weird it's not hot but the solar radiation here is so intense it just cooks ya and my goggles didn't ice up, they fogged decently but I couldn't break down any farther than that. The interesting thing is I also had a tail wind for those two sessions so that actually made it hotter but the tail wind kicked up just enough where it was cooling on my back and actually gave me a little burst of speed so that actually felt good, kinda nice to enjoy that for once. Then by session 4, just a little puff of wind from the south or east or whatever hit me and whoaaa, I mean just 2 or 3 knots is all it takes and boy jacket back on, go from alpine gloves to mittens, I mean, wooo, doesn't take but anything to slice and dice ya, that's for sure. So it's definitely a weird place um your in minus 20 degrees and yet your on absolute fire just hanging out, so definitely a problem there. Not too bad of camp ground, the surface continues to be soft and mushy, I've been warned that is pretty much the way it's going to be all the way to the Pole. I did get a chance to speak with Hannah McKeand last night, gave me some pointers on how to try and maintain my goggles and get that all up and at this point I'm just having challenges trying to maintain and keep that and I think I'm just gonna cover my face with band aids and hopefully that'll all do it so I'll actually will look like Bossk the Bounty Hunter from Empire Strikes Back, that'll be an interesting look that's for sure. Other than that I've currently got eleven rations and assuming everything goes ok, I'm gonna keep doing 8.3 miles a day, I'll get to the Pole in about 8 days. Uh yea, I'm having to put an extra half session at the end of the day to get past that 8 mile mark and that's a really butt kicker, my achilles, my feet, my knee and my hips and my back really don't like it but I don't want to drop too many miles cause there's a massive cloud bank hanging off to the east here, been told it shouldn't visit me but you know how weather forecasts are they can be instantly different so pretty much pray for me that I have good weather coming into the Pole. Definitely still 64/67 miles, it's not next door that's for sure. I hope all is well with everyone. Out!

13 Jan, 13 - 16:28

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day, what day is it? oh my gosh, day 72 of this campaign. Position South 89 degrees 01 decimal 162 minutes, West 081 degree 14 decimal 948 minutes. Distance traveled 8.3 miles, time of travel 9 miles, elevation, GPS says 9,600 feet but I don't believe it, distance to South Pole 59 miles. Um finally, finally finally I am at the 89th degree, usually people do the 1 or 2 degree trips and now I see why although this area is pretty, pretty smooth, the snow is soft and you step in it with your boots you sink 4 to 6 inches. For travel towing a sled, I so desperately wish my sleds still had their skis, but that was hundreds of miles ago now, um yea, that would make the 8 miles a day probably 9 or 10, make a world of difference for me but, that's long ago decided that's for sure. Today was a pretty nice towing day, I did an experiment and tried to run as cold as I possibly could, still had ice in my goggle in the left side for the first 2 sessions. I breathed on it somehow, I don't know, fortunately the sun was out so I was able to face it's still warm, it actually thaws it out, was able to get it wiped out there, get it back to normal but uh for the most part, at the end of every break session, I was shivering pretty violently, just to try and stay cool and during towing I virtually never over heated, just had to unzip a little but. The spectrum of cold to hot that I go through in that 90 minutes of break time to end of towing it's just, man it's almost unmanageable, it really sucks. The winds suppose to be forwarding off tomorrow and then 10 knots the next day at the east, uh yea boy it's, even just the slightest breeze here just cuts me to the bone so, I have to be ultra careful. I pretty much just cover my face with band aids in an attempt to shave off the problem and hopefully it does, it's definitely an unbelievable challenge. Message, a shout out to Mike Hoover, his wife Amber and his kids Sonny and Dana, thank you so long ago, back in the summer for hosting Kelly, Sarah and myself for that neat dinner we had out on your back lawn there, that was super special and I remember you standing there and looking in the fire and telling me, you know your probably not ready for this and (laugh), I thought I was, mechanically I am but psychologically and emotionally, oh man, no fricken way, I've just gotten torn to ribbons, but I guess that's part of the experience. It's mind junk that just eats you alive here, everyone I talked to said yea the mind aspect of this trip just tears you to ribbons and shreds, oh my gosh. So hopefully as long as the weather holds, my body doesn't fall apart, should be about 7 days here, I sure hope so. Out!

14 Jan, 13 - 16:24

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 73. Camp position South 89 degrees 09 decimal 138 minutes, West 081 degrees 02 decimal 217 minutes. Time of travel 9 hours, distance 8 miles, elevation 9,000 feet, distance to South Pole 51 nautical miles. Next way point I'm targeting is actually a VLF marker, for air crafts, just off the pole at 177 degrees, so as it's about 50 miles away, I need to start correcting for that instead of heading about 180 degrees south, otherwise I'm gonna end up with over a half a day of travel just to laterally traverse which would really suck. So at this distance, 04 degrees, I just dial that in, hopefully on the compass, I tried to dial it in today but I actually didn't do too well so. I'll make my correction more severe, cause 2 or 3 degrees I can't even, it's really tough to even do on the compass especially with the huge bubble that develops when that things shaking so definitely a challenge there. Also I ran into some mushy sastrugi from 89.03 to 89.06, it was all lateral to the traverse, uh that sucked, slowed me down, it was only a quarter mile slow down but slow down is slow down and my hip lets me know that yea dude not pleasant. So that was interesting. Um, hey question for Alf, I was calculating the horizon viewing distance for human is about 3.4 miles and yet when I see objects on the horizon and I march towards them, they're maybe only a quarter miles distance, does the earth move around here or what? If you could give me a calculation on that I'm kinda curious. Uh Kelly asked if I could seam seal the goggles, if I would have done it probably several weeks ago when it was warmer and I could get my goggles totally dry then maybe. I keep piling on duct tape but that doesn't seem to do anything. One thing I found too is it's when the wind is dead in my face that's when I die cause today I was really good and when the wind shifted a little bit, then my face foam, almost immediately. So what I did was I started walking with my face sideways and after a while things cleared up so I don't know what the deal is with that, I'm not blowing it out but, too I notice when I'm going where ever the wind directions coming from the opposite side tends to be the one that will fog up, uh I don't know. I've just been trying to run as cold as possible, when I'm skiing I'm just cold and when I stop I'm shivering and just miserable, to try and keep those goggles from fogging cause once they fog I can't navigate cause all the globs of snow out here is so small and subtle that your goggles aren't clear you just can't see em, that really sucks. My mom asked, how much weight do I think I've lost? Definitely notice the pants are a little bit looser, my stomach isn't gone, I've consuming probably 5,700 calories a day, toss down a cookie or 2 just to cut the bonking out I suffer the first 2 sessions cause that's pretty miserable, seems to help a

lot. Also, today I went to total inner space, not the Martin Short movie, but just going through memories of places I've been, where I've gone, what I've done, people I've known, people I've forgotten, cause I'm just trying to pass the time as much as I want to listen to my ipod, it dies in this extreme cold and I can't get the audio books to play in proper order so it's infuriating and useless anyway. Hopefully as long as the weather holds out, 6 days to the Pole, give or take. Out!

15 Jan, 13 - 17:19

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 74. Camp position South 89 degrees 17 decimal 420 minutes, West 080 degree 20 decimal 831 minutes. Distance 8.3 miles, time 9 hours, elevation 9,100 feet, distance to South Pole 42 miles. Current targeting VLF airport marker, 42 miles at 177 degrees, I don't want to head dead south cause there's a huge HF antenna and I to have to divert around it and that'd cost me half a day so. At this distance I can just shoot straight forward and there should be no cost. I was trying to be real subtle about my correction with my compass to 175 and so far I'm holding the course. Found that there are, besides myself, 3 teams remaining. Villa from Iceland last night was at 89 degrees 30 minutes, so she's probably about 3 days ahead of me. There's a South African ski the last degree team, 89 degrees 52 minute, they should be at the Pole tomorrow and then there's a crazy guy, poor guy, named Richard Parks, whose all the way back at 87 degrees 11 minutes. The weathers beginning to deteriorate and he's just entering the hell zone, I can not even imagine going through that stuff in that deteriorating weather. Today was pretty much a serious day of real punishment, suppose to only be 10 knot winds and that's how it started but it got up to 20 - 25, I mean I just died. It got strong enough to where I started getting shoved around when I was facing away from the wind. So I know that's at the 20 plus mark and fortunately I put my parka on in the beginning. So this whole google fogging, icing thing I figured out is when that is blowing dead in my face they ice up no matter how cold I'm traveling, I mean I was a shivering cold, miserable dog and the only way I kept them relatively fog free was the last session, my hands were freezing, my feet were freezing, I was literally yelling at myself, keep warm, thinking of ...Santa Ana Winds, Vegas, anywhere to keep me hot. I barely held on, I was planning to do another 15 minutes but my stomach was starting to sear, I was just roasted. I know it's bad wind because the horizon becomes hazy and gray, when I see a gray horizon I know I'm in for a real beating. It's been a long time since I've suffered through that and yea I pretty remember how much I hate it. Tomorrow the forecast is suppose to be for light wind and then Thursday it's suppose to deteriorate theoretically 10 knots out of the east but now that I know what that means, oh my gosh. So I don't quite know what I'm running on at the moment. Also, oh my gosh, I've been feeling kinda bad over the last 2 or 3 days eating breakfast, just eat some, feel blah, real yucky, take a while to eat it. What I do? I figured out today while chomping on my butter is all my butter supply has gone rancid, when it was cached by the air craft crew, it wasn't buried so it was sitting in the sun, you'd think at minus 15/20 degrees it wouldn't have gone bad, it's destroyed so I'm out 7/8 blocks of butter, oh boy, um, bonus, sled lighter, major draw back, I'm gonna be hungry, gosh dang it that sucks. As long as I can hold 8.3 miles, I'll get to the Pole or at least a Geo camp sight and then I don't know what I'm gonna do because their gonna close down the camps so. Needless to say it's getting tight and kinda stressful so. Hope all is well. Out!

16 Jan, 13 - 16:30

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 75. Camp position South 89 degrees 25 decimal 722 minutes, West 079 degrees 10 decimal 252 minutes. Distance 8.3 miles, time 9 hours, distance to the South Pole 34 nautical miles, elevation 9,100 feet. Way point to the VLF marker I'm headed for is 33 miles out at 176 degrees. Even though I have my compass set 174 I'm still not quite on, I'm gonna correct it out to 172, using the compass here has become quite challenging cause the needle floats around everywhere and with the shaking of the compass it develops a massive bubble, I actually spend quite a lot of time trying to pin point navigate. Some areas this morning there's tiny little lumps of sastrugi, they're all mushy, it wasn't too bad. Then there's a massive open area where it's almost impossible to sight anything and now I'm in little lumps of junk again. Uh icing on the goggles, no solution. I had it under control for so long and I think two things, one there's no cross breeze it's all front breeze so it just packs that air right into my face, it doesn't blow it off and two my little masky thing hanging off my goggles to protect me probably keeps the steam in, but I noticed it's not necessarily steam coming up but my face is actually warm, it's the only warm part on my body. Ran with only my shirt and my parka today, I mean even though I eat against the wind when I'm sitting there it just cuts right through that thing so if the wind picks up I'm gonna have to put the leave in jacket on then the parka on, since I'm fogged up and iced anyway I guess it doesn't matter. It was

very difficult to run with the pants unzipped because any wind also bites into there. The kartankers getting wet, I figured out when I've got boots on I'm shoveling stuff out I get that hot flash feeling, that's when they first get moist. They're probably getting moist when I'm skiing but I'm cold, again this is, I think I had this problem when I first got here, battling it for about a week so again I don't have a particular solution. As long as I can keep punching 8 plus miles a day, I don't know if I want to mess with anything, try anything cause the more I fool with it the worse things get. Um, what else? Oh yea, weather tomorrow is suppose to be super light air but with the deteriorating conditions, overcast coming in. Apparently ALE is bugging out of South Pole camp maybe early, I don't know what the whole deal is, so there's not really gonna be a team there. I'm running fairly tight on food, as long as I get to the Pole in 4 days I've got 2 or 3 days of food left so talk about cutting it to the absolute wire. I've only got 2 liters of fuel left, so they're gonna leave me 6 days of food a gallon of fuel so if terrible weather descends and they can't come in and eventually pluck me out, I won't starve and dehydrate to death. Should be able to arrange a tour at the station, that'll be good. Uh guess a lot of technical details but I still got 32 miles to go. For any other activity, running, jogging, biking, anything, backpacking, 34 is nothing but on skis towing sleds it is still 4 days, it's just blows my mind. But that's ok I'm keeping the mantra of just gotta hang for 4 more days and then I get to just lay around and fricken sleep, I'm so toast. Wake up at 3am thrash around, I just can't get back to sleep, it's kickin my butt. Also being short on butter or actually having no butter, uh yea enjoying some serious bonking but I've got some food for it stashed, couple cookies and what not so I'm gonna start nibbling into them just to take the edge off. Hope all is well with everyone. Out!

17 Jan, 13 - 16:15

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 76. Camp position South 89 degree 33 decimal 835 minutes, West 075 degree 53 decimal 430 minutes. Time of travel 9 hours, distance 8.3 miles, distance to South Pole 26 miles, elevation 9,100 feet. It was a super nice day for towing, overcast and no wind so I didn't bake by the sun and I did get my face burned off. Apparently it's suppose to be clearing but that also means the wind's going to be increasing. I was kinda hoping that the forecast would say yea it's going to be just like today for the next couple days but apparently not, that's a bummer. I found out that the visitor's center at the South Pole I guess is already closed, so if anybody out there knows how to finagle somebody to get me in there so I can get my passport stamped and maybe buy a few trinkets, I would hugely appreciate it. It would be a major bummer to ski almost 80 days only to be nixed by about 5, that would really suck. Dad thank you very much for the prayers, I have needed them like you can not believe. I guess I wouldn't feel so bad but I just have not been getting sleep for the past 5, 6, 7 days, I wake up at 3-3:30 and just start swirling around, it's pretty miserable. Um (laugh) just all this mind junk spinning around in my head, I mean only 26, 25 miles out so should be ok if nothing breaks and nothing turns punishment. I did find too that some more of my rations have gone bad because they were left in the sun. I'm shuffling things around so I don't end up totally starving. Pretty much dead on my feet constantly with hunger so that kinda sucks, I don't want to push my rations but I'm getting real tired of just starving and that does definitely suck. What else do we have going here? Oh the audio in my blog seems to be messed up, so hopefully you guys can even hear this. Kelly if you can somehow finagle Steve Daley or somebody to somebody who knows somebody to open that visitors center, I would definitely appreciate it please. Other than that, virtually no wind right now, it's kinda warm in the tent. I really hope that wind stays really low and it's way off axis. I wore my glasses today instead of my goggles cause my goggles just fog now, I get too warm, I don't know what's wrong with me, what's happened or what. What a pain in the butt, so hopefully I'll be able to do that or just keep taping my face and roll with that, who knows. Other than that ok but man I just want to sleep, I just want sleep. Hope all is well. Out!

18 Jan, 13 - 17:31

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 77. Position South 89 degrees 40 decimal 962 minutes, West 072 degrees 01 decimal 181 minute. Time of travel 9 hours, distance 7.3 miles. I lost an entire mile to serious serious head wind, probably 20-25 knots. It was bad, oh boy! oh boy! oh boy! Yea having that wind and loosing that mile and unfortunately being told that the wind will be staying with me through tomorrow means that there's no way I will make the pole in 2 days. Seriously bummed about that, I was really hoping to roll in on, what ever day that would be, what is today? Friday? yea I was hoping to roll in on Friday evening, (he meant Sunday), that is definitely not going to happen, I'm seriously bummed. Unfortunately, uh yea, the wind that bad. I'm trying to run as cold as I can not to have fog in my goggles and not to have my kartankers get wet, which are my wool liners in my shoes

or my boots, and to no avail both ice formed in my goggles and my kartankers were moist, moist meaning my feet were cold all day. And that's not that bad but when I stop and I get off of my skis and march around and put the tent together that's when the real pain starts. As long as I'm on my skis it's kinda tolerable so oh man, toes are turning purple. Also that moisture causes my feet to dry out like crazy so they're cracked, so I gotta put some lotion on them which makes my sleeping socks even colder. Definitely gonna be 3 days to the Pole, oh dang it. Hey uncle buddy thank you very much for sending my dispatches to grandpa, I really appreciate it. And Also Rincon Valley S.D. in Santa Rosa, thank you very much for listening and following on my dispatches here, I really appreciate it. Uh, oh man, wind, now the total white out where I'm blind it's really not that big a deal other than you lose your balance, you can handle that, so my little two final nemesis are bad snow and wind and looks like Antarctica is really trying to give me a good send off here. So, in bed, I'm toast. Hope all is well with everyone. Out!

19 Jan, 13 - 17:11

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 78. Camp position South 89 degrees 46 decimal 357 minutes, West 064 degrees 35 decimal 881 minutes. Distance traveled 6 miles, time 6 miles, distance to South Pole 14 miles, elevation 9,100 feet. VLF way point 12 miles. Four rations of food left. Today was one of the most punishing traveling days I've had in I can't even remember. It was complete white out for over 5 hours at 30 knot either head on or slightly off access wind, holy moly, plus I had my goggles iced up so it was pretty much as Alf said, zin travel, so I activated my little game of counting steps and then counting sets of 60 steps up to 80 or so and that's a session. And every, when it's white out, play with my chest harness with compass because in 60 steps I'm stumbling on a little sastrugi, getting shoved around by the wind, instead of heading south you could actually start heading southwest in as little as 60 steps. It's unbelievably disorienting, kinda funny cause you get that same thing that pilots have sometimes where you don't actually believe your instruments, you look your compass, your like, no way I'm heading east, that's crap and then you wiggle around wiggle around, oh, or you think oh the wind has shifted, wow, that's an incredible shift, yea no not quite. So yea that was interesting. And I definitely took my expedition managers advice and slept a little bit more and felt so much better. My throats getting sore, I've been seeing spots for over a week and a half, ..., all sorts of weird stuff. I looked at my journal and realized that I have been going 9 hours a day for 40 days straight. Imagine hard work, pulling a sled in brutal weather, freezing, for 40 days straight and I haven't had an off day since 70 days. The only reason I had an off day at 70 days ago was because I had bronchitis. As long as the weather cools down, and hopefully it snows, forecast is I should be at the pole in 2 days, I know I keep saying that but hopefully that will improve. And soon as I get there I'll start making my phone calls, so please be ready. Also my phones already all at half battery of course cause I haven't had any sun to charge and currently there are ice crystals in the sky, needing my other favorite thing, snow, so crud (laugh). I was hoping for easy, boring weather to roll into, no no no no Antarctica is giving me the royal send off. Took me an hour to unbury my tent this morning, love it. Hope all is well. Out!

20 Jan, 13 - 16:52

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 79. Camp position South 089 degrees 52 decimal 668 minutes, West 032 degrees 17 decimal 367 minutes. Distance traveled 8.4 miles, time 9.5 hours, elevation 9,100 feet, distance to South Pole 7 miles, way point 4.8 miles. One bummer is I can actually see the station now but I can't get to it at all because there's a high voltage transmission line that runs right through that area so you actually have to take quite a detour which is a real bummer, meaning I'm gonna end up having a full full day tomorrow. Unfortunately I got a butt kicker of sleep last night, as you wake up and your head spins, man what I wouldn't give for some Advil pm. Doing ok, it was white out for, fudge, 6 plus hours, I was fully navigating on instruments, that sucked. Needless to say it was quite challenging, you pretty much stumble around, look at your instrument, look up, ski 60 seconds, look down, oh man, totally crazy, but. Little bit better now, I'm able to charge the phone so I should be able to make my phone calls. Please note, I will do my absolute best to make my phone calls, cause there's suppose to be clouds coming in so I have to keep my phone available for airplane calls and such, so I will promise to do my absolute best, gonna be tight so what ever phone number you gave me please have it ready or your cell phone. Other than that just tired, excited, nervous, after 10 years of planning, thinking, dreaming and doing, I just gotta crank out another 8 milesish tomorrow, oh boy. Hope all is well with everyone. Out!

21 Jan, 13 - 17:12

Hello Aaron in Antarctica, day 80. Hahaha, Camp position South 90 degrees, West, East, it really doesn't matter cause you can walk in a circle and I already subtracted some days off my life, not such a bad thing. Still quite a white out out there, um, visibility is really good so hopefully they'll be able to get a plane in tomorrow and pick me up, it's actually quite a long flight to get back to Union Glacier, 6 or 7 hours. Um, fortunately I was able to see a target and then fog kinda cleared and I was able to see the station, where I needed to go and I'm now camped, oh gosh, 600 yards out of the South Pole station, what an experience. The station manager Weiks, Shannon and Andrea, thank you very much for giving me the tour of the station and giving me the low down and being very patient with my questions there I really appreciate it. Also Jeffrey, I hope to meet up with you, what would be for me, tomorrow morning to chit chat about my expedition, I really appreciate you following my blog. Jeffrey works at the South Pole station, real nice guy. Thank you so much to all of my sponsors and all of my private donors that made this adventure possible, it would have not ever happened without you guys, that's for sure. Special thank you to Kelly, my expedition manager, for keeping me alive and keeping me going and I'll begin making calls as soon as I can here. It is white out so I only have so much battery, I have to be really really careful. Thank you much, hopefully I'll be back in the states in a week or two, it's gonna take a while to get there, that's for sure. Thank you, oh my gosh! Your right dad, all of a sudden, it's over, just like that. Out!

24 Jan, 13 - 06:35

Zoom! Hello Aaron in Antarctica, final day, I don't really have a day count anymore cause well I finally made the Pole a day and a half ago. Had a super nice reception by Antarctic Logistics (ALE) here. I had a full plate of food, I mean a bunch of people stayed up til 1 to meet me, it was so nice. The flight back from the South Pole took 5 - 5 and a half hours, it was really really long, it's definitely not conducive conditions. It was fascinating to see the landscape that took me almost 3 months to ski over. My actual vision of sustrugi and wall that from the ground I couldn't tell what they were so seeing from the air was a real treat, so that was really good. Then in the camp I'm just packing up my gear now and the Russian jet the Ilyushin suppose to be her early afternoon when we're suppose to pack up, so that was really good. I've met a couple climbers and guides and all sort of nice things or people. One thing everybody asks me is I gotta see if I can find a scale to weigh myself, everybody said I look like a ridiculous scarecrow with my clothes hanging off, apparently lost more weight than I thought, so that's kinda funny how my pants keep falling down so it's rather annoying. Uh one, a couple bad notes, a French Filmer I met yesterday, they flew out to the dome and well he broke his leg and also there's an aircraft lost out here in the Trans Antarctic, no news but it's out in the British news and the New Zealand news, so if you look you Tim Borek you'll be able to find more information, definitely want to send some prayers out to them. They don't have any communication so it doesn't mean anything when the transponder went off so that's never a good thing unfortunately so. The family down here is definitely hoping and praying for those folks, that's for sure. Thank you so much for my sponsors and supporters for making this trip entirely possible for, without you I wouldn't have been here or even had the chance to ever fulfill a dream I've had for over 10 years, I mean, just the opportunity to do that and then apparently I was told I believe I'm the second only American ever to solo to the South Pole, ever. The first was Todd Carmichael in 2008, he has the speed record for solo, unsupported and apparently I have the anti speed record, but I'll deal with that, that's ok with me so. It was pretty interesting to meet a couple people that are actually amazed at what I did and I don't maybe I don't think about it right but I'll uh I guess I'll have to learn to think about it differently. Anyway, I've got to get packed up cause I definitely don't want to miss my flight home, can not become a permanent resident here. Again, thank you so much for everyone who followed me, all my supporters and all my sponsors, you guys really made this dream a total reality and all my tough times, the last 10 days, 12 days where I got worked over and skiing blind and just having a hard time. I knew I would grind it out but trying to handle the mind junk is just an experience so. Hopefully it will alter my life a little bit and I'll become a better person and move forward and move on and move up. Thank you very much and I'll hopefully shoot an update once I get back to the states. Thanks! Out!