



(March 24th to 26th)

Tuesday, March 24th

Outside Temperature: Not sure, but certainly not as bad as yesterday (probably $\approx -30^{\circ}\text{C}$). We have two electronic weather stations but have not yet succeeded in getting either to work.

It was a good thing yesterday was so cold, because now -30 is a cake walk. Well, almost. All of us newbies appear to have slept well for our first night in camp; exhaustion tends to have that effect on you.

Ongoing efforts to make camp both operational and comfortable appeared to have consumed everyone's day. Approximately 50 barrels of Jet-B fuel was relocated by snowmobile to the five separate clusters; each next to what will soon become a helicopter's parking space. Test holes were drilled through the ice on the airstrip in-the-making, ice thickness being a requirement for the pilot's runway report. The ice was 1.2m thick. After dinner, a communications tower was assembled and erected.

One starts to get a sense of the magnitude of this operation when the planes arrive. Today, the DC3 came in with loads of gear and more fuel twice, as did the Twin Otter. All of the gear comes in from Eureka. The Twin Otter can haul 5 to 6 barrels of fuel to camp, however it takes almost as much to do so. The four contractors departed on the last flight outbound. They were hard working guys who knew what they were doing so it is likely they will be missed; especially if the toilets don't work.

Wednesday, March 25th

Outside Temperature: -43°C , no wind.

Everyone was busy with various tasks today; everything from installing a steam table in the galley, to building partitions for the 'soon to become operational' shower. The DC3 made two trips into camp again. Among the barrels of aviation fuel, the first load included the snow melter (required for the shower), the second a diesel powered 750cc Arctic Cat ATV. Work on the airstrip is ongoing 24 hours a day with a Bobcat with snowblower attachment. When completed, it will be 1000m long, 40m wide. A load of groceries came in with the Twin Otter, and the weather station for the North Camp was in this load as well. Hard to believe this will be the *South* Camp. Even our Inuit Wildlife Monitor Tom Kiguktak spoke excitedly about this experience, as he had never been this far north before. Another Twin Otter arrived just before noon with our future North Camp Operators Jørgen Skafte and Kristen Christoffersen. They stopped in to take on some fuel, such that they could continue north to scout out a suitable site for the North Camp. On their return they stopped in as well, again to take on more fuel. Jørgen reported that he found a good site at latitude $85^{\circ} 30'$ (approximately 270 Km north of us). Four barrels of fuel and a transmitter were left there; the transmitter so that they can find it again as the icepack can move as much as 20 Km a day.

Thursday, March 26th



(March 24th to 26th)

Outside Temperature: -38°C, no wind.

Camp is getting organized. The various piles of gear that was hurriedly dumped by either a Twin Otter or DC3 over the past 2 weeks and was buried in the blizzard have now been dug out of the snow and hauled by ski-doo to the appropriate location in camp. Another communications tower was erected today, as well as the flag staffs to fly flags for Canada, Denmark, Nunavut, and ... of course ... the CHS.



The fact that the flags are not flying does not make for a great picture but it means the wind is not blowing – the weather is good – and it is much easier to work without the wind chill.

I have come to the conclusion that guys like Jon Biggar and Rudy Cutillo must have been big fans of Lego when they were young. Setting up this camp is like assembling one VERY BIG Lego set. The logistics required to set up such a camp are truly astounding. Every box is labelled and numbered using colour-coded duct tape. Every nut and bolt is accounted for on detailed lists; however they seem to know the contents of each box by just looking at it. If there is so much as a pin-hole in a cargo box, you can be sure that any empty void within will be packed solid with snow.



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The DC3 made its' first landing on the airstrip today. After unloading its cargo of diesel fuel, the pilot confirmed his suspicions; he had a flat tire. One Twin otter was dispatched from Eureka with the DC-3' engineer and the second sent to Alert to pick up the spare tire and jack from the DC-3 that is flying aerogravity from Alert. That Twin Otter arrived later on in the afternoon and delivered Dick MacDougall¹, Julian Goodyear², and Janice Lang³ who had been in Alert since Saturday. It also brought along extra equipment such that they could change the tire on the DC3.

Changing a tire on a DC3 in the cold is no simple matter. The plane must be jacked-up – but to do that the ski has to be removed for the jack to fit – and the whole wheel and axle removed – and the axle and all the bits inside the wheel such as the brakes moved to the replacement wheel. . Nearly eight frosty hours later – when the jack was letting the plane back down, everyone was crossing their fingers that someone remembered to put enough air in the spare. They flew out of camp at 11:30pm – it is anybody's guess why they didn't just choose to spend the night in camp.



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