



North Pole 2018 - Blog No 5:

Keep Calm, your North Pole Expedition has been delayed by 11 days!

Tuesday 27th March

As mentioned before, adaptation is the key ingredient to success .

It's 50 hours for departure and I have completed my 4th blog so ready to push the button. The key messages in this blog are "I am ready to go" and "adaptation will be the key ingredient to success". Not knowing that 2 hours later I would receive an email from the expedition leader with the subject "Crazy North Pole news..."

I'm afraid to open the email but of course I do.

Hi All, I am writing to you from Longyearbyen with some not so great news about our upcoming North Pole expedition. Roughly an hour ago, I received an email from Victor Boyarksi of VICAAR - the company that organizes the logistics and set up of Barneo, the remote drift station at roughly the 89th parallel on the sea ice. (It is important to note that this temporary camp is set up and taken down every year as the ice moves considerable throughout the season and the year.) As of right now, it looks like the 2018 North Pole season will be either delayed or cancelled. They will send the final word tomorrow (28 March) since their 27 March deadline at 1700 has passed and they did not get final "YES" or "NO" so they feel the process is still ongoing. VICAAR feels that because their helicopters must start North not later than 0600 AM Moscow time on March 29, they all have one more day to get the permits / helicopters / flight support necessary to set up Barneo with reasonable delay (approximately one week) so they have changed that the practical deadline would be 1800 Moscow time on March 28. Right now our two options are:

- 1. Barneo 2018 will take place with a serious delay of starting*
- 2. Barneo 2018 will be postponed to 2019*

Therefore, I strongly suggest that you cancel air tickets and hotel's reservations in Longyearbyen, remaining ready to book again for another date in April should the season move forward. VICAAR will confirm tomorrow whether Barneo is going to happen or not happen. I will be notified at 1800 Moscow time tomorrow March 28 when they will come up with the final decision. Eric

I am in shock for 10 minutes, then I become angry and emotional at the same time. 500 Days ago I made the decision to go for this adventure, I have been training like crazy, I am not drinking alcohol for the last 3 months, I spend a fortune, I even went to Oslo and Canada for

training and buying gear, my parents are about to jump on the plane to help us out (again) and now you are telling me that there is a serious chance of cancellation! I try to reach Daan but she is in Athens so it takes 3 hours before I have her on the phone, but in the meantime I have great responses from Lente and Iris who really try to help me. That night I can hardly sleep and the next morning I am still in denial, only waiting for the email whilst it's getting closer to the deadline. Finally, there is an update and the subject is bringing a small smile on my face "Barneo update, Good news?"

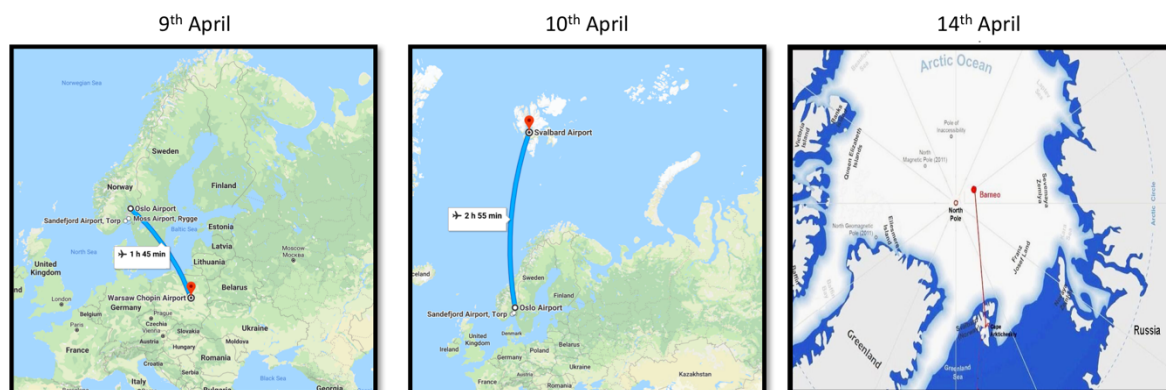
Hi all, I received an update from Barneo. It looks like there was some 11th hour negotiations that will allow the 2018 Barneo season to continue. It looks like our new dates will be from April 14-24. As you know, I am currently in Longyearbyen and will most likely fly back to the states and return on the 11 or 12th depending on how much I can prep now. With everyone being fairly up to speed on procedures, I think we can hammer out packing, etc in one day and be ready to go. Please reschedule to arrive in Longyearbyen on either the 11th or 12th. We will start packing on the afternoon of the 12th and finalize preparations on the morning of the 13th and be ready to fly on the 14th should conditions be suitable. Obviously, there can still be delays, etc but luck seems to be on our side at the moment. Let's hope we can keep rolling with it...

After reading this email 4 times I have a Skype chat with Eric and within one second we are both showing a huge smile and at the same time we are thinking "luck is in our favour".

The hours after this I am using my organisation skills to the max by changing all my flights, hotels, meetings, paperwork etcetera and in the meantime I am picking up my parents from the airport knowing that I now will have the luxury of celebrating Easter with the family.

Below my new revised schedule.

Dare to Dream!



Most ideal second scenario

April 9

- Fly Warsaw – Oslo

April 10

- Fly Oslo - Svalbard - Longyear / Norway

April 11

- Acclimatisation

April 12. Day 1

- Team dinner

April 13. Day 2

- Food pack and equipment fitting (harness, skis)
- Sled pack and ski / camp orientation
- Transfer loaded sleds to Airport
- Final ice briefing

April 14. Day 3 - Fly to Barneo

- Transfer to Airport Board AN-74 fly to Barneo, land at Barneo
- Load equipment onto Helicopter and transfer to 89th parallel ski and/or camp

April 15-23. Day 4 - 13 Expedition

- 6:30 Wake up 8:30 Leave tent 5:00 Arrive at ice camp 7:00 Dinner 9:00 Sleep

April 24. Day 14 –

- Fly to Longyearbyen
- 6:30 Wake up 8:30 Leave tent 5:00 Arrive at ice camp 7:00 Dinner 9:00 Sleep

April 25. Day 15

- On your own departure