

10TH MAY

We woke up at 7.00am and Clark got straight onto melting snow for our drinking water. Everyone piled into our tent for our usual breakfast of cereal or oatmeal. Greg had a little melt down when he began drinking his hot chocolate and found remains of last nights ramen noodles in his cup and the day before's chicken soup in there too!! The weather was good and one team had come up from 14,200ft and were en route to the summit along a much lower traverse than the one we were on yesterday...

After we had returned to camp yesterday Clark and Brent had subsequently fixed some rope so that we could get across the crevasse and onto the lower traverse up the Denali Pass, so that was the route these guys were now on.

We started off about 9.50am and headed back up the Denali pass following in these guys footsteps.. We moved along nicely today and despite the cold it was sunny and clear with a light wind. Two hours later we were at the ridge at the top of the Denali pass and i felt that today was my chance to get to the summit. We took a break on the ridge and i tried to thaw my frozen hands, grabbed a bite to eat and we started moving upwards. We took another break behind some rocks at the base of the slope that takes you up to the "football field" Once going again, although moving fine and being good for time, when i asked Clark if i could take a breather, he told me to take a Gu shot immediately. He said that he wasn't feeling comfortable with the nenticular type of clouds that were forming above the summit of Denali and unless i got moving faster he was going to turn me around. I could feel the panic at the thought of being turned around rising in me. I took one half frozen power gel and made a big effort to start moving faster. I took two more power gels at the base of the football field and by now i was moving fast and my lethargy had passed. I kept pretending to Clark that i couldn't see any cloud at all when he pointed it out to me and then i burst out laughing as he re pointed for the 3rd time..

I could now see the summit headwall straight ahead and someone was up by the summit right in front of me. Our other team of Guy, Greg and Brent were about 25 mins or so behind us. Now i was so determined to do it and almost chomping at the bit to get moving up the headwall. At the base of the headwall, i bumped into Jerry's son Jeremy whom had just been up to the summit via the Messner route (thats the most technically difficult route on denali) and he said hi to us on his way down.. His dad and uncle were apparently headed towards the summit behind us.

Soon we had climbed past the last crevasse and as i stepped up onto the summit ridge, the view literally took my breath away.. It was panoramic and stretched out as far as the eye could see, of snowy mountains and glaciers.. It was so beautiful and i had tears in my eyes already. The vertical drop on the other side of the ridge was thousands of feet so i tried to look outwards as opposed to straight down. Mark took the lead from here so that he could film me arriving on the summit. I was like a racehorse being held back and dying to move as fast as possible to get to the summit, but Mark moved slowly (as one should!!) to the actual summit of Denali

followed by me and Clark taking up the rear. At 4.30pm I reached the summit of Denali and was so blown away that i had done it i couldnt even speak for the camera.. I was very emotional and then got onto doing all my sponsors photos holding their flags. Guy, Greg and Brent then arrived and we were all hugging on the top. This was Guys last of the Seven Summits and it was so great to be able to do it together. This was Gregs 3rd of the Seven summits and we have climbed 2 of them together which has been great. Greg then bent down and his camera fell out of his pocket and dropped off the 5,000ft drop (not sure how steep it was, maybe more than 5,000ft!) anyway he was reliant on my photos now!! We spent about an hour on the summit and Clark said that we were unbelievably lucky with the conditions and that he had rarely had a summit day like this. The clouds were around but Clark wasnt worried anymore. One Ukranian guy got to the summit at the same time as us and he wanted his picture taken with me.

Soon we decided to start moving down and began the long decent. We passed the 3 UBS guys on their way up to the summit, and although moving slowly they seemed steady. At the bottom of the headwall we took a break as it was fairly warm and we had been moving fast (i wanted to take off my down jacket) and we came across Jeremys dad Jerry. He stayed and chatted to us for a while, he told us his brother Terry was going very slowly but as he hadnt reached the summit of Denali, Jerry wanted him to do it. Jerry had climbed Denali once before and was planning to go to Everest next year. I didnt really think about how late it was for them to be still going to the summit (it was probably 7.00pm or 7.30pm at this point) nor did i think if it was foolish for someone so apparently tired to continue on up the headwall at this time of day (they probably had a couple of hours to go to reach the summit at this point) Nor did i think it my place to offer any advice to someone that didnt need a guide to climb a mountain (i do!!) so we just chatted and left it at that.

We said our goodbyes and our group sped off down the mountain moving fast. We were back at camp by 8.30pm and i was ecstatic to be back down at high camp with all my team having reached the summit - i was almost looking forward to ramen noodles!! We heard the UBS guys come back at midnight and Clark went out and gave them some water. Soon we were all in an exhausted sleep and didnt stir until the next morning at 8.00am