

16TH DECEMBER

After a great breakfast cooked by carolina we got ready to move up to camp 1. This time, I wanted to have someone help carry the communal gear up to camp 1 and 2 for me given that i had climbed the mountain before carrying all my gear and that if i wanted to do such a rapid ascent, i didnt want to be too weighed down.

When i climbed Aconcagua in 2001 i actually injured my lower back from carrying such a heavy pack so i was anxious not to have any further back problems.

When it came for me to pick up my pack im afraid i had my first tantrum. I was so cross as my pack was really heavy which defeated the purpose of having people help lighten my load. I needed all my energy to try and get to the summit of this mountain in such a short period of time. After throwing a few things back into my bag that was to remain at basecamp, still ranting and raving i showed up at the doctors tent to get my oxygen saturation and blood pressure taken. We all had to be checked that our o2 sat was above 70 before we were allowed to move up to camp 1. Given my recent tantrum i thought perhaps my blood pressure would be sky high, but amazingly enough we were all good to go. We arrived up at camp 1 after about 3 and a half hours and set up camp. We got chatting to 4 girls from Wales whom had been up to the col today.

They said it had been pretty windy up there and that no one had been at camp 2. At dinner i noticed that Hamish was not eating his normal vast quantities of food which is most unlike him and he was rather quiet. Most unlike him. It transpired that he had a really bad headache and was feeling nauseous. We were now at 16,500 feet and rather rapidly at this altitude (dont forget its almost the same height as the summit of Vinson). You have to bear in mind we were probably only really acclimatised to somewhere between 11,000 and 14,000ft from Vinson. Luis gave him a medley of pills - diamox and anti nausea pills and said that if he wasnt feeling better by the morning it would be better for Hamish to go descend back to basecamp. I, at this point felt fine thank goodness and we all went to sleep.. i was feeling so bad for Hamish, altitude sickness is not fun.