Sermersuarmik itiviinerma sakkortunersaat

Qallunaat kalaallillu angalaqatigiit sermersuarmik itiviigamik ilungersunartorpassuarnik akiorniagassaqartariaqarsimapput. Aqqutaani taquaat aamma nungupput. Allaanngivippugut toqungalluta inuusugut, angalaqatigiinnut aqutsisuusartoq misilittagartooq oqaluttuarpoq

ALLATTOQ: Niels Ole Qvist

Fridtjof Nansenip sermersuarmik itiviinerit siullersaat ukiut 125-t matuma siorna – naalakkap ukiuani 1888-imi – siuttuuffigaa. Naammassisani tamanna nunarsuarmi tusaamasannguutigaa.

Norgemiu Issittumi angalatooq tumisiorlugu inuit hundredelippassuit angalasarsimapput ilungersunartorsiortarsimaqalutillu.

Tamakkua ilarpaalussui tunniutiinnartarsimapput, arlallit innarluutigilikkaminnik qerunneqartiterlugit utertariaqartarsimallutik, allaallumi ullutsinni angalasartut atortorissaarutinik nutaaliaasunik iluaquteqartaraluartulluunniit sermersuarmik itiviilluni angalaneq navialiffiusarpoq.

Angalaqatigiit qulingiluat ornikkaminnut Isortumut Tasiilamiit 100 kilometerinik kippasinnerusumiittumut apuuttut aperiinnariakkit. Angalaqatigiit taakkua inuttaraat angutit arfinillit arnallu pingasut 27-niit 62-inut ukiullit, taakkunanngalu pingasut Kalaallit Nunaanni najugaqarlutik.

Sermersuaq itivillugu angalanerminni ullut katillugit 36-t atorsimavaat, angalanermi pilersaarutit malillugit ullunik 27-nik sivisussuseqartussaagaluartumi.

Angalanerlu oqitsuinnaasimanngilaq.

Taamaattorli misigisassamut akiliutissat 100.000 koruuningajaat (angalaneq atortullu ilanngullugit) peqataasut tamarmik tamakkiisumik pissarsissutigaat.

Napparsimalersut

Angalaqataasut atugarliornerpaat aqqutaani marlussoriarlutik qiimassuseerulluinnangajattarput. Taakkualu ilaat marlussuit puammikkut aseruuttoorneqalermata penicillinamillu nakorsaatitortariaqalermata tamanna ilungersunarluinnarsimavoq.

Silapilunneralu oqinnerulersitsinngilaq. Angalaqatigiit perserluni anorersuarujussuartarnera tuperminni saattuararsuarnik annoraaminertalinni issulittorujussuusunilu nikeriarsinnaanatik ulluni arlalinni uninngaannartariaqartarsimapput.

Taamaalinerani tuluit angalaqatigiit Tunumi piteqqamit ersigisaasumit eqqugaasimasut angalaqatigiit ernumaammerlutik eqqaallattaarpaat.Tamatumani piteraq tuluup 37-nik ukiullip Philip Goodeeve-Dockerip inuuneranik akeqarpoq.

Taakkua saniatigut angalaqatigiiaat immikkoortut sisamat allat ataatsikkut ajornartorsiulersimapput peqataasullu arlallit qerunneqalernermikkut ajoqusertut Air Greenlandip qulimiguuliinik aaneqartariaqarsimallutik.

Angalaqatigiinnut aqutsisoq akisussaasorlu Erik B. Jørgensen nassuerluni oqarpoq, tamanna tunngavigalugu angalanertik toqqissisimannangitsumik aallarnersimagitsik. Ajutoornerillu tatamissutigisimannginnerarpai.

– Neriuppunga soqutigittaatsutut misigissuseqanngitsutulluunniit nipeqassananga, kisianni isumaqavippunga tuluit kukkussutaasa assinginik kukkussuteqarnaviarata. Piteqqamit nalaanneqaruit iliuuseriniagassaq tassaavoq imminut assaalluni. Imminut assaassimatilluni ajunaarnissaq pisariaqanngilaq. Ilikkagassaq taanna tuluup ajunaartup puigorsimavaa. Ikiortissarsioraluarneq ulapputigivallaarsimavaa. Kisianni silaa taama itsillugu qulimiguulimmik tikittoqarnavianngilaq, tamatumani nammineerluinnartariaqarpoq, Erik B. Jørgensen ilassuteqarluni oqarpoq.

White out

Sakkutuuni immikkut sungiusakkani Jægerkorpsimi alapernaarsuisoqatigiinnut aqutsisuunerminit Erik B. Jørgensen sungiusimasaqareerpoq. Taamaakkaluartoq sermersuarmik itiviiniarlutik angalaqatigiinnut siuttuusussanngorami tamatigut akisussaafferujussuartut misigisarpaa. Ajortumimmi pisoqassagaluarpat naggaterpiaatigut inuttut nammineq tikkuarneqartussaavoq.

Ukioq mannali angalaqatigiinnissaq aallartissinnaanngorpat piareersaatit pisariaqartut tamakkerlugit suliarineqarsimapput. Ullormi aallarfissami nalunaaqutaq arfineq-marlunngortorlu nalunaaquttat tuperniittut eqeersaalerput. Kikkullu tamarmik sermersuarmik inuunerminni aatsaavissuaq misiliinissaminnut piareertinnagit issingigassat, knækbrød tiilu ullaakkorsiutigineqaqqaarput.

Angalaqataasut tamarmik immikkut nasartorsimasut isarussersorsimasullu ingerlaarneranni tulukkut qernertut qulangiuaaripput. Silasiortunit oqarasuaat qaammataasakkoortoq aqqutigalugu silarluleriartornera aarlerisaarutigineqarpoq. Silarluk sakkortunerpaaffissamini ullut qulissaanni pitoraappoq.

– White out tamakkisumik atuuppoq, tassa suna tamarmi qaqortuinnanngorpoq, Erik B. Jørgensen oqarpoq, misigissutsinilu ullorsiutimini ima allaaseralugit:

– Takorlooriaruk ini qaqortuinnarmiillutit qaqortumillu pujortoq arpattarfimmilu løbebåndimi arpassasutit. Sunnguamilluunniit najoqqutassaqaranilu isiginiagassaqanngilaq. Misigisimanarpoq siuninni itersuarsuaqartoq qanoq ilinikkulluunniit nakkarfigineqarsinnaasumik, Erik B. Jørgensen nassuiaavoq.

Silarlorujussuarnera

Ersigunnaaveqqanera unammilligassatuaanngilaq. Issersuaq aamma unammilligassaavoq. 17-18 gradinik issippoq, anorilu suli issinnerulersitsilluni. Aput aqitsuararsuaq aamma artukkiivoq. Tamatumalu qaavatigut tupeqarfik napparsimasunik passussivittut atuutilersimalluni.

– Nassuerutigissavara taamaalinerani tatineqartorujussuusutut misigisimagatta. Silarlunnera ajornartorsiortitsiuarmat piffissatsinnik qaangiuttuulerpugut. Pingaartumik persersuarmik saperngunitsinni ullut pingajussaat ajorluinnarpoq. Qasuvugut immaqalu aamma sapiissuseerutaasarsimalluta, Erik B. Jørgensen oqaluttuarpoq.

Taamaattorli ersinngitsorsuarmiinnermi aamma qiimmallannartoqarpoq. Minnerunngitsumik anori inoriaqquumigaangat, avatangiiserlu kusanartoq ersileraangat. Sukkulaatit, mamakujuttut, peanutsit, sikut skumfidusillu qiluatat qiimmassaataaqataapput.

– Sorpassuit pilersaarutit malillugit ingerlanngillat, tamanna angalaqatigiinnut uggornarpoq. Kisianni taamaakkaluartoq angalaqataasut tamarmik qiimanerminnik attassiinnarsinnaasimanerat tulluusimaarutigaara. Arlaannaalluunniit uniinnaqqajanngilaq, Erik B. Jørgensen erseqqissaavoq.

Qutsissorsuarmi

Angalanermi qaammammik ataasingajammik sivisussuseqartumi qiimmallannartorujussuarnik marloriarluni pisoqarpoq: Siulleq tassaavoq Amerikamiut radareqarfigisimasaannut DYE 2-mut Kangerlussuarmiit 140 kilometerinik ungasissusilimmiittumut takornariarneq. Taanna ullumikkut timmisartunik Herculesinik sikumut minnissamut sungiusarfittut US National Guardimit atorneqarpoq.

Qiimmaallannartut aappaat pivoq angalaqatigiit angallaviup qatsinnersaa 2.500 meterinik portussusilimiittoq maajip aallaqqaataani nallermassuk.

Tamatuma kingorna Tunumi ornigassamut sukkakannersumik ammut ingerlaalerput.

Taamaattorli silarluleqattaartuarsinnarpoq. Suli tikiffissamut ungasippoq, anorleqalunilu.

– Silapalaavissuaq, Erik B. Jørgensenip ullup tamatuma sooq immikkut unammilligassaaneranik oqaluttuarinninnermini oqarneratut:

– Tassanngaannaq qamutinik annaasaqartoqarsimaneranik suaarpallattoqarpoq. Tamanna ilungersunarpoq. Aamma inuit maluginngisaminnik qamutinik annaasaqarnerannik angallassisarninni siornatigut pisoqarsimanngisaannarpoq. Artornaraluaqisoq aalajangerpunga ilakka tammaarfissaliortut uterlunga ujarniarlugu. Atortorissaaruteqarani ersinngersuup ataani kisimiilluni ingerlaneq navianangitsuunngilaq. Qujanartumilli nassaaraakka sukkanerpaamillu aalajangersoriarlugit sapinngisannguara tamaat arpallunga uterlunga.

Taquaaruttoorneq

Angalaqatigiit sapaatip-akunnerisa kingullersaannut appakaammata sukataarususseqarneq suli allanngorsimanngilaq, sulili isikkiviluttorsuulluni. Taqussat ikililluinnalernerat peqataasunillu timmisartoq Tasiilaq aqqusaarlugu ilaatigut Danmarkimut oqqussisussaq angumerineqarsinnaassappat sukkanerusumik ingerlaartariaqalerneq Erik B. Jørgensenip nassuerutigisariaqalerpaa.

Angumersiniaalluni tamaviaartoqartariaqalerpoq. Angalaqatigiit ulluni kingullerni ilungersoqalutik ingerlaarput. Erik B. Jørgensenip angalanerup naggataasersorneqarnera pillugu ullorsiutimini tamanna ima allaaseraa:

– Ullut unnuallu kingulliit aappaa affaq pikkunarluinnarput. Nassuiaruminaatsumik ataatsikkut kusanarlunilu, ilungersunarlunilu, qiimmaallannarlunilu nanertisimanartoq.

Piniartut Isortumeersut marluk, Salo aamma Peter, angalaqatigiit parsiarniarlugit aalajangersimasut ungasiinnarmi ersertut takuleramikkit angalaqatigiit immikkuullarissumik oqiliallapput. Taamaalillutik atortut ilarpassui qamutinut usilersuussinnaalerpaat. Tamatumalu peqatigisaanik nutaanik nerisassaqalerput, angalaqatigiinnit kaapajaaqisunit qilanaarineqarsimaqisunik.

Nalunaaquttap-akunnerini 26-ni uninngingajallutik katillugillu 68 kilometerit ingerlaareerlugit kiisami nunaqarfimmut apuuffissaminnut Isortumut, sermersuarmik itiviisut apuuffigisartagaannut imaluunniit itiviiniat aallartiffigiartagaannut, tikipput.

– Taamaalinerani toqungallutalusooq inuuvugut. Ilungersorsimaqaagut nangitittarsimaqalutalu. Kisianni tamanut pikkunarluinnartumik naggaserneqarpoq, Erik B. Jørgensen ullorsiutimini naggasiivoq.

Sulummit oqaloqatigineqarami naammassisami ajasoornartup kingorna timimigut suli qasoqqavoq. Timmisartup angumerinissaanik neriuutaarutereersimaapput , peqataasunut minnerunngitsumik pilersaarutit malillugit katittorsiortunut peqataaniarlutik angerlareersimasussaagaluartunut.

Tamarmilli ajoratik apuunnertik Erik B. Jørgensenip qujamasuutigaa.

– Sisamariarlunga itiviisarnerma maannamut sakkortunerpaartaartaa. Isortumut tikikkatta sequmilluinnarsimavugut. Aqqutaanili aamma ullunik nuannerluinnartunik, ajornartorsiutinik tamanik puigortitsisunik, aamma misigisaqarpugut. Tamanillu pingaarnerpaamik – apuuppugut!

ASSIILISOQ — Jon R. Ineson

[KAL] Erik B. Jørgensen sakkutuuni immikkut sungiusakkani Jægerkorpsini alapernaarsuisoqatigiinnut aqutsisuusimavoq Issittumilu angalaneq ukiorpassuarnik misilittagaqarfigalugu. Tamatuma saniatigut angalatuut peqatigiiffiannut, Eventyrernes Klub-imut, ilaasortaavoq.

[DK] Erik B. Jørgensen er tidligere patruljefører i Jægerkorpset og har mange års erfaring med ture i det arktiske. Han er desuden medlem af Eventyrernes Klub.

[GB] Erik B. Jørgensen is a former patrol leader with Special Forces and he has many years of experience with trips to the Arctic. He is also a member of the Adventurers' Club.

Min hårdeste tur over indlandsisen

En dansk-grønlandsk ekspedition måtte kæmpe mod alverdens plager, da de krydsede indlandsisen. Undervejs slap maden også op. Vi var levende zombier, beretter den erfarne ekspeditionsleder

TEKST: Niels Ole Qvist

For 125 år siden – i det herrens år 1888 – ledede Fridtjof Nansen den første ekspedition over indlandsisen. En præstation, der gjorde ham verdensberømt.

Siden er hundredvis fulgt i sporet på den norske polarfarer og har udstået store strabadser.

En del er bukket under, flere er returneret med invaliderende forfrysninger, og selv i dag, hvor ekspeditionerne er udstyret med moderne hjælpemidler, er det en farefuld færd.

Bare spørg de ni deltagere, som nåede frem til endemålet, Isortoq, 100 kilometer vest for Tasiilaq. En gruppe bestående af seks mænd og tre kvinder i alderen 27 til 62 år, hvoraf tre er bosiddende i Grønland.

I alt brugte de 36 dage på at krydse den store gletsjerkappe, en tur, som efter planen skulle have varet 27 dage.

Og det holdt hårdt.

Deltagerne fik i hvert fald fuld valuta for de knap 100.000 kroner, som man skal punge ud med for oplevelsen - (inklusive rejse og udstyr).

Syge på isen

Et par gange undervejs var de værst medtagne deltagere ved at miste humøret. Særligt slemt var det, da et par af dem fik lungebetændelse og måtte i penicillin-behandling.

Hårdt vejr gjorde det ikke lettere. I flere dage lå ekspeditionen underdrejet og vejrfast på grund af vilde snestorme, som fik det til at buldre og brage i de tynde teltduge.

Imens kunne deltagerne sende en dyster tanke til den britiske ekspedition, som et par uger forinden var røget ind i en af de frygtede østgrønlandske orkaner, en piteraq, der endte med at koste den 37-årige englænder Philip Goodeeve-Docker livet.

Hertil kom fire andre ekspeditioner, som på samme tid var røget i problemer, og hvorfra flere deltagere var blevet evakueret med Air Greenlands helikoptere på grund af forfrysningsskader.

Ekspeditionsleder Erik B. Jørgensen, som havde ansvaret for ekspeditionsgruppen med de ni deltagere, erkender da også, at det var på en foruroligende baggrund, at de indledte deres færd. Men han var ikke skræmt af ulykkerne.

– Jeg håber ikke, jeg lyder arrogant eller ufølsom, men jeg var overbevist om, at vi ikke ville begå de samme fejl som briterne. Når du bliver ramt af en piteraq gælder det om at gøre én ting: At grave sig ned. Så længe man graver, omkommer man ikke! Den læresætning glemte den omkomne englænder. Han var for optaget af at forsøge at skaffe hjælp. Men under den slags vejrforhold kommer der altså ingen helikopter, der er man helt overladt til sig selv, tilføjer Erik B. Jørgensen.

White out

Som tidligere patruljefører i Jægerkorpset og ikke mindst fra sin tid i Sirius-patruljen er Erik B. Jørgensen vant til at lægge arm med naturens kræfter. Alligevel føles det altid som et stort ansvar, når han sætter sig i spidsen for en indlandsis-ekspedition. I sidste ende vil pilen pege mod ham, hvis noget går galt.

Alle nødvendige forberedelser var dog gjort, da dette års ekspedition kunne tage sin begyndelse. På startdagen bippede vækkeurene klokken syv i teltene. Så stod den på havregrød, knækbrød og te, inden alle var klar til at indlede de første livtag med isen.

Sorte ravne svævede over deltagerne, som stred sig frem, hver i sin lille osteklokke af hætter og briller. Meteorologerne kunne over satellit-telefonen advare om, at der var uvejr på vej. På 10. dagen ramte det med fuld styrke.

– Der var totalt white out, hvilket betyder, at alt er hvidt, siger Erik B. Jørgensen, som beskriver følelsen på denne måde i sin dagbog:

– Prøv at forestille dig, at du står i et hvidt rum med hvid røg omkring dig, og du så skal løbe på et løbebånd. Der er absolut INTET at forholde sig til eller fokusere på. Man føler, at der foran én er et stort hul, man hele tiden kan falde i.

[KAL] Qaalloriinnarsuup soqanngitsup naassaanngitsullu qeqqani. Apuuffissamut suli ungasikkaluaqisoq isumalluarneq allanngorsimanngilaq.

[DK] Midt i den uendelige, hvide intethed. Optimismen er intakt, selvom der stadig er langt hjem.

[GB] In the middle of the infinite, white nothingness. Optimism still flourishes, even though it is a long way home.

ASSIUISOQ — Erik B. Jørgensen

Katastrofe-vejr

White out var langt fra den eneste udfordring. Kulden gjorde sit. Op mod 17-18 minusgrader plus chillfaktoren. Den løse sne var en yderligere belastning. Hertil kom, at teltlejren en overgang var forvandlet til et feltlazaret.

– Jeg må indrømme, at vi på det tidspunkt følte os pressede. Tidsplanen skred, efterhånden som vejret blev ved med at drille. Især den tredje dag, hvor vi var fanget i snestormen, var en katastrofe. Folk var trætte og måske også lidt modløse, fortæller Erik B. Jørgensen.

Midt i den hvide intethed var der dog også opmuntrende ting. Ikke mindst når vinden løjede af, og det smukke landskab foldede sig ud. Chokolade, slik, peanuts, rosiner, is og ristede skumfiduser var med til at holde humøret oppe.

– Der var mange ting, der ikke gik efter planen, og det var synd for holdet. Men jeg er stolt over, at alle alligevel formåede at bevare den gode stemning. Ingen var på opgivelsens rand, understreger Erik B. Jørgensen.

Højt oppe

Der var to positive højdepunkter på den næsten måned-lange tur: Den ene var besøget på DYE 2, den nedlagte, amerikanske radarstation, som ligger 140 kilometer fra Kangerlussuaq. Et sted, som US National Garde i dag bruger til at træne is-landinger med Hercules-flyene.

Det andet højdepunkt indtraf, da ekspeditionen den 1. maj rent bogstaveligt overskred rutens højeste punkt, som er på 2500 meter.

Herefter gik det i pænt tempo nedad mod målet på østkysten.

Vejret fortsatte dog med at vise tænder. Der var stadig langt hjem, og det blæste kraftigt.

– Et lortevejr, som Erik B. Jørgensen beskriver det, mens han fortæller, hvordan netop den dag bød på en særlig udfordring:

– Pludselig var der en, som råbte, at man havde mistet en pulk. Det var kritisk. Og det er aldrig sket før i min ekspeditions-historie, at folk taber en pulk uden at mærke det. Jeg traf den tunge beslutning at gå tilbage efter den, mens de andre slog lejr. Ikke nogen ufarlig ting at gå alene i totalt white out, uden udstyr. Men heldigvis fandt jeg den og fik den lynhurtigt klikket fast og løb tilbage, alt hvad jeg kunne.

Mad-mangel

Da ekspeditionen gik ind i sin sidste uge, var kampgejsten intakt, men sigtbarheden var stadig dårlig. Erik B. Jørgensen måtte erkende, at provianten var ved at skrumpe ind, og at tempoet skulle skrues i vejret, hvis deltagerne skulle nå frem til det fly, som via Tasiilaq blandt andet skulle bringe dem retur til Danmark.

Det blev en intens kamp mod tiden. De sidste dage sled ekspeditionen sig frem. Erik B. Jørgensen noterede dette i sin dagbog om afslutningen på turen:

– Det har været det vildeste halvandet døgn. Ubeskriveligt smukt, hårdt, opkvikkende og deprimerende på én gang.

En hel særlig lettelse bredte sig i gruppen, da den i det fjerne fik øje på de to fangere, Salo og Peter fra Isortoq, som havde besluttet at gå ekspeditionen i møde. Herefter kunne en stor del af udstyret læsses over på slæderne. Samtidig var der nye forsyninger af mad, noget som den sultne flok i den grad havde set frem til.

Efter 26 timers næsten uafbrudt march, og 68 kilometer i alt, nåede de endelig frem til Isortoq, en bygd, som ofte er slutpunktet – eller startstedet – for indlandsis-ekspeditioner.

– På det tidspunkt var vi levende zombier. Vi havde slidt og slæbt og fået så mange bank. Men det var en total sej afslutning for alle, konkluderer Erik B. Jørgensen i sin dagbog.

Da Suluk efterfølgende taler med ham, sidder udmattelsen stadig i kroppen ovenpå den imponerende bedrift. Håbet om at nå flyet er væk, ikke mindst ærgerligt for de deltagere, som efter planen skulle have været hjemme til bryllup.

Men Erik B. Jørgensen er taknemmelig for, at alle nåede frem i god behold.

– Det har været min hidtil hårdeste tur ud af de fire, jeg har prøvet. Vi var fuldstændig smadret, da vi nåede frem til Isortoq. Men undervejs har vi altså også haft fantastiske dage, som fik os til at glemme alle problemerne. Og vigtigst af alt – vi nåede frem!

ASSIUISOQ — Erik B. Jørgensen

[KAL] Sermersuarmi tupeq uninngaarfigissallugu ilorrisimaarnartuuvoq.

[DK] Teltet er et rart opholdssted midt i isørkenen.

[GB] The tent is a nice place to be, in the middle of the ice desert.

Toughest crossing ever

A Danish/Greenlandic expedition had to battle all kinds of torments when they crossed the inland ice. They even ran out of food on the way. – We were living zombies, recounts the experienced expedition leader

TEXT: Niels Ole Qvist

125 years ago – in the year of our lord 1888 – Fridtjof Nansen led the first expedition to cross the inland ice. This was a feat that made him world-famous.

Since then, hundreds have followed in the tracks of the Norwegian polar traveller and have suffered great hardships.

Some have buckled under, more have returned with disabling frostbite and even today, where expeditions have modern equipment, it is still a dangerous business.

Just ask the nine expedition members, who reached their goal, Isortoq, 100 kilometres west of Tasiilaq. The group consisted of six men and three women between 27 and 62 years of age, three of whom live in Greenland.

They spent a total of 36 days crossing the great ice cap – a journey that was planned to take 27 days.

And the going was tough.

The participants definitely got full value for the almost DKK 100,000 they had to pay out for the experience (including fares and equipment).

Bad health on the ice

Several times on the way, those who were hardest hit almost lost heart. It was particularly tough when a couple of them got pneumonia and had to be treated with penicillin.

Harsh weather did not help matters. For several days the expedition was at a standstill, weather-bound due to violent snowstorms that whipped and tore at the thin canvas of their tents.

All the while, the participants could send sombre thoughts to the British expedition that had run into one of the feared hurricanes of East Greenland, a piteraq, a couple of weeks earlier, which ended by costing the life of the 37-year old Englishman, Philip Goodeeve-Docker.

There were also four other expeditions that ran into trouble at the same time and several members were evacuated with Air Greenland's helicopters due to frostbite.

Expedition leader Erik B. Jørgensen, who was responsible for the expedition, admits that they were starting out in the wake of some disturbing events. But the accidents did not worry him.

– I hope I don't sound arrogant or insensitive, but I was convinced that we would not make the same mistakes as the Englishmen. When you are hit by a piteraq, there is only one thing to do: Dig in! As long as you dig, you don't die! The dead Englishman forgot this doctrine. He was too busy trying to get help. But in weather conditions like this, no helicopter can come to the rescue. You are on your own, adds Erik B. Jørgensen.

White-out

As a former patrol leader in the Special Forces, and not least from his time with the Sirius Patrol, Erik B. Jørgensen is used to arm-wrestling with the forces of nature. And yet it is always a great responsibility to head an expedition on the inland ice. When it comes down to it, the finger will point at him, if anything goes wrong.

However, all the necessary preparations had been made before this year's expedition set off. On the first day, alarm clocks went off in the tents at seven o'clock. Oatmeal, crisp bread and tea were served before everyone was ready to take on the ice for the first time.

Black ravens soared above the members of the expedition as they pushed forward, each in his own bubble of woolly hat and goggles. The meteorologists warned them over the satellite phone that a storm was coming. On the 10th day it hit with full force.

– It was a total white-out, which means that everything is white, says Erik B. Jørgensen, who describes the feeling in this way in his journal:

– Try to imagine that you are standing in a white room surrounded by white smoke and that you have to run on a treadmill. There is absolutely NOTHING to relate to or to focus on. You feel as though there is a huge hole in front of you, into which you can fall at any time, explains Erik B. Jørgensen.

Catastrophic weather

The white-out was far from being the only challenge. The cold also made its contribution. Down to minus 17-18 plus the chill factor. The loose snow was a further burden. In addition to this, the tent camp was temporarily turned into a field hospital.

– I must admit that at one point we felt we were under pressure. The time schedule slipped gradually as the weather kept bothering us. Especially the third day, when we were caught in a snow-storm, was a disaster. People were tired and perhaps a little discouraged, tells Erik B. Jørgensen.

In the midst of the white nothingness, however, we also found encouragement. Not least when the wind died down and the beautiful landscape unfolded. Chocolate, candy, peanuts, raisins, ice-cream and toasted marshmallows helped to keep spirits up.

– There was a lot that didn't go according to plan and that was annoying for the group. But I am proud that everyone managed to keep their spirits up. No-one was on the edge of giving up, stresses Erik B. Jørgensen.

> "When you are hit by a piteraq, there is only one thing to do: Dig in!"
>
> — Erik B. Jørgensen

High up

There were two positive highlights during the almost month-long trip: One of them was a visit to DYE 2, the now closed American radar station which is located 140 kilometres from Kangerlussuaq. It is used today by the US National Guard to train landings with Hercules aircraft.

The other highlight happened on May 1st when the expedition literally stepped over the highest point of the route which was 2500 metres.

Afterwards, we held a good pace downwards towards our goal on the coast.

However, the weather continued to show its teeth. It was a long way home and strong winds were blowing.

– The weather was rubbish, exclaimed Erik B. Jørgensen and recounted why one day in particular was challenging:

– Suddenly, someone shouted that they had lost a pulk. This was very serious. And never before in the history of my expeditions had anyone lost a pulk without noticing. I made the critical decision to go back for it, while the others made camp. Walking alone in a total white-out without equipment is not without danger. But fortunately I found the pulk and quickly got it clicked on before running back as fast as I could.

Food shortage

As the expedition entered its last week, the fighting spirit was undaunted, but visibility was still poor. Erik B. Jørgensen was forced to admit that supplies were getting short and the expedition members would have to get a move on, if they were to catch the flight that via Tasiilaq would take them back to Denmark.

It turned into an intense fight against time. The expedition struggled on during the final days. Erik B. Jørgensen wrote about the last days of the journey in his journal:

– It has been the wildest day and a half. Indescribable, tough, exhilarating and depressing all at the same time.

A special feeling of relief spread through the group when, in the distance, they spied the two hunters Salo and Peter from Isortoq, who had decided to come and meet the expedition. After this, a great deal of the equipment could be loaded onto sleds. There were also fresh supplies of food – something the hungry group had looked forward to.

68 kilometres later, after being on the move almost constantly for 26 hours, they finally reached Isortoq, a settlement that is often the end station – or the starting point – for expeditions to the inland ice.

– At this point we were living zombies. We had struggled and pushed and taken such a beating. But it was a total victory for everyone, concludes Erik B. Jørgensen in his journal.

Afterwards, when Suluk talked to him, he was still exhausted after the impressive feat. Any hope of catching the flight was gone, frustrating not least for those members who had planned to get home in time for a wedding.

But Erik B. Jørgensen is thankful that everyone arrived safely.

– It was the toughest of my four trips up to now. We were completely wrecked by the time we got to Isortoq. But on the way, we also had some fantastic days which made us forget all our ordeals. And most important – we made it!

[KAL] Peqataasunut qulingiluanut – arnanut pingasunut angutinullu arfinilinnut – angalaneq tassaalerpoq ilungersunarluinnartoq sakkortoorpassuarnik misigisassaqarfiusoq.

[DK] For de ni deltagere – tre kvinder og seks mænd – blev det en ekstrem hård tur med mange barske prøvelser.

[GB] For the nine expedition members – three women and six men - it turned into an extremely tough trip with many ordeals.

PHOTO — Jon R. Ineson