

Beaufort Gyre Exploration Project: Dispatch 10: Looking for ITP-1

Luc Rainville
August 5, 2007

In 2005, Rick Krishfield and John Kemp (senior Engineering Assistant at WHOI) found a great thick ice floe to deploy the second [ice-tethered profiler](#), ITP-1. The first one, ITP-2, was deployed the year before. Don't ask. The ice was great and appropriately enough, the melt ponds on the floe the shape of a nice smiling face, so they named it Camp Smiley. They installed the ITP-1 with its yellow float right in the middle of the floe (as the nose of the smiley), hoping that it would stay solidly stuck in the ice as it travels around the Beaufort Gyre.

The location was perfect, but unfortunately a software error occurred and the ITP had to be disabled - it stopped profiling the upper ocean in January 2007. It has been still valiantly called home and relayed its position ever since. Because it still contains interesting data and might be re-used, and it is currently located very close to our cruise track, we decided to try to recover it. ITPs send their data and positions via Iridium satellite phone once a day (more information on ITPs can be found [here](#)). We have been tracking the position of the buoy, and we knew it had to be closed. As communications via email are always delayed and complicated, we arranged for Mary-Louise Timmermans, a WHOI involved in the a few projects of this expedition but who stayed on Cape Cod, MA, to give us a call with the position as soon as the ITP would communicate it.

Just after dinner on Sunday, Kris Newhall and Rick Krishfield got on the helicopter with pilot Christopher Swannell, and they took off for the site just after I talked to Mary-Louise on the ship's satellite phone. The communication was a little broken, but we got the coordinates (already a few hours old by then). After a 30 minutes of searching, they spotted "Camp Smiley". They landed and marked the site with a big red flag and radar reflector so that it would be easier to find tomorrow or in the following days. We couldn't retrieve it right away since the fog was rolling in, and tomorrow morning is a big day: first mooring recovery is happening in the morning! Hopefully it will go smoothly and we will recover the ITP-1 soon. But the Arctic is hard to predict...



Kris Newhall, waiting to go look for the ITP in the helicopter. (Photo by Luc Rainville).



They found it! ITP-1 (yellow float) and the ice mass balance buoy, deployed nearby by collaborators from the Army Cold Regions Research and Engineering Lab (CRREL) in New Hampshire.



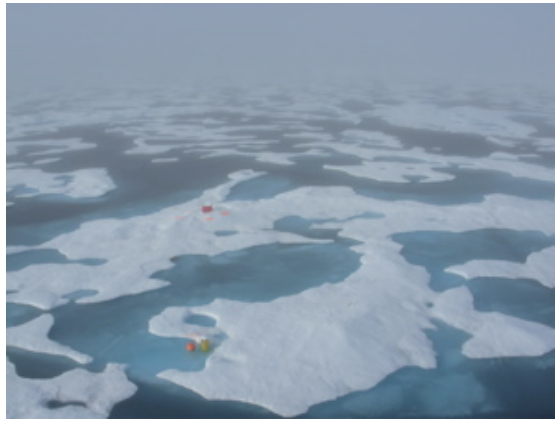
"Camp Smiley" was will solid enough for the helicopter to land. The big red ball was left there to help find the float for recovery.



For the past two years, no human had been close to the float... (Photo by Chris Swannell)



... but that's not to say that nobody visited it! These claw marks suggest that a polar bear might have been curious.



Camp Smiley, two year later. Click [here](#) to see what it was two years ago.

Most photos by Rick Krishfield.

Last updated: October 1, 2014

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Mail: Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, 266 Woods Hole Road, Woods Hole, MA 02543, USA.

E-Contact: info@whoi.edu; press relations: media@whoi.edu, tel. (508) 457-2000

Problems or questions about the site, please contact webdev@whoi.edu