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Beaufort Gyre Exploration Project: Dispatch 17: Camp Zebra

Luc Rainville
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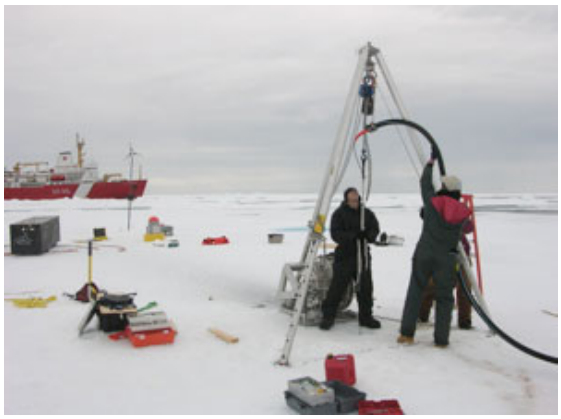
After a while, it's hard to remember what was different between the floe where ITP-4 was deployed (2005) and the one what we chose for ITP-6. Particularly for the sites where more than one buoy is deployed, it's always more useful and fun to name the floe.

This morning, I helped Jenny Hutchings and Alice Orlich deploy three ice buoys that will track the mouvement of the ice. We packed the helicopter and went looking for multi-year ice. The goal is always to select nice thick floes that will last for a few seasons. While doing that, we found a big flat piece of multi-year ice that tuned out to be perfect for the deployement of an Ice Based Observatory (IBO), a set of three buoys measuring the water column, the water-ice interface, and the ice thickness. The ship's crew and rest of the WHOI guys finished the deployment of mooring B (again without any glitch), and then a big group of us headed for the ice. While we were installing the buoys, a few people on the bridge (the ship was parked right next to the floe) noticed the long stripes across the floe, and the name Camp Zebra was suggested.

The idea behind IBO is to combine three different instruments that have been (and usually still are) deployed separately to get a better understanding of the Physics of the ice and of the upper ocean, and study how the two interact. First there is the ice mass balance buoy, built by the Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory, which measures ice temperature, the ice growth from under the ice, as well as the ice and snow accumulation (or decrease) from above. We also deployed a Ocean Flux Buoy from the Naval Postgraduate School, measuring the heat and momemtum transfers at the interface between the water and the ice. Finally, there is the WHOI Ice-Tethered Profiler (ITP), measuring the water column properties from about 7 meters below the surface to depths of nearly 800 m. Everything went very well. In addition to the buoy work, Jenny led some ice measurement and ice coring operations - to be described in tomorrow's dispatch. Everybody had a successful (and fun) time on the ice!

Jim Dunn and Kris Newhall making a 10-inch hole in the 3-m thick floe.



Kris and Rick Krishfield finishing the ITP deployment. The profiler and 800-m of cable have been lowered through the ice, and the float is next. The Ocean Flux Buoy is in the background.

Steve Manganini and Mike Dempsey reading the instructions for the deployment of the ice mass balance buoy. Where was this extra piece supposed to go?

Jim taking a short break and drinking from the melt pond. The water is not salty at all and ice cold (!).

The three buoys finally installed: ice mass balance buoy, barely visible in white on the left, the wind generator and the yellow and red float of the ocean flux buoy in the center, and the ITP on the right. Time to go back!

Just are we were leaving, a seal came by to try to figure out where these cables and sticks hanging from the bottom of his favorite ice floe came from. (Photo by Rick Krishfield).

Successful deployment! Mac Nagata, Steve Manganini, Tim Kane, Kris Newhall, Jim Dunn, Rick Krishfield, Luc Rainville, Mike Dempsey, Glen Watton, Bill May, Toshi Nagashima, Yuko Mukahira. (Photo by Chris Swannell).

Camp Zebra, after we were all done. I know, I don't see the zebra either... (Photo by Rick Krishfield).

Most photos by Luc Rainville

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