

Beaufort Gyre Exploration Project: Dispatch 20: Time for Shrinky Cups!

August 21, 2013

Well we've done it – we reached our most northerly station called CB11. We arrived at 79°N, 150°W at 2am to find nice ice floes, and chill temperatures. This is the first station where we saw freeze up conditions, with thin skins of ice and slush forming on the water surface.

Since this is the most northerly station, it was also time for the crowd favorite event of shrinky cups. Over the past few days crew and science team members have been flexing their artistic muscles, drawing on coffee cups with permanent markers. Today we collected up the cups, and loaded them into our high tech compression bags (old potato and onion sacs) for their descent. First we put the rosette in the water and sent it down ~100m. We like to give some space between the cups and the rosette so we minimize any chance of interference. Then we bring in the line and strap the sacs to the line and send them on their way. The ultimate depth of the cups wound up being 3808m, which means that there was roughly 5500 psi of pressure exerted on them. When they came back up the cups which could once hold 8oz of water may have been able to hold 1.

Other notable events of the day were the final mooring deployment for the WHOI group, which went smoothly and without a hitch once again, and our first sunset of the trip. The sunset lasted several hours and we were grateful to have the fog clear for a while to actually see the colors, but then around 11pm local time the sun finally dipped under the horizon and stayed down for the next 2 hours. We also had our first significant snowfall of the trip – not just flurries, and a full moon which made for some very beautiful scenery all around.

Last updated: October 19, 2015

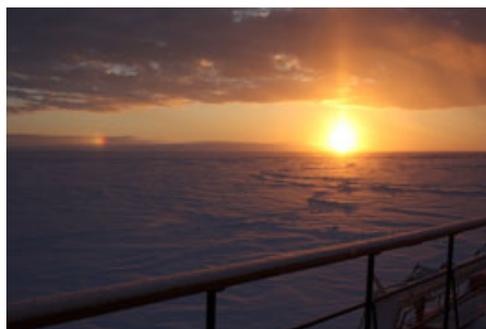
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