

Snow's in his forecast

EMMA REILLY
CITY MAN WHO SKIED TO SOUTH POLE IS BACK HOME ... SKIING
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Two days after returning to Canada from a gruelling ski trek to the South Pole, Fred Losani is back on the slopes.

The Hamilton-area businessman returned from Antarctica Monday with teammates Peter Turkstra, Steve Stipsits and Mark MacLennan.

And now he's on a skiing trip at his family's chalet.

"I feel great -- alive and energized," he said.

The team had planned to return home before Christmas. But they were stranded at the Patriot Hills base in Antarctica by bad weather.

Losani said it was especially difficult for the team members to be away from their children over Christmas.

"But the kids understood that we were down there for a purpose."

The trip raised about \$500,000 that will be distributed to local charities for anti-poverty programs. The team raised the same amount during a 2006 trip to the North Pole.

Losani said this trip was more physically and mentally demanding than the trek north.

The earlier trip required constant problem solving to deal with the changing landscape and the threat of polar bears and drifting ice.

But the trip to the South Pole was "kilometres and kilometres of nothingness," Losani said.

He said he sometimes counted to 200 just to keep his mind occupied amid the barren landscape of snow and sky.

"There were parts of the trip that were miserable," he said.

"The only environment you can control down there is between your ears."

Losani said he has started to think about his next adventure -- a family trip to climb Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

He's also interested in hiking the Bruce Trail.

"Sometimes you don't have to go to the most remote places in the world," he said.

"Not a lot of people take advantage of what's going on in our own backyard."

The Antarctica trip was an overwhelmingly positive experience, Losani said.

"I'd encourage anybody to do something like this," he said. Everybody should do something that scares them "at least once," he added.

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Courtesy South Pole Expedition for Kids



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