

BELARE 2007-2008: A TRIP THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS



With a work schedule ranging from 7 am to noon and 1 pm to 7 pm, work is progressing at a fine pace in Antarctica. Sunday, however, is a day for relaxation, laundry and travel.

A couple of days ago, nurse Vaska Van Beneden celebrated his 37th birthday. While he had already been called on duty in Antarctica during BELARE 2006-2007, this is the first time he spends his birthday on the continent. A magical present was given to him just before dinner: a picture of him signed by all the members of the team.

This past Sunday, the Utsteinen crew decided to visit the surrounding mountains. Going for a walk alone can be rather dangerous so they decided to go on a group tour, aboard one of the Prinoth trailers. After an hour's trip through Tangarden, they reached the summit of the Vikinghögda (1300 metres elevation). The seats may not have been very comfortable but it seems it had all been forgotten when they finally reached the top and saw the magnificent view. "A landscape of unimaginable beauty", as describes Fons, one of the team members. They had a clear view all the way to the horizon.

Utsteinen, the summit of the base camp, is a very dominant feature on the terrain. From far away, however, it is no more than a peak that emerges from the surrounding glaciers. The highest summits in the region are the Wideroefjellet and the Birger Bergersenfjellet. The mountains in the Sør Rondane all carry Norwegian names. This is because the Norwegians were the first to map the region in the 1950s. But the Japanese must have also visited the region, because the team members found a Japanese film roll dating back 1987!