

Pole position for three South Africans braving the ice

The three South Africans who scaled the 4 980m Mount Vinson in Antarctica – having overcome blizzards and minus 35°C temperatures – are now fighting their way to the South Pole.

Their mission is to place a Peace for Africa flag at the Pole, after the one they placed at the summit of Mount Vinson.

One of the members of the expedition, Jason Grove, reports that despite weather delays, the party should reach the Pole within the next few days. He and two other South Africans – Shawn Disney and Donald O'Connor – will become the first adventurers from Africa to achieve the double feat.

Grove says standing at the peak of Mount Vinson provided one of the highlights of his life.

“It has been a really tough haul, but I was well prepared, and meditation has made all the difference. I even spent a few minutes meditating at the summit.”

Earlier this week the expedition left the Patriot Hills camp and began their trek in the middle of the polar plateau.

On the first day of skiing and pulling sleds, the party noticed the effect of altitude on breathing and stamina. At the poles, there is less oxygen. The plateau has lines of “sastrugi”, or ridges of windblown snow, which caused much grief during previous expeditions.

● Follow their progress on www.jasonfgrove.co.za

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