

THAT'S REAL LIFE

IT'S THE PAPER WITH THE FEELGOOD FACTOR

THE WEEKLY NEWS

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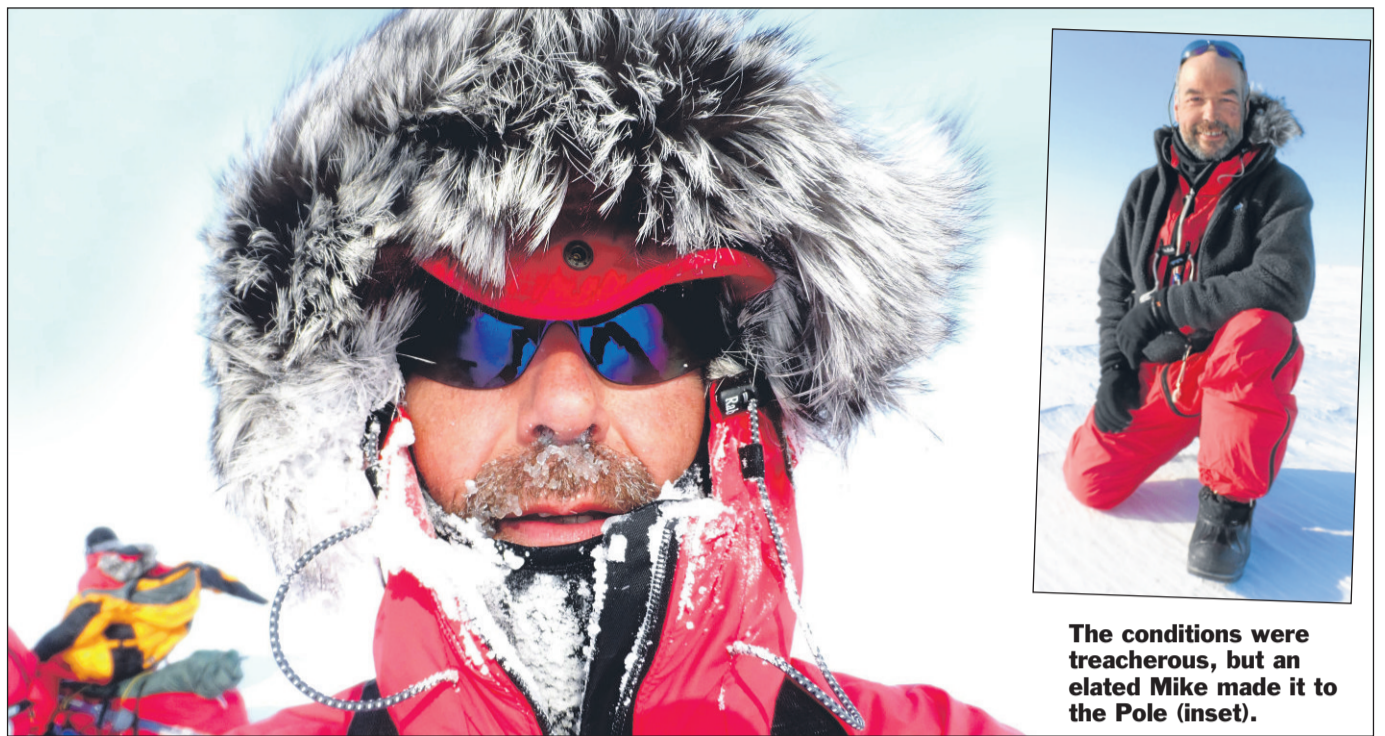
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WE want you to tell us about your real-life experiences. Funny, entertaining, moving or dramatic, let us know about it. Write to us at — **THE WEEKLY NEWS, 185 FLEET STREET, LONDON, EC4A 2HS or 144 PORT DUNDAS ROAD, GLASGOW, G4 0HZ**

Or email us — weeklynews@dcthomson.co.uk



The conditions were treacherous, but an elated Mike made it to the Pole (inset).

I took on Mother Nature — and won

I'M not sure what makes some of us want to explore the harshest parts of the world — I just know I love it!

I've recently completed the Polar Race, an expedition which left from Resolute, Northern Canada, and reached the Magnetic North Pole.

As part of a team of three, I'm very proud of what we achieved. It was a very intense experience.

The team covered 400 miles across desolate Arctic conditions.

The average daily temperature was -30°C and, on occasions, plummeted to -55°C with the wind chill!

There were times when we struggled to walk or even stand as

the wind was so strong.

Then it would be blowing in the right direction and we'd put our skis on and let the wind do the rest.

I lost 20lbs, but I'm sure I'll soon put that back on.

The only thing we all suffered is frost nip, a minor form of frostbite.

It means I've lost of bit of feeling in my fingers. It will come back in a few weeks,



by Mike Laird

though, so it's nothing to worry about.

And thankfully, the closest we came to a polar bear was waking up to find tracks around our tent.

I've been in the Arctic Region three times, twice for photography and exploring and the third time in Alaska,

where I retraced the footsteps of Christopher McCandless, before his story was made into a film, Into The Wild.

This had been in the pipeline for two years. I have done a lot of tough trips, but when you realise Ranulph Fiennes could mess this one up, you realise the magnitude of it!

Failure can knock the arrogance out of you, but having failed before, that's no bad thing.

Another threat we faced was from the ice moving or breaking up.

When we were crossing the ice, we were very aware and

cautious at first, but we became more used to it.

In places, the ice was a metre thick and we could see holes made by seals hunting.

I really missed the everyday things you take for granted.

It is nice to be back and take everything back in.

The South Pole will be next, and then Everest.

Sadly, I can only afford to do it because my mother left me money in her will when she died last year.

And yes, she would be pleased that I'm spending it this way!

As told to Craig Campbell

It's not easy being a 21st-century dad!

FATHERS really earn their special day this weekend — being Dad can be harder and more dangerous than you think, writes Craig Campbell.

Quirky British-based sock company Socked.co.uk asked some of their customers how hard it is to be a UK father — and got some scary replies!

"My six and seven-year-olds spread map pins all over the floor on my side of the bed while I was asleep," one dad, Mike, told them.

"Then they sneaked outside and rang the doorbell. We laughed about it, eventually!"

David told them: "My daughter drew all over my face while I was asleep the night before I was due to fly out to the US.

"I got up at 5am, dressed in the dark, and didn't have any idea that anything was wrong until I got dirty looks from the guys on passport control at Heathrow."

And Colin revealed: "I've got three teenage kids.

"I still haven't worked out which one sabotaged my lunchbox.

"Shaving foam sandwiches

and dried pasta pushed into a banana were not welcome after a hard morning's labouring."

Other loveable kids sold their dad's stamp collection at school, used his prized vinyl records as Frisbees, put underwear in his briefcase and stole beer from the fridge and held it to ransom until pocket money was paid — in full.

Let's hope those cheeky little urchins are a bit kinder on Sunday!

Learn more at www.Socked.co.uk



I love you, Daddy — as I pull your hair out . . .