North to the Pole

Five men and a woman make Arctic history

Caught in the massive grip of Arctic ice, members of the Steger International Polar Expedition strain to haul a dogsled over a fissure, part of their unending struggle with the frozen Arctic Ocean to reach the top of the world. By this date, April 20, 1986, their 44th day on the ice, they have covered 300 miles from their jumping-off point on Ellesmere Island in Canada’s high Arctic. Expedition co-leader Paul Schurke (right) uses a sextant to check progress. Eleven days later they reached their goal. Not since Robert E. Peary in 1909 had a party attained the North Pole by dogsled without resupply.

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Photographs by the author
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