

Barrow Whalers Safe at Home; Abandons Whale

Joash Tukle's whaling crew were rescued from the icy waters of the Arctic Ocean last week after search planes had failed to locate them for about a day or so.

They are now safely back in Barrow but the crew had to abandon the huge whale they had harpooned due to ice conditions and treacherous Arctic Ocean.

(Continued on page 5)

Barrow Whalers

(Continued from page 1)

On Thursday, Joe Felder, a bush pilot, located the Tukle crew about 30 miles east of the farthest north mainland point of land, Point Barrow.

The whale, first thought to be 60 tons, was even bigger according to Sam Taalak, manager of Barrow Utilities.

"They said the whale was closer to 70 tons," Taalak said.

After harpooning the huge mammal, Joash Tuke and his crew along with the help of Ben Itta's crew, started to tow the animal during which time Tuke's crew ran out of gas.

Sensing trouble, Ben Itta's crew was sent back to Barrow to get help and reached the village with just barely enough gas.

News of the whale catch spread through Barrow.

Some motorboats began to reach the whale catch area but heavy slush on the sea hampered their progress.

A plane was dispatched to pinpoint the location of Joash Tuke and his crew but returned without locating it. Hours of search began thereafter until some time on Thursday, October 31, when Joe Felder located the whalers 30 miles east of Point Barrow.