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## Mitteilungen / Notes

### *In memoriam Niels Reeh*

(\*9. Februar 1940 – †26. May 2009)

Our dear friend and colleague, the Danish glaciologist Niels Reeh died on May 26, 2009, at the age of 69, losing a long battle against cancer.

Niels Reeh was highly regarded for his contributions to glaciology, specifically through his rigorous combination of numerical modelling and field observations. By training, Niels Reeh was a civil engineer with an interest in polar problems from the start. Already in 1966 he began his work on the application of beam mechanics to floating glaciers and ice shelves and throughout his life, Niels retained a strong interest in modelling glacier dynamics. In the early 1980s Niels developed a 3D-model for ice sheets and later a more advanced flow-line model. Niels Reeh also took part in the early ice core drilling efforts in Greenland and later pioneered the concept of retrieving similar records from the surface of the ice sheet margin. Mass balance of glaciers and ice sheets was another theme in Niels Reeh's research, with a number of important contributions and insights still used when teaching the subject to students. Niels developed elegant models for ablation and snow densification, notable for their applicability in large-scale ice-sheet models and studied the impact of climate change on ice sheets and glaciers. Niels also took his interest in ice-dynamics and mass balance into remote sensing and worked successfully on methods to utilize radar and laser data from airborne surveys and satellites in glaciology.

Niels Reeh was an exceptional scientist who inspired generations of glaciologists, young and old alike, while always retaining a remarkable modesty. Niels Reeh's personal integrity is legendary. Niels worked most of his career without the security of a fixed position, in order to never compromise his scientific and personal ideals. Having his heart with him in whatever he did was what mattered. Niels Reeh's tall and lean figure took part in a great number of field campaigns, notably in Greenland and Canada, tirelessly unlocking the secrets of the ice even after he had fallen ill.

Niels was never interested in medals and honours, but was nevertheless crowned "King of Paakitsoq" by his field companions on his 20-year field anniversary at this pivotal site on the West Greenland ice-sheet margin. The sturdy tinfoiled cardboard "crown" produced in the field as a respectful prank was worth more to him than any official acknowledgement could ever be, and he proudly kept it in his office to the end. Niels Reeh will be missed by family, friends and colleagues, but will continue to inspire through the scientific and personal legacy he left behind.



A ceremony for Niels Reeh was held in Næstved, Denmark, on May 30 2009.

Andreas Peter Ahlstrøm

