



PRESS RELEASE

'2 BOYS' HAVE JUST OVER 700 ATLANTIC CHALLENGE MILES TO GO

DATE: 14 January 2014

Race Tracker: <http://yb.tl/talisker2013>

Website: www.2boysinaboat.com (blog on the website)

They have been rowing for 40 days – non stop. They have faced huge waves, 30 knot winds, constant soaking in sea and rainwater, no more than 80 minutes sleep at a stretch. They have lost over 12kg each in spite of eating 6000 calories a day, they have excruciating salt-sores on their bottoms and aching muscles all over but students Luke Birch and Jamie Sparks have rowed approximately 2300 nautical miles across the Atlantic, leaving just over 700 to go. Once completed, their two-person non-stop challenge to cross the Atlantic Ocean will see them become the youngest pair to row the Atlantic. They are raising money for Breast Cancer Care, having so far raising £160,000.

Childhood friends Luke Birch from Lincolnshire (Doddington; also an Edinburgh student) and Jamie Sparks from London (Islington; also a Bristol student) are attempting to break the World Record for the youngest team to row the Atlantic. At the same time, they are raising funds for Breast Cancer Care.

They have battled huge waves and swells, course-deviating fierce winds, narrowly missed being hit by a container ship, losing equipment overboard including their mattress, discovering 150kg of sea water in their bilges, going overboard on a rope to clean the barnacles off the hull, being thrown around a tiny cabin whilst trying to sleep and having to eat dehydrated food every day. Four teams have already been rescued from the race, and several others have severe problems with steering and power generation, but the 2 Boys in a Boat still press on and are at the front of the 'pairs' race. Morale peaks and troughs like the waves that batter them.

For more information please visit www.2boysinaboat.com.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

WE CAN POSSIBLY ARRANGE A SATELLITE PHONE INTERVIEW WITH LUKE OR JAMIE, OR AN INTERVIEW WITH CLAIRE BIRCH (LUKE'S MOTHER) OR CAROLINE BARKHAM (JAMIE'S MOTHER). Please contact Claire Birch on 01522 683 537 / 07900 555 368 or Amy Claridge MCIPR on 01522 698 698 / 07770 764446.

Contd.../

14 January 2014 press release contd.

IMAGES AVAILABLE. Please contact Claire or Amy.

More information: Luke and Jamie have been training since summer 2012. Luke is currently studying at Edinburgh University and is no stranger to pushing himself to the limit: in 2010 he swam the English Channel in 14 hours and 45 minutes as a solo swimmer (at the time only 50 people aged 18 and under had completed the swim). Jamie is studying at Bristol University and is from Islington, London. He played rugby for Middlesex (U18s and U20s) and cycled 1500 miles from Gibraltar to London.

The Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge is described as the 'world's toughest endurance race'. Teams – including Luke and Jamie rowing as '2 Boys in a Boat' – row nearly 3,000 nautical miles non-stop in two hour shifts across the world's second largest ocean, the Atlantic. Rowers started on 4th December Canary Islands (La Gomera) and finish in Antigua; it is estimated that the 2 Boys in a Boat will arrive at the end of January.

As part of their preparations, Luke and Jamie – apart from rowing thousands of practice miles on their boat and rowing machines - had to gain an RYA Yachtmaster Ocean Theory certificate, a First Aid certificate and an RYA Basic Sea Survival course completion certificate. During the race, they are not be allowed any outside assistance and Luke and Jamie will have to survive with onboard supplies, making up their dehydrated food with water produced by a solar powered desalinator.

All the costs of the row have been covered through commercial sponsorship, with lead sponsors Duracell and WeSEE.com along with Reed.co.uk, Sidley Austin LLP and Buzzacott. The boat was purchased using their savings and some help from their families, and the the plan is to sell her afterwards to offset some of the cost.

www.2boysinaboat.com

@2boysinaboat

www.facebook.com/2boysinaboat

www.taliskerwhiskyatlanticchallenge.com/