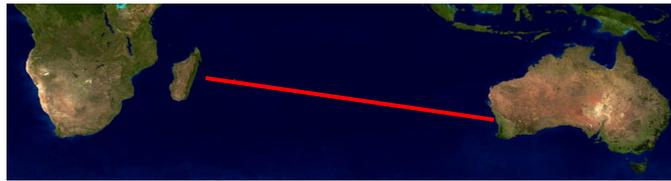


NEWS RELEASE– 22nd January 2009



## **BRITS SET FOR RECORD AS YOUNGEST EVER TEAM TO ROW FROM AUSTRALIA TO AFRICA**

Two Berkshire graduates will make history this summer as the youngest ever people to row any ocean, aspiring to become the first pairs boat to row from Australia to Mauritius.

Jamie Facer and James Thysse will undertake a journey which only two people have completed before, taking part in the first ever Indian Ocean Rowing Race on the 19 April 2009. They are raising money in support of two very important charities, 'Sparks' the children's medical research charity and 'Headway' the leading brain injury charity.

The determined rowers, who graduated from university this summer, will be making history as the youngest ever ocean rowing team, aged 21 and 22, and in the tradition of the sport will be rowing stark naked. They set off from Geraldton, Western Australia, in nothing but a 7 meter, self-sufficient boat, carrying all their supplies, using the fashionable 'bucket and chuck-it' method of going to the toilet.

They chose their charities carefully, wanting to lend their support where it counts most to them. James explained: "I am raising money for Headway, as not long ago a close friend of mine was involved in a serious accident and suffered brain injuries. I am overjoyed to see him recovering - he has a tremendous determination, but it is because of the support of Headway, to him and his family that he has been able to regain a small few of the capabilities he once had."

Jamie, the first ever UK birth from a frozen embryo and the first IVF child to row an ocean, will be raising money for Sparks, who lead children's medical research to bring healthy babies into the world. "I will forever be indebted to the founders of IVF treatment, Patrick Steptoe and Robert Edwards, for their research into IVF, which has benefited so many parents and has given over three million children a life. In support of the importance of scientific research and, in particular, giving babies the birth they deserve, I put this endeavour towards the great work of Sparks."

The young duo has spent much of the last few months training on the river and in the gym. "This is an endurance race of epic proportion, taking it in turns to row 2 hour shifts twenty four seven for 90 days," said Jamie/James. "We are training in all aspects of sport, building stamina and muscle, rowing, running, swimming, weights and circuits. While also preparing for the mental challenge and exploring the psychology behind such an extreme and stressful situation."

The challenge for the two is huge, the row itself being just one aspect. The pair are on a steep learning curve and gaining valuable experience for the world ahead of them. The enormous amount of preparation, fundraising and sponsorship leaves no spare time in their days. While they struggle against the current economic crisis they will never give in and are committed to rowing this ocean.

During their crossing they will be conducting ocean research for Earthwatch, to collect valuable data to contribute towards a better understanding of our oceans, how they are being affected by the changing climate and the locations and species of wildlife found in the Indian Ocean.

Still chasing sponsorship, the intrepid oarsmen would warmly welcome any support and are immensely grateful for the help they have received so far.

To support the young rowers and help their charities, please donate money at:

[www.oztoafrika.com](http://www.oztoafrika.com)

**-Ends-**

For further press information, please contact:

*J&J Rowers will be available for media interviews*

**Jamie Facer-Childs** T: 07955 319161 E: [jjrowing@oztoafrika.com](mailto:jjrowing@oztoafrika.com)

W: [www.oztoafrika.com](http://www.oztoafrika.com)

W: [www.sparks.org](http://www.sparks.org)

W: [www.headway.org](http://www.headway.org)

W: [www.woodvale-challenge.com](http://www.woodvale-challenge.com)

Facebook Group: J&J Row the Indian

Photos and video footage of J&J can be supplied

