

PRESS RELEASE
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First ever four-man crew break five world records in epic row across Arctic Ocean and raise money for homeless young people in Devon

On Saturday 22nd July, the first ever four-man crew completed a freezing 15-day row across the Arctic Ocean from Tromsø in Norway, 550 nautical miles to Svalbard in the high North.

The team was led by Plymouth-based Royal Marine, Matt Mason, Skipper of the first team to row from New York to London and included MOD Policeman Matt Inglesby, and Somerset-based businessmen Mark Sealey and Colin Hiscock.

The epic journey, which saw them face 30ft waves, in ice-cold conditions, looks set to collect five world records. The crew are the first and fastest four to row the Arctic Ocean. At 59, Mark Sealey is the oldest crew member to row the Arctic Ocean. Matt Ingles is the first person to row the Atlantic and Arctic Ocean in the same year. And Matt Mason is the first person to row the Arctic, North Atlantic and mid-Atlantic.

Mark Sealey previously rowed the Atlantic Ocean and compares how different it was to this row:

“The Atlantic row was 3,000 nautical miles and took 50 days. Although the Arctic row was only 15 days and 550 nautical miles, the conditions were much worse. The 30ft waves during the storms threw our small vessel 30 degrees in one direction, to 30 degrees in the others. You just wait at para-anchor and try to sleep.”

A para-anchor is a parachute system which anchors a boat in water that is too deep for a normal anchor. The para-anchor is strong enough to hold the bow of the boat head to the wind in the worst storm conditions and stops the vessel being thrown off course.

During the worst of the storms, the crew of four stayed hidden away in tiny compartments, either end of the boat.

Throughout the 15 days, the crew, who rowed consecutive two hours on and two hours off, saw over 50 whales, dolphins, puffins and even a walrus. But for all of them the highlight was reaching the high North.

“The final four days we rowed up the western side of Svalbard, underneath the lee of the landmass,” explains Sealey. “We had the wind and current with us. It was just magical. Incredible scenery – beautiful glaciers.”

The team raised nearly £3,000 to support young people facing homelessness through the work of YMCA Exeter.

Gareth Sorsby, YMCA Exeter Joint CEO says:

“We were delighted that the crew from the Ocean Revival Arctic Row chose [YMCA Exeter](#) to be their charity during this amazing challenge. YMCA Exeter supports over 600 young people in Devon every year in their time of need; helping them overcome adversity and reach their unique potential. This could be through the provision of housing after homelessness, 1-to-1 wellbeing support for mental health challenges, or workplace training and advice after a period of unemployment.

“It was an absolute privilege to follow the journey of Matt, Mark, Matt and Colin as they battled the world’s coldest row. They took on freezing temperatures, icy waters and extreme physical and mental pressures. In challenging themselves to their limits, they needed total reliance on each other, reaching break-through moments and ultimately achieving their goals. Facing challenges every day is the reality for many young people, so we applaud the team all the way.”

The world-class ocean rowing boat includes a life raft, immersion suits, AIS, lifejackets, danbuoys, locator beacons and is designed to withstand adverse weather having been tested in the Indian, North and Mid Atlantic Oceans. With no support vessels, the crew was entirely self-sufficient.

Ocean Revival Adventures was first set up by Royal Marines to raise awareness for the plastic destroying the world's oceans. The first epic row took place in 2020 across the North Atlantic totaling approximately 3,700 miles from The Brooklyn Bridge in New York City to Tower Bridge in London.

Matt Mason and his team have visited over 20,000 school children, with the focus of inspiring the next generation of marine conservationists.

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Notes to Editors

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About Ocean Revival Adventures:

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For more information see www.oceanrevivaladventures.com

About YMCA Exeter: YMCA Exeter is one of the oldest YMCAs in the world, founded in 1846. Part of the worldwide YMCA movement, YMCA Exeter is a local charity and a Registered Provider of Social Housing working across Greater Exeter and North Devon. The charity provides services in Supported Accommodation, Offender Rehabilitation, Mental Health and Wellbeing, and Youth Services so that all young people can thrive in body, mind and spirit. For more information see www.ymcaexeter.org.uk