

PRESS RELEASE

Earthrace eco-boat begins round-the-world record attempt today

Spain, 27 April 2008 – Earthrace, the world’s fastest, coolest and greenest powerboat kicked off its round the world race at 1400hrs CET today from Sagunto in Spain, in an attempt to break the round the world speed record and promote the use of sustainable fuels.

Earthrace is an incredible 78ft wave-piercing trimaran that runs exclusively on biodiesel, and has a net zero carbon footprint, making it one of the world’s most environmentally-friendly powerboats.

Skipper Pete Bethune and his crew of three (New Zealand, UK, Sweden) **plus one special guest crew for the first leg, 39 year old Lisa Topley, mother of two from Southampton, UK**, blasted off from the port of Sagunto, Spain, heading for their first fuel stop in the Azores. They will be crossing the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans as they thunder around the planet’s circumference at a maximum speed of 40 knots.

“For the next 40 days we’re going to be living on adrenaline,” says Bethune, who auctioned off his home and sold his company to fund the building of the GBP 1.5million boat. “The crew have entered ‘race mode’ and we have one thing on our minds – the world record.

“We are fully committed to beating the record, and we don’t intend to leave anything to chance – the boat is fully geared up and weather conditions are optimum. There have been five attempts, including our own first attempt last year, since the current record was set in 1998 and we’ll do everything we can to mark this tenth anniversary by beating it!”

Lisa Topley works with husband Paul in their company, Churches Fire Security who have provided fire safety equipment for Earthrace. Paul has already booked his place on the final leg back to Spain. Some race legs are still available. If going on the race itself is a little too daunting, people can buy nautical miles for the record route (www.earthrace.net) to help support the project.

You can keep up-to-date with the crew’s progress via the website at www.earthrace.net, where they will be posting regular blogs, audio features, new photos and video diaries.

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International press contacts

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Notes to editors:

About Earthrace

Crew for 2008 world record attempt

The team is made up of entirely international volunteers. They are:

Boat crew: Skipper, Pete Bethune (New Zealand); Navigator, Adam Carlson (Sweden); Engineer, Mark Russell (UK and USA); and Cameraman, Rob Drewett (UK and Spain), Eartha, our mascot who has her own facebook page and will be blogging from on board on a regular basis, and George, the RNLI bear who has just completed the Barcelona World Race on board Hugh Boss.

Ground crew: CEO, Fiona Clark (UK); Operations Manager, Adrian Erangey (Ireland); Engineer, Celestino (Tino) de Freitas (Guyana). They will travel ahead of the boat to provide the essential logistical support to the Boat throughout the World Record attempt, including: fuel delivery; customs clearance; refuelling; mechanical and engineering maintenance; supplies; media liaison; sponsorship servicing. As with carbon emissions caused by transporting the fuel to the fuel stops (and the biofuel itself), all CO₂ emissions from travel by the ground crew will be offset through the purchase of carbon credit from downwithcarbon.org.

Base crew: Head of media, Bev Bailey (UK); Administrator in Spain, Karoline Romanek (Hungary); Administrator in London, Ali Bradshaw (UK); Administrator in NZ, Sharyn Bethune (NZ), Administrator in Spain, Phil Parra. The base crew, working from London, Spain and New Zealand, will be coordinating media, working on the subsequent Earthrace tour following the world record journey, as well as sourcing any unexpected supplies or replacement parts needed by the boat or ground crew.

Earthrace is run as a not-for-profit venture, with a boat, ground and London base crew made up of international volunteers.

The full record route is as follows:

Sagunto (Spain) – Horta (Azores) – San Juan (Puerto Rico) – Colon (Panama Canal, Panama) – Manzanillo (Mexico) – San Diego (USA) – Maalaea Harbor, Maui (Hawaii) – Majuro (Marshall Islands) – Koror (Palau) – Singapore – Kochi/Cochin (India) – Salalah (Oman) – Port Said (Suez Canal, Egypt) – Sagunto (Spain)

You can find out in real time exactly where Earthrace is now by going to www.earthrace.net and clicking on the 'Where is Earthrace' globe.

High resolution, copyright-free photographs and video footage are available to download from the 'News and Media' page on www.earthrace.net. Please email bev@earthrace.net for access, or call +44 7711 482 572.