

NEWS RELEASE

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LANCASHIRE



When the going gets tough, the tough keep rowing

Lancashire's dynamic duo, Paul Nelson and Adam Murfitt are now in the home stretch in their bid to complete the 2003 Woodvale Atlantic Rowing Race.

Paul, from Chorley and team mate Adam, from Lancaster have now been rowing continuously for over 47 days and have covered well over 1800 nautical miles. With a mere 700 nm to go, they are currently lying in 8th position in their boat, The Spirit of Lancashire and hope to cross the finishing line in Barbados around the 17th December.

It hasn't all been plain sailing since the pair set out from La Gomera, in the Canary Islands in October. "They have been noted as the team with the most problems", admits team manager Dr John Bradley, a sports scientist from the University of Central Lancashire, where the rowers completed their gruelling training programme. "They broke an oar five days into the race, suffered complete electrical failure after ten days and had to put up with innumerable bits and pieces of the boat breaking up. But in spite of all that, they kept on rowing and in suitable conditions are still one of the fastest boats in the race."

In the run up to the race the team went through a rigorous training schedule with the help of UCLan's Sports Scientists. "We offered a whole range of support from the physiological and biomechanical to the actual psychology of preparing for, and coping with, the race itself" says Dr Bradley. "They were one of the best supported crews in the race."

Paul and Adam have been buoyed up by continuing support from friends, family and the University, who speak to them regularly by satellite phone. They're in good spirits, despite the threat of an odd shark or two and looking forward to celebrating Christmas in Barbados.

Well-wishers can leave messages of support on the website at www.spiritoflancashire.com, while the race can be monitored at www.woodvale-events.com.

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-Notes to editors follow-

-page 2 of 2-

1. For more details, please contact Dr John Bradley, Dept of Biological Sciences, University of Central Lancashire, tel: 01772 893523. See www.uclan.ac.uk/sport for photos and links
2. Calls via the satellite phone cost around £5 per minute. Those interested in sponsoring Adam and Paul for the cost of a call, should contact Dr Bradley, as above – nb calls can **only** be made up to 12th December. After this date Paul and Adam are planning to row for 16-18 hours a day up to the finish and are unlikely to be awake for longer than necessary.