



## **BRITISH ATTEMPT UNVEILED TO CONQUER ONE OF THE LAST TRUE GLOBAL FIRSTS...**

### **OLD PULTENEY ROW TO THE POLE LAUNCHED**

Scots born explorer Jock Wishart and Old Pulteney Single Malt Scotch Whisky have today (Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> April) unveiled a remarkable mission to conquer what could be one of the world's last great 'firsts': the first rowing attempt to one of the world's Poles.

'Old Pulteney Row to the Pole' will see Jock and a 5-strong crew brave some of the harshest conditions on earth as they row in a specially designed boat through Arctic waters to reach the pole – a feat of extreme physical and mental endurance that has never before been attempted and if successful, will rank alongside the first row across the Atlantic.

The challenge will take place in July/August 2011 and is of global significance as both a pioneering maritime adventure and an environmental expedition. The planned 450 mile route across the Arctic sea starts in Resolute Bay in Canada with timing being of the essence as the final section of the journey is only navigable for a few weeks of the year before refreezing. It has only become possible to consider an attempt like this in recent years due to the increase in seasonal ice melt and the much-documented deterioration of the Arctic landscape.

The adventure will be captured online and on camera for UK and international audiences. It will follow Jock's extraordinary preparations and the 4-6 week long row where his team will face dramatic ice-bound coastlines and shifting sea-ice barriers on their voyage and their haul of the boat over land which is necessary to complete the journey.

Jock, who is a descendant of Scotland's national bard Robert Burns, will row for hours on end with his crew in challenging weather and subzero temperatures with little chance for rest or shelter. Decisions about navigation and the route will be

critical. Jock's background as an expedition leader and his long track record of organising successful record attempts will stand him in good stead as he faces his biggest challenge to date.

Preparations are already underway for their August 2011 attempt:

- A recce of the route took place by plane in August 2009
- An advanced rowing boat design is being constructed to make it possible for it to be man-hauled across the ice. At a later date, this specially designed boat will be unveiled – believed to be the first 'ice boat'.
- Jock has begun the challenging process of finding and selecting his crew who will activate a 'three on, three off' rowing and resting regime.
- Planning has taken place with scientific research partners to deliver environmental data and insight from the journey

The Old Pulteney Row to the Pole will be the first polar expedition to involve rowing since Ernest Shackleton's men took to their boats to save their lives in the South Pole, on his now legendary 1916 Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition.

Jock is established as one of the UK's leading adventurers and explorers, with a successful background in polar exploration, rowing and extreme navigational feats. He led the team which established fifteen new world speed records for powered circumnavigation and captained the team that broke the London to Paris rowing record in 1999. He has a lifetime interest in polar exploration and in 1992 journey he was part of the first team to walk unsupported to the Geomagnetic North Pole.

*'A few years ago a good rowing friend joked that a row to the pole would be the ultimate challenge for someone like me, who is passionate about both polar exploration and boating,'* Jock commented.

*'It's therefore incredible for me, after three years of planning, to be unveiling this expedition today and to begin the intense process of work and training that now lies before us to prepare for what will be the greatest challenge of my life.'*

Old Pulteney's partnership with Jock is rooted in the whisky's renowned maritime heritage and history of supporting sailing and seafaring adventure. The whisky is distilled in the historic harbour town of Wick, the most northerly distillery on the UK mainland and the windswept and rugged landscape that surrounds it has given the malt its legacy as the Genuine Maritime Malt.

Margaret Mary Clarke, Senior Brand Manager for Old Pulteney commented:

*'Old Pulteney is extremely proud to be a partner in this great adventure, and to be working with Jock who is an inspiration for all of us who are passionate about maritime adventure. We will be supporting Jock and his crew throughout the process, and look forward to being part of this exciting project as it unfolds over the coming months.'*

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**www.rowtothepole.com**

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**Notes to Editors**

- The certified position of the North Magnetic Pole is 78 degrees, 35.724 minutes North, 104 degrees, 11.915 minutes West.
- See Jock Wishart's biography attached for more information on his previous feats as an oarsman, polar explorer and navigator.

**Old Pulteney Single Malt Whisky**

Old Pulteney Single Malt Whisky, is diligently crafted at Pulteney Distillery in Wick. It is the most northerly distillery on the UK Mainland and was founded in 1826 by James Henderson at the height of Wick's herring boom. The distillery lies in the heart of 'Pulteneytown', which was created for all the fishermen at the time, and is embedded in the deep rooting history of this coastal town, which used to be one of the most important and biggest herring fishing ports in Europe.

Wick became known around the world for its precious barrels of silver and gold – silver being the herring and gold being the fine whisky - which left the port in vast numbers.

Old Pulteney Single Malt whisky has a long standing association with the sea and is also known as the 'Genuine Maritime Malt'. Its carefully crafted taste carries the windswept and rugged character of the North, the salty and fresh air of the North Sea and the distillery's rich maritime heritage runs through every drop of this fine malt.

As a strong supporter of Wick's community, Old Pulteney is delighted to be continuously supporting the Wick RNLI Station, the Wick Pipe Band, Wick Football Club and Hockey Team and furthermore as the 'Genuine Maritime Malt', Old Pulteney is also involved with some of the most prestigious sailing events in the country including the Port of Dartmouth Royal Regatta, the Round the Island Race at the Isle of Wight and the Old Pulteney IRC Scottish Championship.

*15<sup>th</sup> April 2010, Old Pulteney Row to the Pole*

International Beverage Holdings ([www.interbevgroup.com](http://www.interbevgroup.com)) was established in 2005 as the international arm of ThaiBev, one of South East Asia's leading alcohol beverage companies. With a network of regional offices in Asia, Europe and North America, the company is responsible for the production, sales, marketing and distribution of a portfolio of premium global brands in over 80 countries and territories.

Inver House Distillers ([www.inverhouse.com](http://www.inverhouse.com)) is globally integrated into International Beverage Holdings and drives the distillation and maturation of Scotch through its five distilleries.

International Beverage brands include:

- Chang Beer: Thailand's iconic beer brand
- Single Malt Scotch Whiskies: Old Pulteney, Balblair, anCnoc, Speyburn
- Blended Whiskies: Hankey Bannister
- Mekhong: 'The Spirit of Thailand' since 1941
- Caorunn - a small batch distilled Scottish Gin infused with 5 Celtic botanicals

The company's success is built on the combination of a strong understanding of local cultures and markets with the creation of a truly global operational network. Brand building pays respect to heritage, provenance and craftsmanship whilst delivering innovative and highly effective strategies at global level. A skilled and dedicated team of people of more than 12 nationalities, speaking over 14 languages delivers the highest standards of customer service and attention to detail across all aspects of the business.