

Earthrace eco-boat smashes round-the-world speed record by 13 days, 21 hours and 9 minutes

Sagunto, Spain, 27 June 2008: Earthrace, the world's fastest eco-boat, has smashed the world speed record for a powerboat to circumnavigate the globe, completing the 24,000 km journey in just 60 days, 23 hours and 49 minutes.

The boat crossed the finish line in Sagunto at 14:24hrs CET on Friday 27 June and completed the journey using 100% biofuel to demonstrate and draw global attention to the potential for alternative fuel sources.

Earthrace is a 24m tri-hull wavepiercer built in New Zealand, and the record attempt, run by a team of international volunteers from New Zealand, UK, Sweden, Guyana and Hungary, has been completed as a carbon neutral project.

She set off from Spain on 27 April at 14:35hrs CET in an attempt to challenge the world record that has remained unbroken since 1998, when it was set by the British boat, Cable and Wireless Adventurer. The finish in Spain by Earthrace was monitored by D. Jaime Pérez López, Presidente de la Federación Territorial Motonáutica de la Comunidad Valenciana.

Earthrace, a not for profit enterprise, has overcome many obstacles during its journey, the most challenging of which were the replacement of the boat's driveshaft and propeller after hitting sea debris in Palau, encountering monsoon conditions in the India Ocean, and bypassing a massive backlog of ships waiting to transit the Panama Canal. Despite this, the crew has emerged victorious after almost two months at sea.

Skipper Pete Bethune, a former oil worker, has dedicated the past six years of his life towards reaching his goal of smashing the record in his amazing boat using biodiesel, including an attempt last year, called off after meeting three huge storms in the Mediterranean.

"We're completely stoked to have achieved something so incredible," says Bethune. "Earthrace's success has proved that any form of transport, including marine, can be non-damaging to the environment as well as being high performance. It is still early days for alternative fuel and there are issues that need to be addressed by those with the power to make change happen. But I hope that Earthrace and her adventure highlight to the world the importance of continuing to research and develop alternative fuel sources for global use."

"This fantastic team of people and our amazing boat have broken the record by a massive margin, and I finally feel that all the sacrifices made, especially by my family, have been worth it. I'm also enormously grateful to all the individuals and companies that have supported us along the way, some of them since the very beginning. Without them, none of this would have been possible".

After crossing the finish line at Vulkan Shipyard, Sagunto, the boat will be docked at Marina Real Juan Carlos 1 in Valencia for a few days to allow supporters and the public to go on board and meet the crew.

World record route

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)

Crew for 2008 world record attempt

Boat crew: Skipper, Pete Bethune (New Zealand); Navigator, Adam Carlson (Sweden); Engineer and first mate, Mark Russell (UK); and Cameraman, Rob Drewitt (UK)

Ground crew: CEO, Fiona Clark (UK); Operations Manager, Adrian Erangey (Ireland); Engineer, Tino de Freitas (Guyana). They provided 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 were offset through the purchase of carbon credits.

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).

What next for Earthrace?

Following a visit to Portugal to meet fuel sponsor, SGC Energia, Earthrace will be embarking on a further tour that will take in more of Europe as well as the Caribbean and Australia, with the boat returning home to New Zealand in 2009. Skipper Bethune is actively looking for new volunteers to travel with the boat as crew during the tour. Keep up-to-date with news and see if the boat will be visiting a town near you on www.earthrace.net

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Notes to editors:

Further media information available <http://www.earthrace.net/index.php?section=2>

High resolution, copyright-free photographs and video footage are available to download from our FTP site: <ftp://assets.earthrace.net>

Please contact news@earthrace.net for login details.

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