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MIRACLE OF MEDICAL SCIENCE YOUNGEST TO ROW INDIAN OCEAN
LCG Bioscience helps young ocean rowers take on the world's great challenge



Britons, James Thyse and Jamie Facer-Childs (22), have become the youngest pairs crew ever to row across the Indian Ocean. It is the second time that Jamie has made history, he was one of the first 1000 babies born as a result of IVF treatment at Bourn Hall and the first frozen-embryo twin in the world.

Medical science has always required individuals with pioneering spirit to push back the boundaries, so when staff at the specialist clinical research centre LCG Bioscience heard the inspiring story of Jamie Facer-Childs and his school friend James Thyse they persuaded the company to sponsor the adventure seeking duo and their faith has been rewarded.

Dawn Course, Director at LCG Bioscience commented: "It has been a real adventure for the James and Jamie and we have been following it closely. They have been at sea for a staggering 103 days, capsized in a sea full of sharks and had an exciting running battle with the other pairs team in the race who only narrowly beat them at the last leg.

"For us it has been inspirational and a real demonstration of what can be achieved if you put your mind to it. We are proud and relieved to see them safely at the finish."

The pair were competing in the inaugural Indian Ocean Rowing Race 2009, finishing just hours after their rivals the 'Flying Fox' on 31st July 2009. The two boats had fought a fierce

duel, swapping positions numerous times during the 3,132 nautical miles from Geraldton, Western Australia across the Indian Ocean to the beautiful island of Mauritius.

James and Jamie rowed the journey in a 7x2m boat, the '*Southern Cross*', with just a small shelter to keep off the blistering heat and salt spray. Prior to the race only two people had ever rowed the Indian Ocean which although calmer than the Atlantic it is more unpredictable, with the additional hazard of sharks.

The lads were tested to the limit when their boat capsized in the first half of the race, damaging equipment and ruining food supplies, and increasing the odds against them finishing the race. They were forced to ration meals causing considerable weight loss, yet despite these obstacles, the youngest team in the race achieved their goal with a crossing time of 103 days, 9 hours and 26 minutes.

James Thyse comments: "Capsizing in the middle of the Indian Ocean was the most scared I have ever been. But when we righted, checked over the boat and had time to reflect, we were more determined than ever to reach Mauritius, no matter what.

Jamie Facer-Childs added: "Seeing all our friends and family on the dockside in Mauritius was an amazing feeling and something I will never forget. We are now both looking forward to the delight of putting all our lost weight back on again."

Head of Volunteer Recruitment at LCG Bioscience, Clare Lyon explained that Jamie, as an IVF baby, is proud to be the result of a scientific breakthrough, and an exemplary example of the benefits of medical research.

"LCG Bioscience has a long history of supporting research into women's health and played a key role in the development of the early fertility treatments. Jamie is to use the Oz to Africa race to raise funds for Sparks, a children's medical research charity, and to prove that children born as a result of IVF were fit and healthy, we were happy to support them.

Prime Minister Gordon Brown said in a letter to all the teams: "An event such as this has the power to inspire people both within the field of rowing and throughout the wider public.

I would like to send my warmest best wishes to all of those who took part in this year's Race and to commend your efforts in raising money for good causes. I am sure it was a physically

and mentally gruelling race but ultimately provided rich and rewarding memories of the occasion."

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About LCG Bioscience

LCG Bioscience is fully MHRA accredited, modern purpose-built research facility with a 40-bed clinic (including a ward for radio-isotope studies, dedicated sleep rooms and respiratory facility), clinical and biomarker laboratories, GMP Pharmacy, archive and study catering facilities. We have particular expertise in studies that require biomarkers, complex clinical procedures, special populations, or surrogate pharmacodynamic endpoints.

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