



## Africa to the Americas 2011

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### MEDIA ALERT

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### **OAR Northwest to Match Muscle Against Motor Guinness World Record holders lead yacht parade**

Seattle, WA – Before wrestling with the waves of the Atlantic Ocean this December, the OAR Northwest ocean rowing expedition team will lead the annual Opening Day ceremonial procession of yachts through the Montlake Cut. The savvy ocean veterans are well trained in the event they encounter rogue bow waves.

The Seattle Yacht Club invited the team to lead the 2011 Opening Day Parade to highlight its next ocean-crossing expedition. Most parade vessels will be under power, requiring the team to match muscles against Mercruisers.

Once at sea later this year, the rowers will face greater challenges as they venture across the Atlantic from West Africa to South America in a 29-foot specialized ocean rowboat.

The *Africa to the Americas 2011* expedition will span 60 days and an ocean's breadth between Liberia & Venezuela. With a goal of connecting children from three communities separated by a vast ocean and cultures, the expedition team is rowing in support of Right To Play – an international nongovernmental organization whose philosophy is to impart skills of responsibility and self-reliance that leave a lasting impact for children. *[See p.2 for more about Right to Play]*

To create a lasting impact among local youth, OAR Northwest contracted with adventure education consultant, Otto Loggers Ed.M., to design and implement a K-12 education program. Pacific Northwest schools will join the expedition's journey in real-time and gain unprecedented personal contact with the team and rowing vessel, outfitted as a scientific ocean laboratory. Teachers and administrators can find more information and enroll online. *[See p.2 for more about the Education Program]*

Atlantic Rowing Race veterans Jordan Hanssen and Greg Spooner, as well as Olympic Gold Medalist Adam Kreek and former UW rower Richard Tarbill are available for media interviews and/or photos beginning Friday, May 6 at the Seattle Yacht Club.

The team can discuss 30-foot waves v. a 29-foot rowboat, losing 45 pounds in 72 days on the open sea, things that go bump in the night (they're sure it was a shark)... and why Jordan and Greg want to do it all over again.

## VISUALS

- \* Expedition team members, including Olympic gold medalist
- \* Historic rowboat outfitted with exceptional technology to cross oceans

## AVAILABILITY

- \* Friday, May 6 – 10:00a until 6:00p, Seattle Yacht Club (dinghy dock)
- Saturday, May 7 – until 11:30a at the southern end of the regatta finish line

## ABOUT OAR NORTHWEST

Founded in 2005, OAR Northwest connects with partners to reach its expedition fundraising goals, while propelling businesses to their own extraordinary achievement. The crew for its next Atlantic crossing: Guinness World Record holders and North Atlantic Rowing Race veterans Jordan Hanssen and Greg Spooner, Beijing Olympic Gold Medalist Adam Kreek and National Level Lightweight Rower Richard Tarbill. Jordan and Greg rowed 3,200 nautical miles across the North Atlantic in 72 days from the USA to the UK without assistance. This Pacific Northwest-based 501(c)3 organization is currently raising awareness and funds for its December 2011 Mid-Atlantic crossing, benefiting Right to Play International. OAR Northwest proves that solid teams faced with extreme challenges can inspire excellence. For more information visit: [www.OARnorthwest.com](http://www.OARnorthwest.com). OAR Northwest is represented by 5T Sports Group – Vancouver, BC.

## ABOUT RIGHT TO PLAY INTERNATIONAL

Right to Play (RTP) is committed to every child's right to play. Children are given a chance to become constructive participants in society, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, social background, or religion. Through games and sports, RTP helps create social change in communities affected by war, poverty, and disease. A team of top athletes from more than 40 countries supports Right to Play. Each week, more than 688,000 children take part in regular sport and play activities, and a combined total of more than 1-million children attend regular programming and special sports events and festivals. This is made possible by more than 15,000 local Coaches, Teachers, and Leaders.

## ABOUT OAR NORTHWEST'S EDUCATION PROGRAM

The OAR Northwest education program aims to motivate student learning, and the approach is to make students active participants in the learning process. Face-to-face interactions with expedition crew members, innovative online tracking technology and a standards-aligned curriculum contribute to building a student's academic excellence. Students explore real life and world issues through authentic classroom and out-of-school learning experiences. Programs launch autumn 2011 only at enrolled schools.

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