



Press Release: For Immediate Release

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Kiting the Empty Quarter

In June, a two-man team will set out to cross the largest sand desert on the planet by wind power alone. The expedition will take Chris Edwards and George Wadsworth 1100 km from Dubai, UAE, to Salalah, Oman, by kite buggy – this will be the first time anyone has ever crossed the Empty Quarter by wind power alone.

To add to the inherent challenges of crossing a desert, neither Chris nor George have any experience with kite buggies at all, so why would they choose to cross a desert at the hottest time of year, in vehicles they've never used before?

Chris explains: "Last year I had an overwhelming urge to get out and do something completely different to normal life – to have an adventure. I've not spent any time in a desert before, and the idea of crossing one really spoke to me, though I didn't think I'd have two months to spare to walk across one; that's when I got the idea to use kite buggies. As for the time of year, we're both about to finish our final year at Newcastle University, so this expedition is also a celebration for us before we start working; June just fits our timeframe."

George continues: "We're both *outdoor types* and we love trying new and exciting things – kite buggying ticks both of those boxes, so I was sold as soon as Chris asked me to join him. For most expeditions like this you'd have at least two 4x4s following you, but this is an unsupported journey, meaning that – aside from stopping to refill water – we're going to have to be self-sufficient."

After several months of planning, the team have been lucky enough to receive support from like-minded companies hoping to help them succeed: Ozone Kites, Expedition Foods, and Yellowbrick Tracking.

As *Kiting the Empty Quarter* is an unsupported expedition, it's vital that the team have gear they can rely on. Ozone will be supplying high end de-power foil kites that will carry the pair across the desert. "Ozone have supported adventures all over the globe, and their kites have a reputation for performing in the worst conditions and the harshest environments," the team explain, "So we're incredibly pleased to have people with so much experience backing us."



Above: The 1100 km route, from Dubai to Salalah, is roughly the length of the UK.





An easily overlooked component of any expedition is nutrition, so the team turned to Expedition Foods, who were more than happy to provide them with top quality freeze dried meals. Jenny Main from Expedition Foods said: “The adventure sounds incredible! I’m a big fan of Thesiger so I’m very envious!”

To keep the expedition on track along their 1100 km route, the team will be using a Yellowbrick GPS unit. George said: “In addition to the GPS, the unit will ping back to our website regularly, allowing supporters to follow our progress over the three week expedition.”

Kiting the Empty Quarter is raising funds for Unseen UK, a charity dedicated to fighting human trafficking at all levels. “We decided early on that an expedition like this should benefit more than just the two of us,” Chris says, “I’d recently read an article on human trafficking and I was shocked at how big the industry is and how little we hear about it. We’re hoping that by supporting Unseen UK, we can help to raise awareness of the terrible conditions some people are forced to live in, even here in the UK, and of the work Unseen do to combat trafficking.”



Above: The team have dedicated their expedition to Unseen UK.

With just over a month to go, the pace is really starting to pick up for the team. Chris said: “We’re upping our training to make sure we’re ready for the heat of the desert, and we’re also starting to collect all our equipment together, which is really bringing it home that it’s happening soon! I’m amazed at the support we’ve received from friends, family and our sponsors; I think the best thing we can do to say thanks is to get out there and cross that desert!”



The expedition team: George (left) and Chris

You can find out more about the *Kiting the Empty Quarter* expedition and follow the team’s progress at www.kitingtheemptyquarter.com

Thanks to Ozone Kites, Expedition Foods, and Yellowbrick Tracking.

