

## British polo players win world's most brutal rowing competition as they complete sail across the Atlantic in 48 days

- Four men crossed 3,000-mile Atlantic in 48 days and 7 minutes
- Won four-person category and 2nd overall in Talisker Whisky Atlantic Race
- Bobby Dundas, 29, Henry Breet, 38, James Glasson, 39, and Fergus Scholes, 31, rowed seven-yard-long boat from Canary Islands to Antigua
- Two men flung overboard and group forced to detour during challenge

By [Sam Webb](#)

**PUBLISHED:** 18:42, 21 January 2014 | **UPDATED:** 11:18, 22 January 2014

Their hands lacerated by blisters and their bodies brutalised, a team of four British polo players have completed the world's toughest rowing race after 48 gruelling days at sea.

In a tiny boat just seven yards long, the Atlantic Polo Team - comprised of 29-year-old Bobby Dundas (10th Viscount Melville), Henry Brett, 38, James Glasson, 39, and amateur polo player Fergus Scholes, 31 - has crossed the Atlantic in 48 days and seven minutes.

The rowers, who had little nautical experience, tackled the staggering 3,000 miles, from La Gomera in the Canary Islands to Antigua in the Caribbean, in shifts of two hours at the oar, followed by just two hours of sleep.



+5

---

**Champions: (Left to right) Henry Brett, 38, Bobby Dundas, 29, Fergus Scholes, 32, and James Glasson, 39, of The Atlantic Polo Team, celebrate as they arrive in the harbour in Antigua**

---

Viscount Melville, from Chippenham in Wiltshire, said: 'It was so out of our comfort zone as we had no seafaring ability. None of us are mariners but we craved that excitement, that sense of adventure.

'We had to everything from scratch, there was an enormity to it.'

Just five days into the challenge, they hit a powerful storm in the Canaries, forcing the four men to seek solace in the tiny 8ft by 3ft cabin - designed to hold just two - for three days.

They were washed back east by the storm and had to spend days making up the lost distance to win the four-person category and take second place overall in the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge.

'We couldn't leave the cabin, it was the most horrendous thing', said Viscount Melville. 'It was morale-breaking.'

They also had to endure being constantly wet from waves or sweat, which combined with the hours spent at the oar caused horrendous blisters that wouldn't close.



+5

---

**Ferocious: Two men were thrown overboard during a ferocious storm just five days into the challenge but they recovered to complete the race in 48 days and seven minutes**

---

But there were moments of incredible beauty too. Former city trader Mr Scholes, from Blandford in Dorset, said: 'We didn't see any wildlife - in fact we didn't even see another boat - but the stars were phenomenal. We were 1,000 miles from any land and the natural beauty was a knockout.

'We talked about food so much, like burgers, milkshakes, cold Coke with ice and lemon and the simple things like a bed and shower.'

The team competed to raise money for The Brooke, Hilton in the Community Foundation and Right to Play

causes.

'The Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge is something we feel extremely privileged to have experienced, yet would not have wished upon our worst enemies - we have been through hell and back again out there', added Mr Brett, from Witney in Oxfordshire.

'Most did not expect us to even get to the start line, we are delighted to have won the fours and be second out of the entire fleet.'



+5

---

**Celebrating seconds: The Row2Recovery Team, made up of British soldiers, Cayle Royce, 27, from Dartmouth, James Kayall, 35, from Blandford, Scott Blaney, 27, from Nuneaton, and Mark Jenkins, 37, from London, came in at number two**

---



+5

Welcomed home: Scott Blaney of the Row2Recovery Team, meets his Fiance Amy Lee, 25, as the team dock at the harbour on the Caribbean island of Antigua



+5

---

**Ocean on fire: The Row2Recovery team set off their flares as they approach the port, coming second in the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge**

---

Two men were thrown overboard during the crossing whilst battling 40ft waves.

Racing neck and neck against friends Row2Recovery, The Atlantic Polo Team nudged to the lead on New Year's Day and stayed ahead for the duration of the nail-biting race.

### **We would not wish that challenge upon our worst enemies - we have been through hell and back out there**

The Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge saw 16 teams from around the world start the race on December 4.

With two teams airlifted to safety following capsizes and one team rescued by a passing bulk-carrier ship, only 11 teams remain in the world's toughest rowing race.

Talisker Brand Manager Sophie Brookes said: 'The Atlantic Polo Team has done tremendously well to win the fours class of the 2013 Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge, during which the team faced extremely unforgiving conditions.

'Bobby and Fergus visited Talisker distillery on the Isle of Skye in Scotland before they left, looking out at the rough Atlantic Ocean surrounding the island one last time before setting off they discussed the tough battle ahead of them.

'All of us at Talisker would like to applaud them for facing the conditions head on and coming out on top in their class.'



### **Comments (30)**

Share what you think

- [Newest](#)
- [Oldest](#)
- [Best rated](#)
- [Worst rated](#)

[View all](#)

[pauly](#), london, United Kingdom, 10 hours ago

You realise how big it is when a cruise ship doing 20 mph 5 days constant to get across, with no ships seen for maybe 2 days. Rather them than me.

[Reply](#) [New Comment](#) [New](#)

[0](#)  
[0](#)

[Click to rate](#)



[TheVoiceOfThePeople](#), London, United Kingdom, 18 hours ago

Ha gaaaay

[Reply](#) [New Comment](#) [New](#)

22  
0

[Click to rate](#)

[TheHerndog](#), Cork, 18 hours ago

eh nobody cares

[Reply](#) [New Comment](#) [New](#)

25  
1

[Click to rate](#)

[P Armstrong](#), London, United Kingdom, 19 hours ago

Why does the headline say that the 'sailed' across the Atlantic? Duuh!

[Reply](#) [New Comment](#) [New](#)

4  
8

[Click to rate](#)

[timmdudley](#), doncaster, United Kingdom, 20 hours ago

Why didn't you cover the winners who arrived 3 day earlier and where only a pair Mike Burton and Tom Salt?

[Reply](#) [New Comment](#) [New](#)

1  
24

[Click to rate](#)

[timmdudley](#), doncaster, United Kingdom, 20 hours ago

Why didn't they cover the winners who arrived 3 days earlier, are a British pair, both 'normal guys' if anybody doing this can be called normal

[Reply](#) [New Comment](#) [New](#)

1  
14

[Click to rate](#)

2 of 3 replies [See all replies](#)

[Tim Dare](#), Cheltenham, United Kingdom, 19 hours ago

The winners did a great job and clearly it was a tough challenge, however, their boat design type was 'wind assisted' and were in the 'Open' class.

0  
5

[Click to rate](#)

[dollydropper](#), auckland, New Zealand, 9 hours ago

'normal guys'? Were the Atlantic Polo Team not normal or British enough?

0  
1

[Click to rate](#)

[blueskies](#), Cambridgeshire, United Kingdom, 22 hours ago

Congratulations , why is this being published so low down on your web page DM? , another GREAT BRITISH achievement.

[Reply](#) [New Comment](#) [New](#)

0  
33

[Click to rate](#)

[skrivener](#), London, United Kingdom, 22 hours ago

Half think what a great achievement & half think, how sad. Such travel challenges seem to have been reduced in modern times been reduced to grueling brutalisation of bodies. Endurance competitions involving 2 hours on - 2 hours off could probably be done just as well inside cold & wet simulators.

[Reply](#) [New Comment](#) [New](#)

28  
3

[Click to rate](#)

[Anastasia](#), Bath, United Kingdom, 22 hours ago

Wow, huge congratulations to you for this amazing achievement.

[Reply](#) [New Comment](#) [New](#)

0  
30

[Click to rate](#)

[nanuk of the north](#), Morpeth England, United Kingdom, 1 day ago

Well done lads.

[Reply](#) [New Comment](#) [New](#)

0  
4

[Click to rate](#)

The views expressed in the contents above are those of our users and do not necessarily reflect the views of MailOnline.



Who is this week's top commenter? [Find out now](#)

---

Published by Associated Newspapers Ltd

Part of the Daily Mail, The Mail on Sunday & Metro Media Group

[© Associated Newspapers Ltd](#)