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## SOLDIERSPORT

CURRENT ISSUE



### MANS' MAGNETIC MISSION



Interview: Richard Long  
Picture: Graeme Main

POLAR expeditions have traditionally been characterised by gruelling treks in unforgiving temperatures that push the boundaries of human endurance.

But with climate change having a definite impact on these spectacular regions, the way in which explorers tackle journeys through such inhospitable lands has also changed.

This month marks the launch of a new polar adventure as a crew of six ultra athletes attempt to become the first people to row to the magnetic North Pole.

Included among the ranks of this vastly experienced team is Capt David Mans (PWRR), an Army rower who triumphed in a field of almost 50 international

contenders to secure the final place in the boat.

"I really didn't think I would get it," the Serviceman told *SoldierSport* during an interview on the eve of departure.

"I was up against a strong field, including rowers from the USA. So to be told I had won was fantastic news.

"This journey has never been done before, it is a world first, and to be part of it is amazing.

"I've always thought about doing an ocean row but with postings to Northern Ireland, Cyprus and Afghanistan I have never had the opportunity until now."

Mans was in action as part of the Combined Services team at the Henley Royal Regatta as this issue went to press, but with his commitments now complete he can concentrate fully on the expedition.

He said: "Rowing for the Army has given me a solid base for this adventure. I'm in a good position but being at sea for a long period of time is going to be quite interesting.

"We have got our flights home booked for September 5 but we hope to complete the route in four to six weeks.

"It all depends on the ice and conditions so we haven't really set any targets, our aim is to just get there."



The crew hope to start the 450-mile challenge – which has been named The Old Pulteney Row To The Pole – at the end of this month. They will work on rotational basis with three rowers spending three hours on the oars before changing position.

The team will set off from Resolute Bay in northern Canada and expect to encounter a host of wildlife along the way, including the narwhal whale, polar bears and Arctic foxes.

"It will be 24-hour daylight and it can go from being very warm to very cold," the officer explained.

"In terms of the ice it will be quite open but there may be a few difficulties.

"For whatever reason the climate is changing, this expedition will highlight what is happening and this is the type of thing you can do now."

The Army rower will form part of a strong crew that also includes leading adventurer Jock Wishart, who was a member of the first team to walk unsupported to the geometric North Pole, and Mark Delstanche, an experienced yachtsman who has climbed Mount Everest.

Mans will be raising money for the [Force Select Foundation](#) by competing in the challenge. To sponsor him visit [www.justgiving.com/DaveMans](http://www.justgiving.com/DaveMans)

For more information on The Old Pulteney Row To The Pole and to chart the crew's progress on the water log on to [www.rowtothepole.com](http://www.rowtothepole.com)

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