

## **Adventurous Scottish brothers finish 3,000 mile Atlantic row**

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Two Scottish brothers who set out from the Canary Islands last year to take part in the “world’s toughest row” finally arrived in Antigua and Barbuda this week after 55 days at sea.

Kris, 31, and Blair Elliot, 28, from Dunblane, managed to paddle 3,108 miles for the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge and in a field of 26 came in 18th place, ahead of their 60 day target.

Race organisers were shocked when they arrived on Wednesday at 3.30pm, just 200 metres and 30 minutes behind another team, apparently a first in the history of the race.

Before leaving last year Kris said that knowing at one point they would be 1,500 miles from land east or west could prove “overwhelming.”

Back on dry land yesterday he admitted “there were a few times that mentally it was tough, psychological torture” - particularly when the race started badly.

“Blair got badly sea sick. He just had to sit there for six days: he couldn’t eat, he couldn’t row, he couldn’t sleep in the cabin and had to be outside but he didn’t quit.”

When Blair found his sea legs they took one hour on the oars each from 10am to 2am before dividing the remaining eight hours into two four-hour shifts.

Kris added: “Some nights were just amazing, with the stars, just listening to music on the headphones.

“Our spirits were lifted when we surprised a huge P&O ship and the captain announced their presence to the passengers over the ship’s speaker system.”

The biggest fear was failing due to something beyond their control like capsizing or a technical problem that would force them to give up.

After 3,078 miles the brothers saw “glow of Antigua on the night sky, just 40 miles away.”

Kris said: “Seeing family again is so emotional, the arrival, seeing my two kids was just overwhelming. Then all the boats in Antigua were blasting their horns, letting off flares.

“The whole thing feels like a gamble which we won and I am going to have that for the rest of my life.”

Their fundraising efforts in memory of Kris’s colleague John Noble will continue with a ball and the sale of the rowing boat in aid of the Fire Fighters Charity.