

## JOHN BARKER (Z84-95) AND ALEX HENNEY (Z84-95)

They, together with the third member of the team Emlyn Evans, have just returned from competing in the 2007 Polar Race, a 300 nautical mile race from the town of Resolute in Canada to the magnetic North Pole. Their team, called Polar Horizon, finished 2nd overall, out of the 6 teams, having taken 15 days, 32 minutes & 24 seconds to cover the 337 statute miles. They ended only 6hrs 55 minutes behind the leaders, but over 2 days ahead of the third place team and 5 days ahead of the 6<sup>th</sup> team!

The two men encountered temperatures as low as -36 degrees in their tent, and were punished by windchill taking the temperature to as low as -78 degrees. The amazing experience saw the two deal with polar bears attempting to enter their tent, as well as covering an huge 35 miles in just 17 3/4 hrs over horrendous terrain. John and Alex both lost 2 stones during the event.



John was born in 1976, and at the time lives in Leamington, and works for HSBC as a national agricultural bank manager for the UK. He was been brought in as "hired help" for the trip. They say "basically the fear of Polar bears have forced Emlyn & Alex to invite John into the team. No self respecting Bear will even think of attacking the team if John is involved, primarily for fear of the fact that it might have "bitten off more than it can chew"."



Alex was born on 1977 and at the time lives in Fulham, London, and works for an independent firm of stockbrokers called Redburn Partners. Having destroyed his anterior cruciate ligament late last year playing rugby, Alex was in a fitness race in order to be well enough to take part in the race. Fortunately he was - "well, we're not sure whether it's that fortunate for his other team mates!"

For more information about what the pairs experience, visit [www.polarrace.com](http://www.polarrace.com) , or visit the team website at [www.polarhorizon.co.uk](http://www.polarhorizon.co.uk)

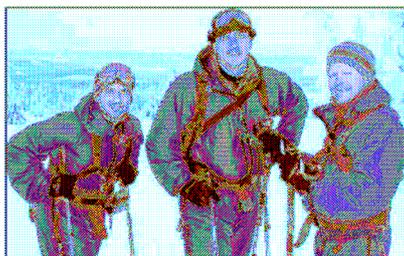


As an added bit of background info, **Richard Rowe (S65-74)** adds the following :-

If you go to <http://polaradventuresltd.com/team/> to see details of the organising company, the fifth guy from the left with the goggles on top of his head, is Steve Pinfield. Steve regularly takes people to the North Pole by land; used to be base commander for "Patriot Hills" base in Antarctica for 8 seasons (and got me a free trip there in 1997) when he worked for Adventure Network. He is now more freelance. Interesting guy. He has been virtually everywhere except the top of Everest. I have known Steve for about 20 years and he is godfather to

my eldest son. I didn't think he was going to be on this race though they had asked him several times to be a team guide.

The following article appeared in the East Anglian Daily Times dated Saturday 5 May 2007



**CAME IN SECOND:** Alex Henney and John Barker with team-mate Emlyn Evans

## Race to Pole comes to end

TWO former Suffolk men are among competitors who were yesterday waiting for transport back to base camp after completing a gruelling race to the North Pole.

John Barker, 30, whose parents live at Wilby, near Eye, and Alex Henney, 29, whose family lives at Ashfield, near Debenham, are members of the three-man Team Polar Horizon which came in second in the race after a 400-mile trek across harsh terrain in temperatures falling to minus 50 degrees.

However, weather conditions at the finish line were yesterday too bad to allow an aircraft to land to take members of all six teams back to base camp.

The first three teams to finish had earlier walked together over the last stretch to the magnetic North Pole in a gesture of comradeship.

Mr Barker's mother, Barbara, said: "We understand they are all stranded up there at the moment waiting for weather conditions to improve. "We don't think

there is any need to worry about them but up-to-date news is hard to get hold of at the moment."

The race started three weeks ago and was the culmination of months of training for all the teams.

Team Polar Horizon did some of its survival training in Scandinavia as well as on the Irish Sea coast of Wales.

The team has raised sponsorship money for Cancer research UK and Wooden Spoon, the rugby charity which supports mentally, physically and socially disadvantaged children around the UK.

Mr Barker said before setting out on the race: "We will be going to a part of the world where less than 400 people have gone before and in a competitive race environment we will be achieving something truly extraordinary."

Teams have had to carry all their own equipment and members are thought to have lost about one third of their body weight during the trek.