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## **Solo round the world sailor Steve White has today launched his "Westabout" campaign to attempt the solo record for sailing non-stop around the world "the wrong way".**

This is the realisation of a 15 year dream for Steve, who has planned and worked towards this, the toughest record in sailing, since long before his successful 8th place Vendee Globe in 2008 / 9.

The Westabout route means that Steve will sail against the prevailing winds and currents through the Southern Ocean, the wildest and most remote waters on the planet. Steve will be on standby for a suitable weather window to start from October 2016.

Only five people have held the record since it was originally set by Sir Chay Blyth in 1970 / 71 - in fact more people have walked on the moon than have completed "The Impossible Voyage".

The current record holder is Jean Luc Van Den Heede, Steve will attempt to better the current record time of 122 days, 14 hours, and take the record back for Britain. Sir Chay Blyth said;

*"It's wonderful that Steve is planning to attempt what many regard as the ultimate sailing challenge. Hundreds have completed the voyage following the classic Eastabout route but doing this in reverse is a quantum leap removed, which is why only five people including Mike Golding and Dee Caffari have tried it. It takes a special character to tackle the trip and Steve is an extremely experienced yachtsman who I believe has the right skills, tenacity and determination to set a new World record."*

Steve's long term sponsor, bluQube (Cloud based finance systems) have been involved in Steve's campaigns for nearly ten years and have come onboard for another year to support the campaign. Steve said;

*"Without the help and support of bluQube over the past few years I wouldn't have got this project over the line. This year they have enabled us to get the boat back to the UK and to begin sailing from Portland Marina, as I begin to work up to the record attempt".*

bluQube CEO, Simon Kearsley, has been involved in the sponsorship of a number of offshore sailing events but feels that this campaign is the biggest project the company has yet been involved with:

*"it's a truly daunting thought! That boat, doing that journey, against the clock. But if anyone can do it Steve can. We've worked with many different professional and amateur sailors over the years and Steve is a one off. Hugely experienced, intelligent, highly skilled technically, and utterly determined. We think he's one of a very small number of people that could pull it off."*

The boat of choice for Steve is a Volvo 70, which is the boat that holds most of the monohull sailing records. It is the pace of this class of boat that leads Steve to believe that the record can be beaten. Normally sailed by ten professional sailors, he will over the coming months, convert it to solo configuration. A group of Steve's friends and supporters have got behind the project and helped to buy the boat which is currently berthed in his home port, Dean and Reddyhoff's Portland Marina. Dean and Reddyhoff run four marinas on the south coast, and Portland Marina Manager said

*"We are all very proud to be supporting Steve in this, the toughest of sailing records. We look forward to welcoming him back into Portland early in 2017 when he returns with the record for Britain".*

Steve has a major sponsor waiting in the wings, who will be announced before the end of this year.

As part of preparation for the record attempt, Steve and the boat will also be taking place in this year's Round the Island Race on Saturday 27th June.

**The Route;** Traditionally, sailors starting a circumnavigation in races like the Vendee Globe go down the North and South Atlantic and turn left, to the East, and under the Cape of Good Hope, then Cape Leuwin, and finally the infamous Cape Horn, before turning North back up the Atlantic to Europe. Steve will go "Westabout, so to Cape Horn and turn right, against the prevailing winds, relentless waves and currents of the Southern Ocean that normally drive East going racers back home - an "upwind" lap of Antarctica. The start and finish line is between The Lizard in Cornwall, and the Ushant Lighthouse off Brittany

**The Boat;** The boat is the ex-Telefonica Black Volvo 70, built for the 2008/9 Volvo Ocean Race. Purchased from the original owners in Spain earlier this year, it will be converted into "solo configuration", as at present it still needs a crew of 10 to sail it. The boat will have autopilots fitted, shelter on deck, furling headsails, and considerable structural re-enforcement to cope with slamming upwind for two months in the Southern Ocean.

**bluQube;** bluQube is a financial software provider that has been helping clients care for customer data since 1997. 60% of their customers have been with them for over 10 years. Taking a fresh approach to financial software, bluQube provides an innovative and unique accounting platform using cloud accounting and integration tools to make finance tasks run smoothly and efficiently.

**Dean and Reddyhoff Marinas;** Dean and Reddyhoff operate four marinas on the South Coast- Portland, Weymouth, Haslar in Gosport and East Cowes.

**Previous Attempts;**

"British Steel" Sir Chay Blyth, GBR Aug 71 292 days

"Ocean Bound" David Scott Cowper 1982 237 days

"Group 4" Mike Golding GBR Jun 94 161d 16h 35m 42s

"Uunet" Philippe Monet FRA Jan 00 151d 19h 54m 36s

"Adrien" J.L Van Den Heede FRA Mar 04 122d 14h 3m 49s



**ENDS**

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