



Scout Leader

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**...EVERYDAY ADVENTURE**

## Scouts of all ages enthralled by tales of adventure

On Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February Standlake and Cokethorpe Sea Scout Group, were hosts to James Ketchell – Serial Adventurer ([www.jamesketchell.net](http://www.jamesketchell.net)) and also a Scouting Ambassador. Beaver Scouts aged 6 to Explorer Scouts of 17, were treated to tales of James' travels as he has pushed himself to the limit; Rowing the Atlantic, Climbing Everest and Cycling around the world – the ultimate triathlon.

1<sup>st</sup> Standlake and Cokethorpe Sea Scouts (RN recognised group 98) who meet at Cokethorpe School during the winter months were able to invite other scout groups from West Oxon District, using the school's Theatre as the venue.

James Ketchell explained that his first adventure of single handily rowing the Atlantic following the route taken by Christopher Columbus, was planned as a goal to help him recuperate after a serious racing motorbike accident, which had left him with several broken and shattered bones. On his return to the UK after 110 days rowing to English Port in Antigua, and then hitching a lift as crew on a yacht back to the UK, he was invited by a friend to join him to climb Everest.

James' talk was accompanied by pictures and videos of his escapades, the 360 degree view from the summit of Everest was just breath taking. More remarkable as he had made it to the summit with a lung infection, after the adrenaline had worn off, James needed lots of cajoling from his Sherpa to get back down. The infection required a week's hospitalisation to treat on his return to the UK.

His next adventure - 18,000 mile cycle (unaided) around the world – on a second hand bike! James averaged over 100 miles daily, the journey took him less than 6 months, crossing the equator twice and travelling through Europe, the Middle East into Asia, Australia and back via North America.

James holds the record being the first human to achieve all three endurances with an added bonus that he achieved these within 4 years!



What did the scouts learn from James? Treat others as you would like to be treated (good scouting fundamental), take advantage of opportunities offered to you, and very importantly; don't give up – perseverance can have its reward, have a goal – have a dream to aspire to.

After the talk, questions from the scouts could have gone on to midnight, so inspired were they by James adventures.

Standlake & Cokethorpe Sea Scouts are now looking forward to following James' next challenge – rowing across the Indian Ocean, with a Scout Leader from Hampshire (to be filmed for a Channel 4 documentary). James and Ash are going to run a live blog, from their Hi-tech rowing vessel called James Lewis, as they cross 3,600 miles of blue water in around 80 days.