



**HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR  
PRESS OFFICE  
No.6 Convent Place  
Gibraltar  
Tel:20070071; Fax: 20043057**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**AFTER 1,700 MILES IN 17 DAYS, PAUL AND DARREN RIDE  
TO THE TOP OF THE ROCK**

His Excellency the Governor Sir James Dutton and Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo were amongst the welcome party at the top of the Rock of Gibraltar when two cyclists finished their challenge to ride 1700 miles from Bradford to the Rock in 17 days to raise money for good causes. Paul Sampson, a retired professional rugby player and Darren Kenny OBE a paralympic star cyclist and world record holder had been accompanied at various stages by other para-cyclists, elite women cyclists and riders from the Armed Forces, predominantly the Royal Marines but Paul and Darren were the only ones to complete the full distance.

‘I had the idea about 18 months ago,’ said Paul. ‘Once, during my rugby career, I spent 5 or 6 days training with the Royal Marines and I learned more about myself in the those few days than at any other time of my life. They took me to a whole new level of knowing my inner strength – and I’ve had to call upon that experience and those reserves a few times during this ride. I wanted this challenge to be really tough – and it was.’

Darren said, ‘I expected it to be hard – but I really didn’t think it would be this hard. The worst part was our first day in northern France when the weather was terrible – hailstones, thunder and lightning, cold and wet. On a ride like this there are usually some rest days but we haven’t taken any – it’s been around 100 miles every single day.’

Paul’s wife Kirsty, the well-known Sky Sports presenter, was there to see the finish. ‘This has been a poignant moment, said Kirsty. ‘Paul wanted to do something for the Marie Curie Cancer Care in memory of his father and the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund because he has such respect for the Forces, especially the Marines. He has trained for this ride for 12 months and it has taken him way outside his comfort zone.’

‘I don’t know what my next challenge will be,’ said Paul. ‘But, whatever it is, it will again be for these two wonderful charities.’

**Note to Editors:**

See the emotional blog written by Paul and Darren at <http://www.ride4care.com/#about>