



Media Release

## Sahara test for new Orca Merino range

Orca sponsors RacingThePlanet endurance race

Performance sportswear innovator, Orca, has agreed a sponsorship partnership with the organisers of the iconic RacingThePlanet endurance races. As part of the launch of its new performance Merino wool activewear range, Orca will provide each competitor with a Merino base layer.

The seven day race will see over 150 competitors complete 250 kilometres in six stages culminating at the Pyramids of Giza. The Sahara Race (Egypt) is part of the 4 Deserts series - named by TIME magazine as one of the Top 10 Endurance Competitions in the world for two years in a row.

“The Sahara is the perfect proving ground for our new Merino wool garments,” explains Orca founder and CEO Scott Unsworth. “The natural performance characteristics of Merino wool make it ideally suited to the needs of the Sahara Race competitors. They will be facing some massive changes in temperature and a Merino baselayer is perfect as it will help regulate their temperature, absorbs and wicks moisture, and can be worn for days without smelling.”

“The wool we use is sourced from Merino sheep that live in the climatic extremes of New Zealand’s Southern Alps. It’s the survival in those conditions that have meant New Zealand Merino wool is regarded as the best in the world. We have also enhanced the performance of Merino in certain areas by combining it with other natural and synthetic fibres.”

Merino wool naturally regulates body temperature, keeping the wearer cooler when it is warm, and warmer when it is cool. Merino is also antibacterial, so it will not smell, even after multiple wears. It can also absorb 30% of its own weight in moisture, and stays warm when wet.

The Orca range of performance Merino activewear will be launched in the United Kingdom in late September. The collection is split into three ranges: the Everyday collection of 100% Merino essentials; versatile Raceday multi-activity garments, including the cycle-specific Velo products; and the world-first Restday range, which uses a unique blend of Merino and the seaweed-based SeaCell fibre to promote increased skin health benefits.

Each competitor at the Sahara Race must race self-supported carrying their own gear, food and clothing in a backpack. The only assistance provided is drinking water, a place in a tent to rest each night and the support of a medical team should they need it. Eleven competitors are trying to complete the 4 Deserts Grand Slam in 2010, racing the 1250km of the Atacama Crossing, the Gobi March, the Sahara Race and the Last Desert – Antarctica within one calendar year.

The Orca Merino range is available globally through the [RacingThePlanet website](http://RacingThePlanet.com), [orca.com](http://orca.com) and a selection of retailers throughout the United Kingdom.

### Ends

For further information or images, please contact:

Simon Kenny  
Marketing Manager  
[simon@orca.com](mailto:simon@orca.com)