



9 May 2011

Malcolm Walker's Everest mission accomplished

Iceland Foods Chief Executive Malcolm Walker (65), and his son Richard (30) are returning to the UK after achieving their personal objective of reaching the summit of the North Col of Everest at 7,020 metres (23,030 feet). This is a higher point than the summit of any mountain on Earth outside the Himalayas and their sub-ranges.

Other members of the Expedition remain on Everest preparing to reach the summit at 29,035 feet, where they aim to plant the Iceland Foods flag at the very top of the world.

Malcolm Walker said: "Getting to the top of the North Col was the most frightening and physically demanding thing I have ever done in my life, and I am delighted to have been able to meet the challenge I set myself at the beginning of the Expedition. I will admit that I daydreamed about maybe going further and trying for the summit itself, but this has never been a suicide mission and I knew when we arrived at the top of the North Col that I had reached the limit of my endurance.

"I have learned that climbing Everest isn't technically difficult: it's just a very long way up and a test of survival in extreme conditions. It is dangerous because of the severe and fast-changing weather and because of the many illnesses (some of them fatal) that can attack human beings at very high altitudes. But most of all every step you take is a massive effort so that climbing the North Col, which is perhaps the most difficult part of the ascent to the summit, becomes a killer due to sheer exhaustion.

"Richard, who has shown himself to be the strongest member of the whole Expedition, could undoubtedly have stayed on to make a successful summit

bid, but has decided that the time is right to return to his wife and daughter in England. We both wish our fellow climbers the very best of luck in returning to the North Col and going on to the summit.

“I am immensely grateful to everyone who has already donated to help us towards our target of raising at least £1 million for Iceland’s Charity of the Year, Alzheimer’s Research UK, for research into early-onset Alzheimer’s disease. I and the rest of the Iceland store and head office team will be working hard all year to ensure that we reach our goal, and I would urge anyone who has been thinking of making a donation to do it now. Dementia will soon affect a million people in the UK and almost every family is touched by it, yet research into it attracts only a tiny fraction of the funding provided for cancer or heart disease. Please help us to find a cure for this dreadful disease.”

Rebecca Wood, Chief Executive of Alzheimer’s Research UK, said: “This is such a terrific achievement and an inspirational way to launch our year long partnership with Iceland. It shows the lengths Malcolm Walker will go to in supporting research into early-onset Alzheimer’s disease - right to the roof of the world. We are very proud of the Everest team’s efforts and Iceland’s commitment to raise £1 million for our world class research.”

Read more about the Iceland Everest Expedition on www.icelandeverest.org.uk which includes Malcolm’s own Expedition blog and information on how to donate, including a link to our page at www.justgiving.com/icelandeverest. You can also follow news of the Expedition at www.facebook.com/icelandeverest

Enquiries: Keith Hann, Iceland PR adviser
01244 842228/ 07831 521870
kh@keithhann.com

Tim Parry, Media Officer, Alzheimer’s Research UK
01223 843304/07795 823308
press@alzheimers-research.org.uk