



## Press release 2005-05-17

### Cross Sportswear winners of Explore Sweden 2005

Cross Sportswear are the winning team of Explore Sweden Expedition Adventure Race 2005. After 76 hours and 20 minutes of racing, the Swedish team crossed the finish line at 16.20 Tired and cold but very happy, as the snow was falling in the hard wind. "It feels great! We had no real problems during the race, but at the end we were a little worried that team Lundhags would catch us, as they are very good skiers," said Mats Andersson, team captain. "Now we are going to celebrate in the hot tubs that we stepped up one place from last year, when we came in second," continued Per Westling. "It is even more fun to win when there are so many good teams in the race," smiled Natasha Vestling. Mats added that "The race was a lot harder this year, with a very well designed course."

Race director Mikael Nordström is very satisfied with the race so far. "The course has worked really well, so that's of course fun! I'm happy for Cross Sportswear. They have done a very good race." But for Mikael the race is not over yet. "I have seven teams out there on the course, in the really bad weather. But we have 60 people working day and night for the safety of the teams and to make all this happen."

Last section of the race, the bike/mountaineering/ski section, was done in a furious tempo. Team Lundhags was only about half an hour behind Cross Sportswear the entire way from Vilhelmina. The bike leg from Saxnäs to CP 34, and the gear drop, was 25 kilometres long and took the teams more than two hours with the skis and the mountaineering equipment on their back. "That was the hardest thing I've ever done," said Björn Rydvall in Team Lundhags when he came to CP 36 with the start of the rope section. At CP36 they changed from skis to crampons, for the about 200 m ascent up the Durrienjaeive. They also had time to eat some chocolate, some of the 1400 SEK worth of candy they bought for this race!

Two more teams has been forced to withdraw from the race. Fredrik Lindström of Team Energizer has not been able to keep any food. The team has rested for a while at CP 34 to see if he would be better, but have now decided to withdraw from the race. One member of the finish team Arkitektkopia has fallen on his skis and damaged a knee. He is now being transported off the mountain by snowmobile.

Six teams are still up in the mountains, and the weather up there is miserable. It is snowing hard, and the wind is up to 22 m/s. Mountain guide Urban Axelsson has closed down CP37 and CP38 for safety reasons. Team Sole is the only ones not having passed there already, and they have to take another course around the mountains.

Team Salomon, who lead the race for quite some time are now third, and are expected to cross the finish line after Team Lundhags. They are really good skiers but have not been able to catch up to Lundhags. After them are Montrail, closely followed by team Buff. "We have the skiing Spaniards on our heels, chasing us down," was Rebecca Rush's comment about the well known ski gurus team Buff.

As of writing, Team Lundhags are moments away from crossing the finish line.

For further information please visit [www.exploresweden.se](http://www.exploresweden.se) or contact Media Manager Stefan Nordström +46 70 642 1910.

