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ANIMAL PLANET GOES HOOK, LINE AND SINKER
WITH MATT WATSON, "MADMAN OF THE SEA"

-- New Six-Part Series Follows the Wild Adventures of Kiwi Fisherman --

(New York, New York, February 9, 2010) – While most people’s aspirations are grounded firmly on land, Matt Watson’s dreams are purely of the sea. Since childhood, the water has been his true home. At only the age of seven, Matt became the skipper of his own dinghy, eventually becoming the captain of his own commercial fishing vessel while still in his teens. Today, Matt is dubbed the “fish whisperer” by his peers for his ability to lure the biggest, fastest, baddest sea creatures that lurk beneath the surface. He feeds off adrenaline and travels the uncharted seas looking for that next great catch, and he’s willing to do anything to find it.

Debuting **Tuesday, March 2, 2010, at 10 PM (ET/PT)**, Animal Planet christens **MADMAN OF THE SEA**, a no-holds-barred fishing expedition led by Matt and his band of friends/crew on their most outrageous expeditions. Matt completes such extraordinary stunts as jumping from a hovering helicopter into the ocean to wrestle a giant marlin and becoming an instant Internet video sensation, faking his own death by shark attack and even capturing a fierce great white shark with only a hand line. And if the stunts aren’t deadly enough Matt and his team risk life and limb to get the action on film, up close and under the water. The six-part series takes the best footage from his recent adventures shown Down Under and packages them for an American audience.

“Matt is a daredevil with a passion for the open water,” marvels Marjorie Kaplan, president and general manager of Animal Planet Media. “His stunts are gut-wrenching and intense, but at his core, he is in love with the sea and the creatures that live in it, even if he shows it in a truly mad manner!”

MADMAN OF THE SEA is loaded with fast-paced footage of exotic sea animals from The Bay of Islands off the coast of New Zealand, an area legendary to sport fishermen. But this is no ordinary fishing show; Matt and his crew are gutsy, risky and a little bit crazy, and there’s no telling what they might do. At the same time, the show contains an underlying message of conservation fueled by Matt’s deeply held belief that the sea is one of the greatest gifts we can pass to future generations. Matt practices techniques in catch-and-release fishing, emphasizing tagging the fish that he catches so that researchers may better track these species’ behavior and migration patterns. These studies are paramount for species’ survival, all the while demonstrating that high action and adventure on the seas don’t need to come with the price of death for these rare animals.

MADMAN OF THE SEA is produced by Hoff Productions. Michael Hoff is the executive producer for Hoff Productions, and Dawn Sinsel is the executive producer for Animal Planet.

Animal Planet Media (APM), a multi-media business unit of Discovery Communications, is the world's only entertainment brand that immerses viewers in the full range of life in the animal kingdom with rich, deep content via multiple platforms and offers animal lovers and pet owners access to a centralized online, television and mobile community for immersive, engaging, high-quality entertainment, information and enrichment. APM consists of the Animal Planet television network, available in more than 96 million homes in the US; online assets www.animalplanet.com, the ultimate online destination for all things animal; the 24/7 broadband channel, Animal Planet Beyond; Petfinder.com, the #1 pet-related Web property globally that facilitates pet adoption; and other media platforms including a robust Video-on-Demand (VOD) service; mobile content; and merchandising extensions.

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