The Explorers Club and Diageo end litigation over Johnnie Walker collection

The Explorers Club, based in New York, and Diageo, the owner of Johnnie Walker Explorers' Club Collection have ended their fight over the use of the Explorers' Club name.

On Friday the two sides reached a licensing agreement and also a global sponsorship deal closing a battle that led to New York Supreme Court Justice Charles Ramos **ruling against Diageo** in August, and issuing a permanent injunction to stop it using the Explorer's Club trademark.

Under the agreement – whose financial terms were not disclosed – Johnnie Walker has become a corporate sponsor of The Explorers Club, which funds scientific and educational research. Without a deal in place, Diageo faced the possible removal from sale of its entire Explorers' Club blended whisky collection using the current branding. The collection (*below*) has proved to be very popular in travel retail channels where it is sold exclusively.



The New York club - founded in 1904 and with

3,000 members worldwide - looks to have secured a good deal for itself.

It is the culmination of an intensive effort by the leadership of the club and its lawyers at Boies, Schiller & Flexner LLP: Josh Schiller; John Dema, a club member; and Ben Margulis.

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Diageo has had to license The Explorers Club trademark for use in its Johnnie Walker Explorers' Club Collection. "The Explorers Club will be directly incorporated into the promotion of the product line, providing a unique global opportunity to raise awareness of the legacy and mission of the club and its members," says President Alan Nichols (*right*).

The sponsorship also means that the not-for-profit organisation will now be able to enhance its grant programmes, further develop its lecture series and educational events, and expand its role as a global centre for exploration.

Nichols adds: "We welcome Johnnie Walker as a corporate sponsor of The Explorers Club, and salute Diageo for their support of our crucial world mission."

Guy Escolme, Global Brand Director for Johnnie Walker, comments: "This collaboration brings the history and importance of exploration to life and allows us to share our joint passion for exploration and discovery."