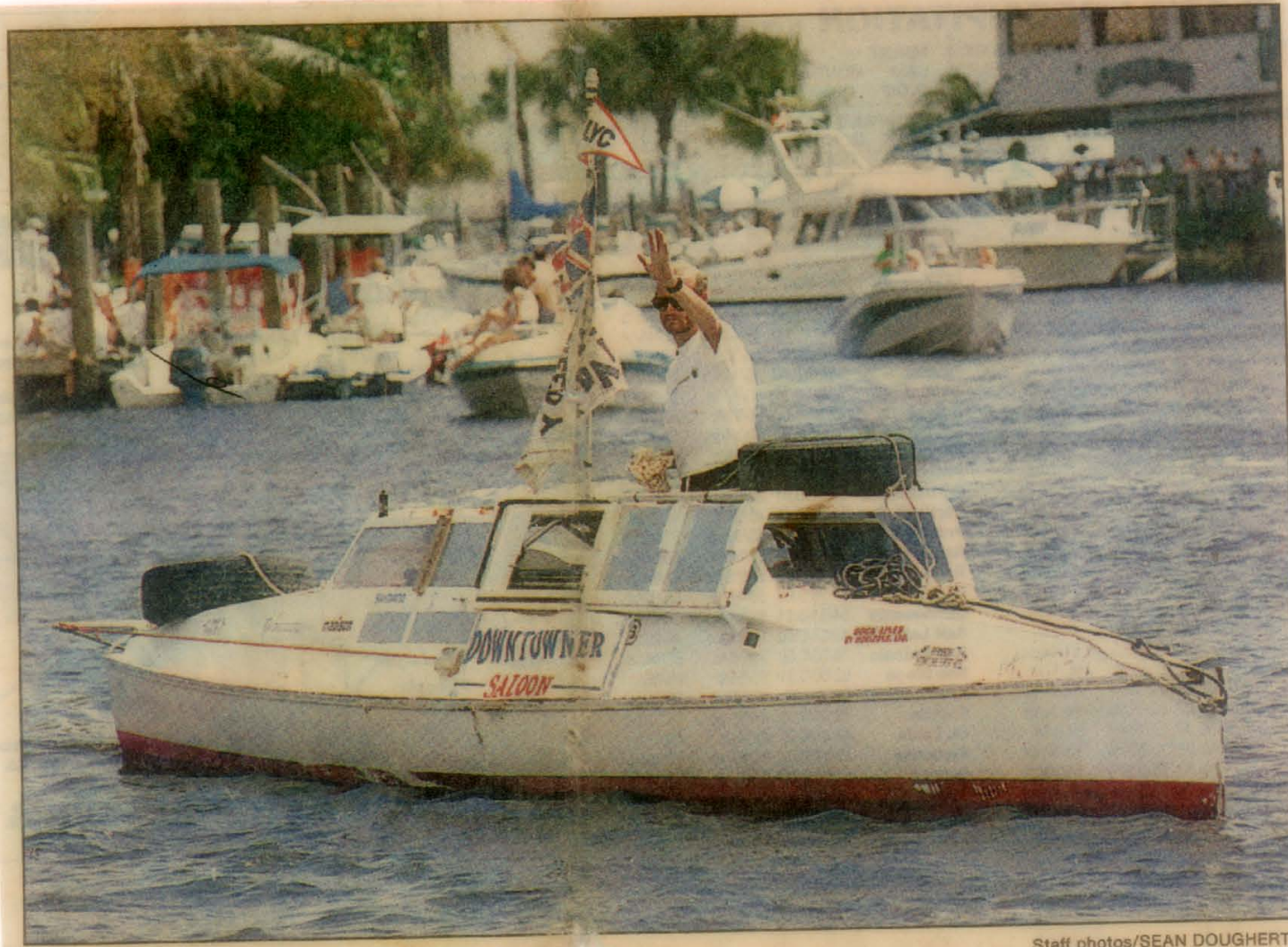


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Staff photos/SEAN DOUGHERTY



Steve Smith, left, and Jason Lewis will stay in Fort Lauderdale while they try to raise money to



continue their trip. Inside the cramped boat, Lewis demonstrates the pedaling mechanism.

## Sailors on global trip stop in S. Florida.

By JOHN MAINES  
Staff Writer

Staying at sea for nearly four months in a tiny boat is tough enough, but how do you tell a giant curious whale to get lost?

Answer: You don't.

"I just kept on pedaling. We got out of there," said Steve Smith, 28, of London. Smith is team leader of Pedal for the Planet, a two-man effort to circumnavigate the Earth using only leg power.

Smith and a college buddy, Jason Lewis, 27, arrived in Fort Lauderdale from Miami on Sunday in the 26-foot paddleboat *Moksha*. Their South Florida stops come after pumping 4,500-miles across the Atlantic on the first stage of their 'round-the-world leg-power trek. The two made landfall in the United States on Feb. 17, when they arrived for the Miami Boat Show.

They left London on July 12, planning to spend at least three years traveling around the globe. By land, they plan to ride mountain bikes; by sea, they take turns at the pedals of *Moksha* (pronounced moak-sha).

On Sunday, they arrived with champagne at the SunBank Sunday Jazz Brunch, off Riverwalk in Fort Lauderdale, as part of their fund-

**"In addition to being a personal challenge, we can send a message. You can go around the world using your own power, and you don't hurt the environment."**

— Steve Smith

raising campaign. Without more money, the trek may stall.

Smith, an environmental research scientist, said he got the idea for the Pedal for the Planet trip about five years ago. When he and Lewis make landfall, such as an earlier stop at the Caribbean island of Providenciales, they want to talk at schools about the importance of preserving the environment.

"In addition to being a personal challenge, we can send a message," Smith said. "You can go around the world using your own power, and you don't hurt the environment."

And they can tell adventure stories. Like the whale.

Late one night in the middle of the Atlantic, a whale repeatedly nudged

the side of the boat, Smith said. He and Lewis were accustomed to visits by curious sea creatures, such as dolphins, but the sheer size of the mammal was troubling.

"I could see it in the moonlight. It was twice the size of the boat," Smith said. Eventually the whale apparently became aware it was getting the cold shoulder from the wooden boat and left.

*Moksha*, a Sanskrit word meaning "freedom," is a cedar-hull boat made at a cost of \$40,000 by the Exeter Maritime Museum in southern England. Family and friends lent Smith and Lewis money to build it.

*Moksha*, a self-righting craft, is only 5 feet wide and can surf waves much like a sea-going kayak. *Moksha* is run by pedals, which power a propeller at the rear of the craft.

Inside, the two men can store enough freeze-dried food for a year, which is the amount of time it will take to cross the Pacific.

When that will happen isn't clear. The Pedal for the Planet campaign is broke.

*We Need A Sponsor*, states a flag flying on top of *Moksha*.

"We have yet to pay for it," Smith said of the boat. "We need all the

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help we can get."

The two men are staying at the Ramada Inn near Miami International Airport, which gave them free lodging in return for a small

Ramada stencil on the side of the boat.

"If it weren't for them, we'd be sleeping on the beach," Lewis said. He said he and Smith plan to eventually ride mountain bikes to San Francisco, where they will begin the next ocean leg of their trip. The boat will need to be trucked to the Pacific.

On Sunday, they gathered a few donations from Riverwalk

sightseers.

"Why not? It's worth it," said Susan Clyman of Margate, after handing over \$20. "If they're brave enough to cross the ocean in that, I can help out."

"It's sort of like traveling around the world in a phone booth," said Joe Schwartz, a Philadelphia snowbird. "The more power to 'em."