

# The Herald

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## Land, sea trip powered

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They call it the "ultimate human challenge" — two English adventurers on a 29,000-mile pedal-powered trip around the world.

It's a journey fueled by shoe leather.

No airplane rides. No car trips. No ocean cruises.

On land, they travel by mountain bike. And when their course leads to the ocean, they pedal across the water in a boat.

Sunday, the world travelers docked their 26-foot craft Moksha at Riverwalk in Fort Lauderdale, with the first ocean leg of their three-year journey "Pedal for the Planet" behind them.

For the past 111 days, environmentalist Steve Smith, 28, and his friend Jason Lewis, 27, a musician, peddled the Atlantic Ocean through high tides and thunderstorms on a voyage from Portugal to South Florida.

Why?

"Because no one else has ever done it without having to use sails or motor power," Smith said. "Our boat operates like a bike."

The world expedition began in London on July 12, 1994 when the two set out on a bike ride across Europe.

On a whim, Smith quit his job as an environmental expert in Europe and asked Lewis, who was singing with a band, to join

him.

They built a boat, gathered supplies and began looking for sponsors. The inexperienced boaters quickly learned the dangers of pedaling through the ocean: Watch out for big ships.

In October, they left Portugal on a 4,600-mile voyage to Miami.

Each day, they took turns pedaling the boat, knees aching from traveling against the wind and rain. Between two-hour shifts, Lewis played his guitar and wrote poetry to pass the time. Smith tackled John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* and wrote in his journal.

"You gain a clarity of mind after 40 or 50 days on the ocean,"



LONNIE TIMMONS III / Herald Staff

**FIRST LEG:** Steve Smith of London, England, prepares to dock his boat in Fort Lauderdale. He and a friend pedaled here from Europe.

## by feet

Smith said. "You practically relive every memory you ever had and every future plan you ever made."

Days would pass without the two having a conversation. Sometimes, they wouldn't utter more than "pass the salt," Smith said.

The crew will search for more sponsors and visit local classrooms during their stay in South Florida. They say they need to raise \$150,000 to complete the entire trip. Next step: Ride bikes to California, then back to the water for a trip to Japan.

"Neither of us had experience at sea. If we had, we probably wouldn't be doing this," Smith said. "Ignorance is bliss."