

# Bridport News

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## Peddalling the Pacific

By CHRIS CARSON

WEST Dorset adventurer Jason Lewis crossed the Atlantic in a pedal boat and then became the first man to in-line skate across America.

Now he can't wait to start a real challenge — a five-month voyage across the mighty Pacific, propelled by muscle power alone.

Dodging hurricanes and typhoons, along with huge supertankers, are just some of the dangers facing Jason, 30, and his fellow round-the-world traveller Steve Smith, 31, when they set off from Hawaii in their 26ft pedal boat this September.

"One of the biggest dangers is all the small islands on the way," said Jason, who hopes to sight Australia's Great Barrier Reef early in 1999.

Repairs to the duo's vessel, which was badly damaged in a storm, are under way and Jason has returned to his home at Askerswell for a couple of weeks before resuming his incredible journey.

He and Steve set out in 1994 to travel 25,000 miles around the globe by pedal and muscle power alone. Backed by UNESCO the duo are using the challenge to promote cultural links between the school-children they meet on their travels.

"It has evolved into much more than a physical expedition, we are working to bring together kids from different cultures through the Internet, as pen pals and by exchanging videos that the youngsters have shot," said Jason.

The duo's educational work, the need to continually raise funds to pay for equipment and repairs, along with unexpected accidents — Jason got knock-

months is set to earn him an entry in the Guinness Book of Records.

After the adventurers arrive in Australia they plan to cycle to the Northern Territories and then use kayaks to paddle around the Indonesian islands to Malaysia. Then it is back in the saddle for the cycle through China, Tibet India, Central Asia and East and West Europe.

Finally the duo are planning a spectacular last leg — with a flight across the Channel in a pedal powered airship which is being specially designed.

ed down and badly injured while skating — and the unpredictable weather have all served to slow them up.

They had planned to complete the round world trip by last year — and they still have two thirds to go — but it's no race, stressed Jason.

And there has been plenty to celebrate. Jason's in-line skate cross the States from Miami to San Francisco in around three



□ RECORD BREAKER: Jason Lewis on his journey across America. (S)