

# The Pueblo Chieftain

128 years...and still on the job

Page 2B The Chieftain, Pueblo, Colo., Monday, May 20, 1996

## World bike-traveler Lewis makes a return Pueblo visit

By YVETTE S. PADILLA

*The Pueblo Chieftain*

Since "that fateful night" when he was hit by a car and suffered two broken legs in Pueblo last September, Englishman Jason Lewis said he has "come full circle."

Lewis arrived in Pueblo Sunday evening after completing a 2½-week, 1,800-mile bicycle trip from San Francisco with his partner, Chris Tipper.

Although his legs have not fully healed, Lewis said he made the trip not only to prove to himself that he could do it, but to finish the United States stretch of "Pedal for the Planet" — a 29,000-mile, human-powered trip around the world on bicycles, in-line skates, a kayak and a pedal boat.

"It was a time for me to test my new legs and to get on my feet again," he explained. "Actually, I found that it's easier on my legs for me to ride my bicycle than it is to walk."

Lewis chose to ride to Pueblo simply to say "thanks" to the Puebloans who helped him and who made him feel at home as he recuperated from his injuries.

Several friends and supporters

gathered at Record Reunion, 685 S. Union Ave., Sunday to greet him.

"My stay in Pueblo was a very positive experience," he said. "I met a lot of neat people and the community really did help me get back on my feet."

He described his unplanned, extended stay in Pueblo as the "good coming out of the bad."

"About 95 percent of the time you have control of your life, but in the other 5 percent fate takes over," he explained. "Even though it was a break in our journey, fate put me in Pueblo and a lot of people came out and showed their support."

According to Lewis, the layover in Pueblo also allowed him to expand the educational aspect of Pedal for the Planet, which resulted in visits to some 30 schools in Pueblo County and Colorado Springs.

"I'm really pleased with that," he said. "That wouldn't have happened if I had just skated through town without stopping."

He thanked Rye Elementary teacher April Mann for her interest in the expedition and for incor-

porating it into her teachings.

Her students have developed a map for the visually impaired to help them follow the progress of the trip; they acquired pen pals in England and started a fundraiser to link the pedal boat with the Internet, which will allow E-mail communication between Lewis and the students.

While in Pueblo this week, Lewis also plans to don a pair of in-line skates for the first time since the accident to see "how it goes."

"If my legs feel OK, then I'll probably skate back to San Francisco," he said. "Having come this far, I would like to complete the journey on Rollerblades if I can."

From San Francisco, Lewis and his partner will pedal a boat to Australia, ride bicycles through Chile, kayak through Indonesia and complete Pedal for the Planet with a bicycle ride through Asia sometime in 1998.

"We can't give an exact date," Lewis said with a laugh. "We originally thought this would be a 2½ year trip, but it has turned into a five-year expedition. . . You just never know."