

# Tampa Bay & State

## Four worldly legs trying for giant feat

■ By sea and by land, two Englishmen are in the midst of a three-year global journey using only pedal power.

By BOB PUTNAM  
Times Staff Writer

ST. PETERSBURG — For three months, Jason Lewis and Steve Smith pedaled 4,900 miles across the Atlantic Ocean in a 26-foot boat.

Now they are prepared for the second leg of their trip around the world.

Only this time on land.

This week, the Englishmen will embark on a journey to San Francisco. Smith is riding a bike. Lewis is using in-line skates. It will take them four months.

For the past week, Lewis has made St. Petersburg his last rest stop before the trip. Smith has been in Tallahassee.

On Wednesday, Lewis shared his experiences with area youths during appearances at Gladden Park and Northwest Community Center.

At Gladden Park, Lewis traced his route on a map and presented slides of the first leg of the trip.

Lewis, 27, and his partner, Steve Smith, 28, say they are the first to embark on an around-the-world journey by foot — using only pedal power.

Lewis showed slides Wednesday of the first ocean leg of their three-year journey, which started in July 1994 in London. For 111 days, Smith and Lewis rode the Atlantic Ocean in a pedaled-powered, 26-foot



Times photo — FRED VICTORIN

Jason Lewis shows children at Northwest Community Center how he will get to San Francisco for the second part of a trip around the world.

boat. They alternated pedaling in two-hour shifts during the day and four-hour shifts at night.

"By doing this expedition, I wanted to get more control of my life," said Lewis, who graduated from the University of London with Smith in 1991. "Steve and I made quite enough money in London, but

we had to spend a lot to eat and travel. Going into this, we knew we weren't going to make a lot of money, just enough to travel. But we felt if we didn't try this, we would always regret it."

Lewis' presentation was part of the

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Pedal for the Planet program, which is endorsed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, based in Paris.

"We're using these presentations to educate on an environmental angle," Lewis said. "It shows the possibility of human power. But we're (also) using the presentations to show kids they can do what they want and follow their dreams."

Beside: Gladden and North-

west, Lewis has visited Roberts Community Center and the St. Pete Sailing Club. He will wrap up his presentations at the National Youth Sport Program at 9 a.m. today and at the Dunedin In-Line Skate Club at 7 p.m.

Lewis will then in-line skate to Tallahassee to join Smith.

So far, Lewis and Smith have visited more than a dozen schools in Britain, France, Spain, Portugal and the United States. With the help of UNESCO, they intend to produce a documentary of their discussions with young people

around the world.

While some visits to classrooms in South Florida have been paid for, the ones at Pinellas County youth centers were free. Lewis and Smith have been paying for their trip with donations, by selling expedition T-shirts and through speaking engagements. They need to raise \$150,000 to complete the trip.

Lewis left the band he was singing with and Smith quit his job as an environmental expert in Europe to build a boat and look for sponsors. They gathered three

months' worth of dried food and had more than 4,000 Mars bars donated by the candy bar company.

Although they have traveled 4,600 miles, their trip is not even at a midpoint.

From San Francisco, the pair again will split up. Lewis will pedal the boat to Hong Kong. Smith will bicycle to Alaska, ride down the Yukon in a bear-skin kayak and cross the Bering Sea into Siberia.

They will bicycle from Hong Kong to London to complete the final leg around 1997.