

BAY & DELTA Yachtsman

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ABOUT THE BAY

BY

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More Pedal For The Planet

Last month, I wrote about the San Francisco to Half Moon Bay voyage of *Moksha*, the pedalboat that is making its way around the world, with two young Brits, Jason Lewis and Steve Smith as the primary pedalers. The boat is now in the Monterey Maritime Museum and there it will rest for the next few months, as Jason cycles — this time on a bike — south to Peru. There the two will board *Moksha* once again and pedal for Australia.

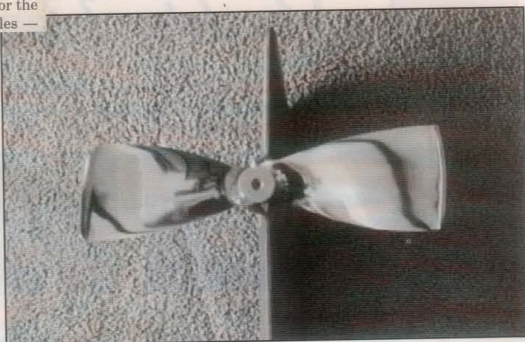
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I've been following the journey since they left San Francisco by calling their 800 number (800-943-0114) for updates, checking in on their website at <http://www.aisintl.com/pedalplanet> and talking with Stuart Smith, Steve's father. It has been fascinating.

To bring you up to speed, from Half Moon Bay, Jason and a very-seasick pickup crewman named Zeb, pedaled to Santa Cruz. (For the moment, Steve is in Ireland writing a book about the expedition.) This leg past Año Nuevo, its elephant seals and local surfers, went through heavy kelp beds. Twenty-two hours later, they arrived in sunny Santa Cruz.

On December 10, Jason and the expedition's photo exchange coordinator, Teresa, arrived in Monterey. They made the front page of the *Monterey Herald* and appeared on the evening television news.

Now, you have to understand that one of the primary purposes of this



Pitchometer's special two-blade prop for *Moksha*

people-powered expedition around the world is to let us know that it is possible to get around without a motor or engine. So Jason and Steve spend as much time as they can ashore talking to schools, yacht clubs, community groups — anyone who will listen. When not speaking, they are scrambling for sponsors. And I do mean scrambling. Finding people willing to donate time, equipment and money is difficult. But the Bay Area has come through for

them. Duncan Dwell of Applied Information Science, in Sausalito redesigned their website.

Scott Miller, manager of Pitchometer Propeller in Alameda, designed a two-bladed 18 in. x 21 in. custom stainless propeller and modified another one. Scott even went to Monterey and Half Moon Bay for a shakedown pedal around the harbor. According to Jason, *Moksha* now averages 4.2 knots. That's a 68 percent increase in speed from the previous 2.5 knots. The new props mean an additional 200 miles a week.

Finally, Tandem Computers of Cupertino has agreed to finance, as in real money, the trip to Peru and then across the Pacific to Australia. "This means we will now have the technology to keep in contact with all our web followers with text and images on our weekly updates," wrote Jason.

Moksha's Propeller

"Jason and Steve came across the Atlantic (Ocean) with a two-bladed prop. It was sized too small and they lost horsepower. When they got the drive shaft from SeaCycle, Jason went to MIT to find the propeller size," said Scott Miller of Pitchometer.

When Jason first called Pitchometer, he told Scott he wanted a plastic-and-aluminum propeller. Scott warned him about corrosion, so

Jason kept looking. But the idea of the expedition and the propeller intrigued Scott. Finally, he called the expedition's 800 number and said, "I am making you a propeller."

Although Scott has been in the propeller business for 15 years, this would be his first propeller from scratch. His initial thought was to make a three-bladed prop to give the 26-ft., 2,000-lb. pedalboat more push. But that idea wasn't workable.

"Then, I thought of a two-bladed prop, with a lot of blade area," said Scott. For those who know propellers, the new design is of three-piece stainless-steel welded construction, finished with a mirror polish. It has two Kaplan-style blades with nonslip tips for greater efficiency at low speed. The 18-in. diameter by 16 pitch is tuned for pedal speed of 57 pedal revolutions per minute.

According to Scott, the propeller was nicknamed "Wings". He was on hand when it was tested in December in the Monterey Harbor.

"*Moksha* is no ordinary pedal boat. The prop size, 18-in. x 21-in., was thought to be capable of 5-plus knots. And she was. Five knots up from 2.5 knots...amazing," said Scott.

But, as Scott soon understood, the pedalers could manage five knots if this was to be a tough two-hour workout, not for a few months at sea. So the load on the pedals was reduced.

"What drew me in first was the fun of it," said Scott. "Then I began to realize that this was a real expedition."

For more info on the propeller, check out Pitchometer's website, <http://members.aol.com/pitchmeter/PROP.htm>



The 26-ft. pedalboat *Moksha* leaves the Bay Area, headed to Half Moon Bay, with Jason Lewis and Sheri Strange as crew. Photo courtesy of Todd Rogers