



□ **CYCLE LANE:** Jason Lewis' tiny pedal boat Moksha on the high seas.

Pedal power brings Jason halfway home



□ **HALFWAY HOME:** Jason Lewis with fingers crossed for his next great voyage. (RA).

BRIDPORT adventurer Jason Lewis has completed his solo 2,200 mile voyage across the mighty Pacific Ocean in a tiny pedal boat.

The 31-year-old from Askerswell landed his £26,000, 26ft wooden craft Moksha on Tarawa atoll in the Gilbert Islands 73 days after leaving Hawaii, a spokesman for his Pedal for the Planet expedition in San Francisco confirmed this week.

It means Jason is now halfway through the 29,000 mile muscle-powered land-sea circumnavigation.

Despite running out of food and water for the last three days he was in good spirits and navigated the island's reef perfectly, said the spokesman.

Last week Jason celebrated the fifth anniversary of the start of the trip, which began at the Greenwich Meridian on July 12, 1994.

Jason, who battled 30ft high waves and adverse currents on his voyage from Hawaii, celebrated the milestones with tots from his dwindling supply of malt whiskey.

He began the Pedal for the Planet expedition with 32-year-old Steve Smith from Wolverhampton.

But after nearly five years of travelling together, Steve pulled out of the trip just before the start

of the Hawaii-Tarawa leg, which began in May.

At the time, Jason said: "I am intrigued about what doing this leg on my own is going to be like. I am a little bit apprehensive about being asleep without someone else aboard looking out for shipping, but other than that I am fine about it."

Jason is now seeking a companion for the next leg of the journey – the 2,300 miles to Australia after a period of recuperation.

He has already completed a pedal boat crossing of the English Channel and a 4,500 mile, 111 day voyage from Portugal to Miami which was the first east-west pedal crossing of Atlantic Ocean.

Steve then cycled across the USA with Jason making the trip on skates – suffering double leg fractures en route when he was hit by a car.

After months of preparation the pair set off from San Francisco to tackle the first leg of the Pacific – reaching Hawaii last November after a two month voyage.

Jason is now planning the homeward course – by canoe and mountain bike thousands of miles across Indonesia, Asia and Europe back to the UK.

Hopefully he will make a spectacular arrival in England – crossing the Channel in a specially designed pedal-powered aircraft.