

DAILY MAIL
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Pedal power pair plan to circle planet

by Tim Reid

TWO English adventurers plan to make history by circumnavigating the globe in a pedal-powered boat the size of a small wardrobe.

The 24ft craft will take them across the Channel and 6,000 miles of Pacific and Atlantic ocean. They hope to complete the 25,000-mile round trip by travelling through Europe, Asia and North America on bicycles.

The pedal-for-the-planet plan is the idea of an environmental researcher, Steve Smith, who has teamed up with a photographer, Jason Lewis, to circle the northern hemisphere using only their own power.

Not even Sir Ranulph Fiennes, the expedition president, has attempted such a feat.

The two men, working with the charity Council for Education in World Citizenship, have arranged to visit schools in 15 countries along the way to lecture on environmental issues.

As the July 12 departure date looms, their thoughts

are on the perilous ocean crossings ahead. "We reckon there are three ways of dying," says Mr Smith. "We could fall overboard, crash into rocks or be sliced in two by an ocean cruiser.

"But the boat is like a cork and self-righting, so it should cope with anything else that hits us."

The pedal boat, designed and built at Exeter Maritime Museum in Devon, will be guided by a battery-sized satellite receiver and packed with dehydrated rations. A gas-fuelled distiller will convert drinking water from sea water and while one man pedals, the other will sleep, cook or navigate.

"Boredom is our greatest fear," says Mr Lewis. "We're taking a chess set, some music, and I will try and learn a language along the way."

Both men have spent three years raising money for the expedition, but are still seeking sponsorship — especially for the Pacific leg of the voyage, which may need back-up as they confront the tail-end of the Caribbean hurricane season.