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## Ocean Rowing: Bay's Shaun can break ocean age record



Shaun Pedley

By hilary bastone

SHAUN PEDLEY, 18, of Paignton Rowing Club, is set to become the youngest person ever to row an Ocean.

He has been selected by Totnes-based Woodvale Challenge to compete for the Atlantic Allum Cup alongside eleven other men whose aim it is to break the mid-Atlantic Ocean rowing speed record.

The crew aboard 'Britannia III' plan to leave San Sebastian on the Canary Island of La Gomera on January 12 next year, the 40th anniversary of the first pairs Atlantic crossing, headed for Port St Charles in Barbados.

'Britannia III', nicknamed 'The Aircraft Carrier', is one of the longest, at 39 feet, and heaviest ocean rowing boats and has recently been altered to provide eight rowing positions. The current mid-Atlantic speed record of 33 days, 7 hours and 30 minutes was set in 2007 by a fourteen man crew aboard 'La Mondiale'.

Shaun, who works for Woodvale as a boat builder and is a prominent member of the Paignton pilot gig crews, said: "This is the chance of a lifetime. I've been rowing since I was three and as a young boy often rowed my father out to his Paignton charter boat 'Our Joe-I'.

Also in the crew will be Woodvale chairman and ambassador Simon Chalk.

"It will be interesting rowing with the boss although we will be just rowers together in the boat," said Pedley.

"At ten stone six pounds I'll need to beef up between now and the start. When we row across the Atlantic we'll be consuming 6,000 calories a day."

He added: "I'm lucky to be going for free when others have had to pay £8,000 for the trip. We will have eight rowers rowing all the time and our aim is to beat 30 days. I'm nervous but really looking forward to the challenge."

Shaun's parents, Simon and Sandra Pedley, said, "We are all very proud of what Shaun is doing and he has the full support of us all."

To take the youngest crossing record Shaun, who will be 19 on February 17, will have to finish by March 27.

Totnes based Simon Chalk, aged 38, has a vast experience of ocean rowing. He started with George Rock aboard Cellnet Atlantic Challenger. They left Los Gigantes, Tenerife, Canary Islands, on October 12 1997 arriving in Barbados, West Indies, on December 15 1997. They rowed 3,012 miles in 64 days 5 hours.

Later, aboard True Spirit, Chalk left Kalbarri, Western Australia on February 27, 2003, arriving at the longitude of Rafael Island on June 15, 2003, to become the youngest British rower to row the Indian Ocean. He had rowed 4,027 miles in 107 days.

And he was in a crew aboard Oyster Shack, which left San Sebastian, La Gomera, Canary Islands, on December 23, 2007, arriving at English Harbour, Antigua, on January 29, 2008. They had rowed 3,011 miles in 37 days, 5 hours and 50 minutes.

Last year he was among an international crew of eight aboard the 36 foot 'Aud Eamus' which left Geraldton, Western Australia, on April 28, 2009, and eventually rowed through the fleet of the Indian Ocean Rowing Race finishing in Mauritius after 58 days, 15 hours and 8 minutes to break the thirty-eight year old record for crossing the Indian Ocean.

Pedley and Chalk will be joined in January by Guy Griffiths (52), a business owner from Cardiff; Ben Gothard (32), an accountant from London; Mike Palmer (45), a firefighter at Manchester Airport; Jamie Davies (33) an IT Manager from Finchampstead; Colin Gray (30) an Events Organiser from London; Dan Munier (39) an Engineer from Boulder, USA; Roger Gould (55) a consultant from Twickenham who rowed in the 1997 Atlantic Rowing Race; Nabs El-Busaidy (40) a self-employed Adventurer from Oman – the first Arab to row an Ocean; and Ian Couch (40) an adventure sports business owner from Norfolk – this will be his fourth Ocean row; with the last man to be confirmed.