TEAM BLOG July 31- September 5

We will row five hundred miles

Written by OAR Crew Monday, 31 July 2006 12:45

So here is a little ditty we came up with out hear on the water. Our version of the Proclaimers song "I would walk five hundred miles."

Who said fighting asthma can't be fun.

As of today we have had a \$5000 increase in on line donation since we started a thousand mile push. This does not count the checks we have received (don't have a tally yet). This is an overwhelming start but we still have big but doable goal of \$50,000 by the time we reach Falmouth. Still making the push, lets do it together. Hope you enjoy our song.

We will row five hundred miles

When we wake up, well you know we're gonna be, Gonna be the men who rowed the ocean blue When we oar up, yeah we know were gonna be gonna be the men pulling cross the sea. If we surf waves, well we know were gonna be gonna be the men surfing toward Falmouth And we do this, we do this for a cause, And that cause is fighting lung disease

But we have rowed 2500 miles And we will row 500 more Just to be the men who rowed three thousand miles To raise some greenbacks for ALAW

When were rowing, yes we know were gonna be gonna be the men working hardest for your lungs
And when the money, comes in from good folks like you we will pass to ALAW through and through
When we cross the north Atlantic, well you know were gonna be gonna be the first Yankees to do so in history
And if we grow old, well we know were gonna be gonna be the men with quite the memories

But we have rowed 2500 miles And we will row 500 more Just to be the men who rowed three thousand miles To raise some greenbacks for ALAW

fa la la la (fa la la la)

fa la la la (fa la la la)

Da Da Dun Diddle Un Diddle Un Diddle Uh Da Da

When were lonely, well you know who only have, only have five hundred more to go.

When we dream, well you know were gonna dream gonna Dream about defeating lung disease.

As we row on go on, well I know were gonna row

Gonna row and be thinking of all you good folks back home

And when we come home (When we come home), yes we know were gonna be, gonna be the men rowing for ALAW

gonna be the men rowing for ALAW

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Asthma fact of the day

The cost of Asthma in 2000 was estimated to be \$12.7 billion with direct costs amounting to \$8.1 billion and lost earnings due to illness and death totaling \$4.6 billion

Capitan Momentummmmmmmmm

Written by OAR Crew Wednesday, 02 August 2006 09:55

and now, the moment we have all been waiting for:

allow us to introduce....

Capitan Momentum

Ocean Rower Identity: Jordan Hanssen

AKA: Dolph, The Barbarian, that viking guy, Capitan America..?...

Other Duties: King of Hanssonia and leader of the Hanssenites

Theme Song: Break on Through...

Favorite TV Show: As the World Turns (and turns, and turns, and turns, and

tur.....

Partners in Adventure: The Handyman, The Gabbermouth and Chronoman

Allies: Private Post-It, The Flash and Dr. Do-Much

Enemies: Sir Stutters, Captain Concise Dr. Do-Little and the Hungry Pants
Super Hero Tools: The Poulsbo Phone, The Repeater, Voice Mail enabled with super
slow play back, smug free writing pads and a collection of pretty objects that we're still
trying to find a use for...

Abilities: Capitan momentum may be slow to get up to speed, but once he's there, there's no stopping him. (unless you have prepared a very nice meal or entice him with talk of 18th century Americana). Any day close to 100 miles for the guys of OARNW is a direct result of Capitan Momentum sneezing in the direction of NY. Tropical Storm Alberto was actually caused by a Cap M coughing fit. This ability is most often an asset, but OARNW had to spend a whole day on sea-anchor to ride out a mis-directed sneeze when Cap M was looking for England...

Some have accused Capitan Momentum of stuttering. Not so my momentum-less friends. He's merely building up momentum to get through those large multisyllabic words...He has even been known to build up so much momentum in conversation that he skips ahead to the next conversation on meal planning or long term patronage of the Seattle restaurant industry.

Capitan Momentum is a great instigator and source of inspiration for ideas. A series of conversations lead to the formation of team OARNW, a summer spent securing a boat and few presentations later, we're leaving for London from NY in little more than a row

boat. True, this did take a year and a half, but look at all the momentum we built up in the final 6 months. Let's hope this momentum carries us through the final 400 miles...

This concludes our selection of OARNW super hero personality descriptions. Any aspiring comic book artists are encouraged to contact us in regards to character development and adaptation to a TV cartoon format. Any interest in action figures? or is it too early to start planning merchandising? If we can build up some momentum, this idea could really take off...

editors note: we are really building up momentum in regards to the ALAW donations. Thank you everyone for your support and keep building that donation momentum...

400 Mile Inspirations

Written by OAR Crew Wednesday, 02 August 2006 12:08

400 Miles! We're doing this a little early, as our satellite phone is acting up and we are trying to cut down our email transactions.

All through our lives, the four of us have been inspired by countless parts of life. Growing up, it was stories of adventures. Later, it was books about great courage in the face of danger, adversity, injustice, and other hardships. As we've grown older, we begun to realize how amazing are the people around us and are inspired by the stories currently being written.

We have run into so much of that over the past year. Every person who didn't immediately ask if we were crazy was inspiration enough to keep us going. But the thoughts of those who placed their beliefs and trust in us, who gave their energy and time selflessly to help us realize our dream have carried us through the toughest of times out here.

For our part, we get messages every day about the people at home we are inspiring. Our text inbox is filled with stories of how our adventure has changed the life of others. A good friend is taking our challenge as inspiration to help her quit smoking. Another asthmatic follower (and our most faithful texter!) is swimming laps for every 100 miles we row.

If we have inspired you to change your life in any way, from these life-changing challenges to the smallest thoughts while going about everyday life, we ask that you consider the American Lung Association in your thoughts. The people at ALAW have been the source of our inspiration from Day 1, and they will continue to be that source for thousands of people long after our adventure is complete. Your support, as part of our 1000-mile drive, will help ALAW inspire countless more people to tackle the challenge of

conquering asthma.

All of you have contributed to our goal of rowing to England. Now we ask that you contribute to our goal of raising funds for our charitable partner. Do it online at http://www.OARnorthwest.com, or send your check to our address listed on the website.

Asthma daily fact:

The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America had estimated the costs of asthma in Washington State at over \$216 million in 1994.

Photos 4 You! Written by OAR Crew Friday, 04 August 2006 03:48 Hi Everyone!

We've got about 350 miles to go right now, and though progress has slowed a bit with decreased winds and a slight current, we continue to maintain the lead, or increase it on the other boats. As exciting as that is, we're more excited to have a nice high pressure system right over us that has kept the rain somewhere else and offered 'shirts-off' rowing for the first time since we left the Gulf Stream several weeks back.

Enjoy some photos we've taken over the last month - from one of Brad's MANY self portraits, to scrubbing barnacles from the hull, to a shout-out to our friend Erden Eruc and his Around-n-Over(.org) project.

Enjoy,

Greg

And so three-hundred

Written by OAR Crew Saturday, 05 August 2006 12:10

Some time during last night we made the cross over into the two hundreds. Close, so close, yet still over two hundred miles away. That is a long way by any standard, even when it means we have traveled over 3,000 so far. Yet its not land, there is still much to do and much can happen. We must be sharp. We must be on top of our game. We must be strong and must persevere.

This mirrors our fight with asthma. still so much to fight and we need everyone's help to do it. during this 1000 mile push we have succeeded in raising \$5000 for ALAW, this does not include the checks we have waiting in our mail box. On line, since we have started this adventure we have raised over \$22,000. Its a huge amount, but there is so much left to do. This is when we stand firm. Believe in us, believe in our cause. Help us get to England and help us fight asthma. Much is done with much left to do before we

have achieved our goals. Thank you for your support.

J

August fourth, My twenty-fouth year Written by OAR Crew Saturday, 05 August 2006 11:38

So today at 3:17 I turned twenty-four out here on the magnificent ocean blue. I did a lot of rowing, but it was not all work and no play. Some of our rations included a few MREs, and while these are not culinary masterpieces, they are much different than our normal food and this makes them a great treat. I choose the vegetable manocotti, good, not my idea birthday meal, however, it was the extras that made it so appealing. In the package came a small piece of wheat bread, a very rare commodity on board this board and something I have been missing a great deal. I choose my meal a day in advance and spent the whole day looking forward to it. The mannocotti was different, but the bread, well the bread I got a little creative. A packet of sugar, two packets of cream cheese, some fruit snacks saved from breakfast, eight fig newtons (I found out recently that these were a favorite snack of my dads), a little bit of Yankee ingenuity and a I had my birthday cake. Four matches as candles toped it off and well...it was different, but as memorable a birthday I could ask for.

Later that night on my first evening shift I was greeted with an impromptu surprise party. A homemade card from my teammates, some apple custard from our rations (getting pretty rare out here this far into the trip), and big birthday flair. Happy twenty-four. Good enough to get the land.

J

Caffe Time Written by OAR Crew Sunday, 06 August 2006 09:35

A day in the life of a coffee drinking ocean rower:

In the months leading up to our row across the North Atlantic I often stated that I imagined life in a row boat for 2 months to be a matter of managing or minimizing discomfort. In no way did I expect to find any level of comfort in a 5x8 foot cabin while being pelted by wind, rain, waves and whatever else the North Atlantic decides to heap upon us. I have been pleasantly surprised to find that the body and mind adapts to the 12 hours of rowing per day and any weather conditions we have encountered. There is a level of comfort and normalcy that can be found in even the most adverse of conditions. On the N Atlantic I have this through listening to the i-pod, discussing the virtues of a liberal arts education with my teammates (our conversations have ranged from the history of Prussia to the Geological formation of the North Cascades) and a moment I enjoy each and every day since leaving the gulf stream.

With the decrease in temperature as we make our way North and away from the warmth

of the gulf stream I have taken to enjoying a cup of coffee in stern cabin. I've got my Jet Boil filled with a nice roast (supplied by Caffe Appassionato) and I sip the hours (all 2 of them) away until it is my duty to row again. The conversation over the next rowing shift is more lively, the pain in my lower back subsides and I take a moment to enjoy the bliss of my coffee propaganda moment.

Anyway, the coffee helps 3 of the OARNW guys get through the day. Greg is becoming a convert, but it is a very slow process and I am sorry to report that the only coffee he has been able to enjoy, is the instant packet found in some of our army ration MREs. Never mind, the rest of us have a more refined taste and recommend Caffe Appassionato for all your coffee needs. Also, if you want to contribute to our goal of raising donations for the American Lung Association of Washington, there is an OARNW blend of coffee that Caffe Appassionato is offering. A portion of the sales will be directed toward OARNW and ALAW. How fitting is that? The Seattle team has it's own blend of coffee! Figures...

Take care all and enjoy some Appasionato with us, while helping the American Lung Association of Washington.

Cheers, Brad V

Winds, Winds, Winds
Written by OAR Crew
Monday, 07 August 2006 09:45
Wow - what a breezy day!

Since ~12:30am, a wind blowing from the NE has built steadily, and should hopefully peak by early tomorrow morning. The finish line is elusive at this point, but despite the strong winds, we should get something favorable over the next few days to make another push eastward for the last 250 miles.

The beauty of this all? No sea anchor. Keeping the JRH in a relatively stable position has been quite comfortable, and splashing is rare enough that we can enjoy a nice hot cooked meal outside on deck. All in all, things are pleasant out here, and our chance is just around the corner.

Greg

P.S. - Regarding Brad's latest coffee blog, please take the word "convert" lightly when referring to my tastes in the classic hot beverage. They'll never get me!

To Submit

Written by OAR Crew Monday, 07 August 2006 12:21

In the months of preparation for this project we encountered a theme of advice from many talented and experienced off- shore sailors: submit to the sea. If ask what it means

before this trip I think all four of us would have given the correct answer but would not have really known what this means. After two months at sea I believe we are slowly coming to understand. In a word the ocean is power and control that we don't have. It decides when and how we live our lives. We submit to that. We give up our assumptions, set aside our presumptions, and let go. The only certainly she ever gives up is her uncertainty. This close to land it is hard not to think of loved ones waiting for us and to want to be with them so bad it hurts. These desires turn too easily to fantasies that play out in estimation of days till we can hold them. Yet we have no choice in the matter, so we submit to the sea and are nothing but grateful for what it has given us so far.

J

Highs & Lows Written by OAR Crew Wednesday, 09 August 2006 19:13 Hello All:

Not a lot of activity at the blog station the last couple days as we've spent the majority of our waking hours at the oars or with spoon in hand. Otherwise it's all about saving as much energy as possible and snoozing away in the stern cabin.

If you're following the progress map, our little green dot can't seem to find its way east toward the finish line. In what is our last major hurdle toward the UK, a high pressure system formed at an abnormal and unusually north location. This is creating strong headwinds out of predominately the east and northeast. According to our latest wind reports, we should see a north wind forming over the next 12 hours, then hopefully a northwest wind (almost tailwind) for the next few days. If this is the case, you should see some good progress again. We've drifted a bit south close to the bottom of the finish line, so staying north is still a priority as well.

Highs are generally found south of here, and this one also happens to feature characteristics holding it in place for up to another 9 days or so. This creates a mental challenge none of us ever imagined. While the highs and lows of the weather remain consistent, the highs and lows of the JRH psyche jump from hour to hour based on wind shifts, sun breaks, and chance encounters with French fishing vessels and a Boston-based sailor passing through to England on his Bristol 40... smile Dave! You're in the documentary!

Stay with us folks, and shoot us some texts... we'll be in England soon. No ETA as of yet, the ocean decides that for us

Greg

Friends and good omens Written by OAR Crew

Thursday, 10 August 2006 10:36

Omens and the ocean go hand in hand. With sixty-two days of sea under our belt their are certain encounters we have experienced that seem to preceded a positive shift in our Odyssey toward Ithaca. This morning, under a cold brilliant sunrise and just over one knot of speed a series of splashed signaled the arrival of friends. Dolphins are not uncommon out here, yet it always seems like a good omen and at the very least a treat when they come to play at the bow of our boat. For fifteen minutes the air was filled with soft splashes and the deep hiss of exhaling air as they surfaced. It is hard not to feel the good will of these streamline denizens as they streak through the water with such grace and ease. Each breath the dolphins took reminded me of why we are doing this. Breathing is a privilege that is often taken for granted, and with dolphins it is hard to ignore the striking sound they made as they powered their bodies through the water. We are down to the two-hundred mile mark, and it has been hard fought. Two-hundred miles to go, a long way but a relative short

time in comparison to the rest of our journey. Help us in the waining hours of this trip, help us fight asthma and every lung desires that tries to take this privilege from us. We can fight. Join us. Lets make this the strongest push of the 1000 miles. We have good omens.

J

The East Wind Bloweth
Written by OAR Crew
Sunday, 13 August 2006 04:27
Hello World:

Onboard the JRH, Jordan's been letting his hair down more often - though not because he likes the feeling of the wind through it (of which there's been plenty), but because he found the camera and is playing catch-up with Brad for 'most self-portraits taken' and wants to use that dramatic photo for the movie poster.

Seriously though, I think the rest of the world is running out of air. All of it seems to be blowing our way at unusually high velocity, and continues to stifle progress. We just set the sea anchor for the third timein 24 hours so as to dampen our drift rate toward the south boundary of the finish line, and the moment we get favorable drift, we go north - be it east or west. England awaits, however, and all we'll need are a couple short days of good wind.

We'll see you there soon.

100 Miles to Go Written by OAR Crew Tuesday, 15 August 2006 13:14 Hello All,

Early this morning (Tuesday) we passed through the 100-mile-togo mark, and since have

been enjoying favorable winds propelling us toward the finish line, and history. When we cross the line, we'll be the FIRST AMERICANS to successfully navigate the North Atlantic by rowboat. Then when we make landfall in Falmouth, UK, we will be the FIRST EVER to row from mainland USA to mainland UK. Huge accomplishments for us, and for all of you who are supporting us from the dry and comfortable confines of your office or homes.

With just 100 miles to go, you still have a chance to help OAR Northwest make a difference for those suffering from asthma and other lung disease. The JRH is named as such because of Jordan's late father's tragic bout with asthma. The great people at the American Lung Association of Washington are here right now to educate the public and help those with lung disease fight a very treatable illness.

Please help us help them -- DONATE TODAY!

Make your tax-deductible contribution online at OARnorthwest.com by clicking the 'donate' button anywhere at our site. It will route you to a secure connection with ALAW. Or, please grab your checkbook and send a check to: OAR Northwest; PO Box 31402; Seattle, WA 98103.

I've got another fun blog coming tomorrow, and please look forward to news and pictures from the finish line over the coming week or so. Also, the finish line marks the end of our 1000 Mile Push for Healthy Lungs. We thank you for your continuing monetary support, and will introduce you to the man behind the boat name, James Robert Hanssen.

Have a great night,

Greg

A Victorious & Thankful Crew Written by OAR Crew Friday, 25 August 2006 16:26

To all of our dear OAR Northwest Community:

No doubts here that if you've seen the website, you know we're in! What a welcome we received in beautiful Falmouth, Cornwall (not to be confused with England!), UK. Spending the last few days adjusting to people, food, dry land, staying indoors if it's raining, and solid ground that doesn't shift beneath your feet is an experience that is never to be traded for anything and never to be forgotten for eternity!

Our last blog left us at just under 100 miles to go, and I promised you all a fun blog... well, the satellite phone went down (every other team lost theirs LONG ago) and we lost contact with you all, couldn't send blogs, didn't receive any more of your wonderful text messages, and no more weather reports (to show us there were more headwinds to come). The blogs are lining up, and I have pictures, some video to test out on the site, and plenty of updates about the OAR Northwest crew and our trusty boat, the JRH

to share with everyone.

Please stay tuned as we're learning how to use technology again, and are eager to share our stories.... so many to tell!

Greg

P.S. - Yorkshire Warrior should be in tomorrow or the next... well done! Commando Joe should be in soon as well... headwinds, headwinds, headwinds...now we know how the Spanish felt when trying to storm the English coast.

LATE BLOG 000 mile: Who is James Robert Hanssen?

Written by OAR Crew Tuesday, 29 August 2006 01:51

It's been about ten days too long since my last post. We have landed and are still catching our feet and I have had this blog, written on the water, that I have been putting off because it required about an hours more computer work that I wanted to do when I landed. But, I figured I needed a rest and that you would all understand- I do hope that's true. So with out further dilly-dally please take yourself back about 10 days to when we crossed the finish line. Remember our satilite phone was out and this was supposed to go out that day. Ah-such is life and electronics at sea...

So, we have crossed the finish line, we are eager to get to land and have our last blog of the 1000 mile push. It is about James Robert Hanssen, the man, not the boat.

When I sit to row a picture stares back at me from the bulkhead. A bearded man at a restaurant with a big mug of beer and a warm grin. Strange for a man whom I had always been told was a vinophile. He had big brown, intelligent eyes and brown hair. The table at which he sits is checkered ed and white. I am told he was very smart and very kind.

He is my father and his name is James Robert Hanssen. He died on August 15th, 1985 of a massive asthma attack - 21 years and three days ago. I was privileged to spend three incredible years with this man and luckier still to have vivid memories of him: building a snowman, playing on a merry go round, getting coal from our garage. Vignettes of life that compliment the memories that others have passed down to me.

I am told he had an inquisitive mind. He was the kind of guy who raised cows because he was curious on how it was done, camped around Europe for a summer, and had a favorite Shakespearean sonnet he would sometimes recite to my Mother.

My Father spent the last years of high school in the town of Sligo on thewest coast of Ireland. He loved it so much that he came back with my Mother and lived their for several years. When he died it was his wish to have his ashes scattered on the mountain, Knocknarea, that sits above Sligo. It is not a big mountain compared to some in the states, yet it dutifully guards the little town from the heaving wind and seas of the North Atlantic. This is where I go to be with him. When the wind blows I can feel him. When it

howls I hear him. He hears me when I speak.

We shall all loose someone that we love. Tragedy inevitably strikes us all. Death will always come too soon, no matter what the age. All we are left with is a choice of how we remember. For twenty-one years my Father died when I was three. From now on I will say instead that he lived until I was three and I am truly blessed for it. To me, to you, and hopefully to those who knew and loved him dearly our last memories of my father, James Robert Hanssen, will no longer be that of an untimely death but instead an incredible life of a son, brother, husband, father and friend who inspired four young men to reach beyond themselves.

In the weeks after we land the four of us will go to Sligo. We will climb the mountain where his ashes are scattered and we will thank a fifth soul for being on our boat, keeping us safe, keeping us together.

Thanks to all of you who have watched us, lived with us, shared our joys, and suffered our pain. From deep in our hearts we are humbled by your generosity. And now I will ask one last thing of you. Tell someone that you really love that you love them. You will never regret saying it one more time.

Thank you,

Jordan Hanssen

The Climb Up Knocknarea
Written by OAR Crew
Tuesday, 05 September 2006 06:41

Gregorio

Text for the pictures
Written by OAR Crew
Tuesday, 05 September 2006 06:44
Hello Everyone!

We're just back from Ireland - beautiful, green country full of absolutely wonderful people - and more specifically, Sligo. Sligo is home to Knocknarea, the mountain you've probably heard about in our blogs or in the papers. It is the place overlooking the North Atlantic Ocean where Jordan's father's ashes were scattered some 20 years ago, a mountain guarding the great town below, a mountain we returned to - physically and in spirit.

Our trip to Sligo and Knocknarea is a symbolic end to our long journey across the Atlantic Ocean to honor Jordan's father, his memory, and the legacy he helped create when we created our partnership with the American Lung Association of Washington on

his behalf. It was a celebration.

The mountain is but a little more than 1,000 feet tall, offers picturesque views of the Atlantic Ocean and the surrounding lands of northwest Ireland. Atop Knockarea is a cairn that rumors to be the grave of warrior Queen Maeve. At the bottom, grab a rock, hike it with you, leave it at the summit. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knocknarea)

Brad, Dylan, Jordan, Jordan's mother Eve, and I climbed on Thursday afternoon, 8/31. It was a gorgeous day with a strong breeze at the top. Flying Spot faithful Todd & Kathy (& Sam)were in attendance. At the top, Jordan lit an envelope he brought with him containing a letter to James Robert Hanssen and shavings from the oars that helped carry OAR Northwest across the Atlantic.

It was a short ceremony, and on the walk down I realized both the finality of the project and also that our work continues. We'll continue to push not only for James Robert Hanssen, but for the American Lung Association of Washington, and our future ocean rowers of OAR Northwest.

Enjoy the photos... we're back in NYC on Sunday 9/10.

Greg