



## Mid-Atlantic 2011: Breaking the Record

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### MEDIA ALERT

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### **OAR NORTHWEST HEADS BACK TO THE OPEN SEA** **Daring Local Ocean Crossers' First Major Training Row**

Seattle, WA - They eventually plan to set a world record. But first they had to find out if they could make it through one night together.

The four men of OAR Northwest attempted their first of three major training rows as they aim for the 2011 Mid-Atlantic Rowing Race. The crew is raising funds in support of Right to Play, International.

They shoved off from La Push, Washington Tuesday, June 22 for three nights on the Pacific Ocean. They rowed back into Grays Harbor at around 1pm Friday, June 25. Jordan Hanssen, Captain of the crew called the trip "one heck of a suffer-fest" that included worse than expected sea sickness and unseasonable ocean conditions.

Atlantic Ocean Rowing Race veteran Greg Spooner calls the trip "an initial shake-down cruise" intended to break in the two new crew members and reacclimate the two veterans. Spooner and Jordan Hanssen were half of the first team to ever row unassisted across the Atlantic from mainland U.S. to mainland U.K. They were joined in their 29-foot rowboat by Olympic Gold Medalist Adam Kreek and former UW rower Richard Tarbill.

The three-day trip was intended to build team unity while under stress in a tight space. While Kreek and Tarbill have spent countless hours rowing, this was their first experience in the open ocean aboard OAR Northwest's rowboat. They didn't see land for much of the journey and rowed through one night. Another night, the crew slept through the night on the sea anchor to simulate stormy conditions.

This first outing was also the first trial run for menu planning, with pre-packed meals providing 6500 calories daily.

After this three-day training session, the second will be a tour of the greater Puget Sound and San Juan Islands/Strait of Juan de Fuca. The third will be a two to three week expedition from Vancouver, BC to San Francisco, CA.

OAR Northwest ... Row *your* ocean.

## VISUALS

- \* The first time all four rowers attack open ocean together.
- \* The historic rowboat back in the water ("The James Robert Hanssen" is a piece of maritime history, as it is the first rowboat to cross from mainland U.S. to mainland U.K.).

## ABOUT OAR NORTHWEST

Founded in 2005, OAR Northwest connects with partners to reach its expedition fundraising goals, while propelling businesses to their own extraordinary achievement. The crew for its next Atlantic crossing: Guinness World Record Holders and North Atlantic Ocean Rowing Race veterans Jordan Hanssen and Greg Spooner, Beijing Olympic Gold Medalist Adam Kreek and National Level Lightweight Rower Richard Tarbill. Jordan and Greg rowed 3,200 nautical miles across the North Atlantic in 72 days from the USA to the UK without assistance. This Pacific Northwest-based 501(c)3 organization is currently raising awareness and funds for their 2011 Mid-Atlantic rowing race, benefiting Right to Play International. OAR Northwest proves that solid teams faced with extreme challenges can inspire excellence. For more information visit <http://www.oarnorthwest.com>.

## ABOUT RIGHT TO PLAY INTERNATIONAL

Right to Play (RTP) is committed to every child's right to play. Children are given a chance to become constructive participants in society, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, social background or religion. Through games and sports, RTP helps create social change in communities affected by war, poverty and disease. A team of top athletes from more than 40 countries supports Right to Play. Each week, more than 688,000 children take part in regular sport and play activities and a combined total of more than 1 million children attend regular programming and special sports events and festivals. This is made possible by more than 15,000 local Coaches, Teachers and Leaders.

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