

Earthrace eco-boat thunders into San Diego as part of world record attempt



London/San Diego, 15 May 2008:

Earthrace, the world's fastest eco-boat, will thunder into San Diego on Friday 16 May, when it stops for refuelling as part of its attempt to break the round-the-world speed record for a powerboat.

Earthrace is a 24m tri-hull wavepiercer that is currently attempting to smash the world record for a powerboat to circumnavigate the globe, running renewable biodiesel fuel, and with a net zero carbon footprint.

Skipper Pete Bethune and his crew are currently over 800 nautical miles ahead of the pace set by the round-the-world record-holder, Cable and Wireless, in 1998. The 24,000 nautical mile route has so far taken in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, and the crew has already overcome obstacles such as missing fuel shipments and a huge backlog of traffic in the Panama Canal.

Bethune's crew consists of a special guest member for each leg, and 36 year-old John Sheetz from San Clemente, CA, will be joining Earthrace for the San Diego to Hawaii stretch.

"We aim to show the world that the best technology can also be sustainable," says Bethune, who auctioned off his home to fund the USD 3m project. "We are hoping that Earthrace stopping here along the race route will be a chance for the people of San Diego to see an example of a vehicle that is 100% carbon neutral but does not skimp on performance or design."

John Sheetz is a retired Lt. Commander in the US Navy Reserve and a former US Coast Guard. He co-founded Applied Information Technology (AIT), a company involved in developing solutions to improve environmental concerns. John was scheduled to make the Atlantic crossing with the Earthrace team in 2007, during its first world record attempt, before it was called off. He will replace Guillermo Woodward Rojas, a shipping agent from Mexico, who joined the crew at Manzanillo on Wednesday.

"I am exhilarated to be a part of the team for the next 2250 nautical miles on this record attempt and look forward to contributing what I can," says Sheetz. "My anticipation for this moment has been building steadily since the race started. I am fully charged and if I can't sleep for the next 5 days I won't be surprised!"

"I hope to see Earthrace accomplish a successful circumnavigation and raise awareness of renewable fuels that will ultimately bring change for the good of the global community."

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Notes to editors:

PRESS RELEASE



High resolution, copyright-free photographs and video footage are available to download from our FTP site: <ftp://assets.earthrace.net>

Please contact news@earthrace.net for login details.

About Earthrace

Earthrace is a 24m (78ft) tri-hull wavepiercer that has been designed and built specifically to get the record for a powerboat to circumnavigate the globe. She is an advanced endurance vessel, capable of submarining up to 7m (23ft) underwater as she powers across oceans.

The goal of Earthrace is to set a new world record for a powerboat to circumnavigate the globe, running 100% renewable biodiesel fuel, and with a net zero carbon footprint.

From the start in Sagunto, the boat will cross the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans and travel through the Panama and Suez Canals as it thunders around the planet's circumference at a maximum speed of 40 knots, attempting to break the round-the-world speed record. The full record route is as follows:

Sagunto (Spain) – Horta (Azores) – San Juan (Puerto Rico) – Colon (Panama Canal, Panama) – Manzanillo (Mexico) – San Diego (USA) – Maalaea Harbor, Maui (Hawaii) – Majuro (Marshall Islands) – Koror (Palau) – Singapore – Kochi/Cochin (India) – Salalah (Oman) – Port Said (Suez Canal, Egypt) – Sagunto (Spain)

Earthrace is run as a not-for-profit venture, with a boat, ground and London HQ crew made up of international volunteers.

You can find out in real time exactly where Earthrace is now by going to www.earthrace.net and clicking on the 'Where is Earthrace' globe.

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