



Rowers all set for Atlantic Challenge

The two Lancashire rowers who are taking part in a trans-Atlantic rowing race later this month, are setting off this weekend on the first stage of their challenge.

On Friday, Paul Nelson from Chorley and Adam Murfitt, from Lancaster, fly to Tenerife, where the race starts, with team manager, John Bradley, a sports scientist from the University of Central Lancashire. Once there, they will put the final touches to their physical and psychological preparations for the race.

Paul and Adam's boat, the "Spirit of Lancashire" is already on its way to Tenerife. They can expect to spend up to six weeks at sea, completing the challenging race.

For the past year, John Bradley and his colleagues from the University's Department of Biological Sciences, have been helping the rowers prepare the race. He says: "We've covered everything from the physiological and biomechanical aspects of their fitness for the race, to the actual psychology of preparing their minds for the challenge ahead."

Simulated rowing sessions have taken place regularly at the University over the year, to monitor the rowers' fitness. Biomechanical assessments have analysed their rowing technique so that they have the most efficient rowing action possible. A nutritional strategy has been planned detailing what the rowers can eat and when, and sports psychologists have helped them prepare mentally for the ordeal.

Dr Bradley will spend a week in Tenerife with the rowers, helping with the final preparations, before flying home. He says: "At this stage we'll be dealing mainly with the psychological preparations for the race, as well as getting the boat prepared and finishing the nutritional plan."

The race begins on Sunday 19th October in the Canaries and finishes in Barbados. Paul and Adam will row 2900 nautical miles in shifts of two hours. The average time for the crossing is 55 days, the record being 41 days. Adam and Paul aren't sure how long they will take, but they say: "We're not only training to compete, we're training to win!"

1st October 2003

nr101kjf

Please note: Paul and Adam are at the University of Central Lancashire with Dr Bradley on Wednesday 1st October from 2pm to 4pm where they will be available for photographs and interviews. Further details from Kate Ford on 01772 894423, 07968 861580.