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Life  
People and places

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THURSDAY,  
AUGUST 2, 2012

COURTESY PHOTOS/BILLYFISH BOOKS

Jason Lewis kayaks in the Straits of Singapore.

ADVENTURE

# 'Dark Waters'

Worldwide adventurer follows his own muse — and path

By MARY JEAN PORTER  
THE PUEBLO CHIEFTAIN

How does one embrace a monster? Such was Jason Lewis' task in writing about a 13-year, 46,000-mile trip around the earth that he made under his own power. Lewis walked, cycled, roller-bladed, kayaked, swam and pedaled alone and with others — and amassed 22,000 still photos, 44 handwritten journals, 700 hours of video and thousands of blog entries documenting the journey. He managed to get his arms around the tremendous amount of material and wrote the trilogy, "The Expedition: True Story of the First Human-powered Circumnavigation of the Earth." The first book, "Dark Waters," was released Wednesday.

Lewis, 44, a native of Yorkshire, England, who lives in Pueblo, said a lucrative book deal with HarperCollins originally was on the table, but the publisher wanted the book written quickly, with the aid of a ghostwriter. Adventure/environmentalist Lewis chose to write it on his own terms and forgo the healthy advance. BillyFish Books, a Colorado independent, published his story.

Lewis said he didn't want the book "knocked out for the British tabloids. This is 13 years of my life. I wanted to tell the story right, in my way."

He said that a co-writer could have helped him manage the sheer volume of information, but he reasoned it was just storytelling and decided to order the books chronologically.

To grab the reader's attention, "Dark Waters" opens with Lewis in a kayak being pursued by a crocodile off Australia's Queensland coast. The book immediately backtracks to 1992, when he and college friend Steve Smith hatched their grand plan to travel around the world by human power.

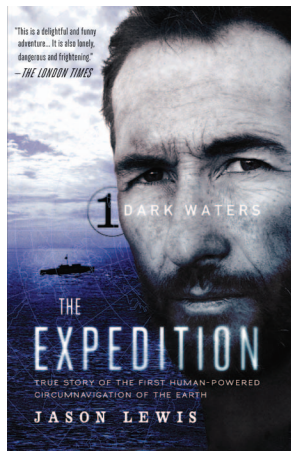
"It had to be the ultimate human challenge," Lewis writes. And it nearly killed him several times. "Dark Waters" ends with Lewis in Pueblo, on the side of the road, crippled by a hit-and-run accident that left him screaming for help.

The second book in the trilogy, "The Seed Buried Deep," will be released Sept. 1. The third book, "To the Brink," will be available Oct. 1.

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Lewis takes a break while bicycling on Lalung Pass in Tibet.



"Dark Waters" can be ordered through amazon.com, barnesandnoble.com or billyfishbooks.com, in paperback (\$16.95) or ebook. maryp@chieftain.com

## Traveler kept planet's health on board

More than an endurance test or a record-setting feat of daring, Jason Lewis' trip around the globe was an educational mission.

Lewis, who made the entire journey under his own power, did so to promote low- or no-carbon emission travel, and to raise awareness about climate change caused by man and the impact that lifestyle choices have on the planet's health.

Lewis said he always tried to involve others in his work. "The expedition became a tool for people to step outside their comfort zone," he said. "I thought that was a more powerful tool than (them) just reading about it."

Hundreds of schoolchildren were involved, including ones from Rye who followed his progress and that of Rye teacher April Abril, who traveled with him on two legs of the journey.

"There were various kinds of programs, including a pen-pal program. When I was pedaling across the Pacific, keeping track of where my food was coming from, getting energy from a wind generator and solar panels, kids were doing some of the same activities in their classrooms."

"The ocean, being a wilderness, allows you to strip down to who you really are. The boat is a closed system like the planet. You can't get resources on or off it. You've got to live with what you have."

Jason Lewis

Lewis said the children's participation was a way for them to realize their own sphere of influence, just as he was able to ponder philosophical questions like, "What does it take to be a world citizen?"

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Lewis talked to children in 37 countries about his trip and raised \$66,000 for causes such as The Hope Orphanage in East Timor and Father Joe's Mercy Centre in Bangkok, Thailand.

More about his work on behalf of the environment is at expedition360.com.

— Mary Jean Porter