



milestone came hand in hand with another – the end of South America, continent number three and arrival on the shores of the Caribbean a year after I pedalled away from

the blustery coastline of the Southern Ocean. Between then and now there have been ups and downs - literal ones, thanks to those bumpy, slow-going back roads that twist and bounce through the Andean wilderness, and the more metaphysical type too. I have been evicted from my tent at gun point in the dead of night in Peru, I cycled stark naked across the world's largest salt lake in Bolivia, I survived a Colombian road known as The Trampoline of Death, I got lost in the eyes of many, many Colombian girls, I cycled more vertical metres in one week than from sea level to the summit of Mount Everest, I was stabbed in the hand by a drunk, I scared myself silly in the aftermath of a volcanic eruption in Chile and I had a flour fight with 25,000 other people in an Argentinean football stadium. So it was never plain sailing, but despite all the effort, the pain and the fleeting bouts of boredom, loneliness and anxiety, it was worth it. www.cyclingthe6.com

Nick Rees (1994)

One Boat, Two Blokes, Four Blades, Three Thousand Miles

It's not every year that you decide to take a sabbatical from your job, leave your young family for three months over Christmas and try to row 3,000 miles unsupported from The Canaries to Antigua, but that's exactly what Nick Rees will be doing in December 2013!

Nick and a friend, Ed Curtis, came up with the idea last February when the dinner conversation turned to 'the next big challenge'. They've certainly met that criteria with this task as the daunting facts demonstrate – more people have been to space than have rowed an ocean; the waves will be 30-40ft high; they will burn 8,000 calories a day, lose 20% of their body weight, survive on four hours sleep a day in snippets of 45 minutes and be at sea for somewhere between 50-80 days (depending on the weather).

Nick and Ed will be rowing for the UK charity Breakthrough Breast Cancer (www.breakthrough.org.uk) following Nick's



wife, Ellen, (a St Helen's old girl) being diagnosed with breast cancer in 2009, aged 33. Happily, Ellen has now been given the all clear having undergone eleven hours of surgery. Breakthrough Breast Cancer remain at the cutting edge of researching this disease. In particular they focus on developing early diagnosis, better treatments and, ultimately, trying to find a cure for a disease which affects one in eight women at some stage in their lives.

Since committing to the cause, Nick and Ed have been busy juggling three projects – getting fit, raising £75,000 in corporate sponsorship to get to the start line (including buying a £33k rowing boat), and holding numerous fundraising events to start to raise the £250,000 they are hoping to raise for the charity. In so doing, they've engaged with lots of schools, including Abingdon, and the support has been tremendous.

Nick and Ed's journey can be followed at www.breakthroughatlantic.com, or on Twitter @atlantic_row. Technology will allow them to post audio and written blogs from the middle of the Atlantic and they can be tracked online via GPS. If you know of any business which might like to be involved in a project like this, or if you would like to make a donation, Nick and Ed would love to hear from you!

