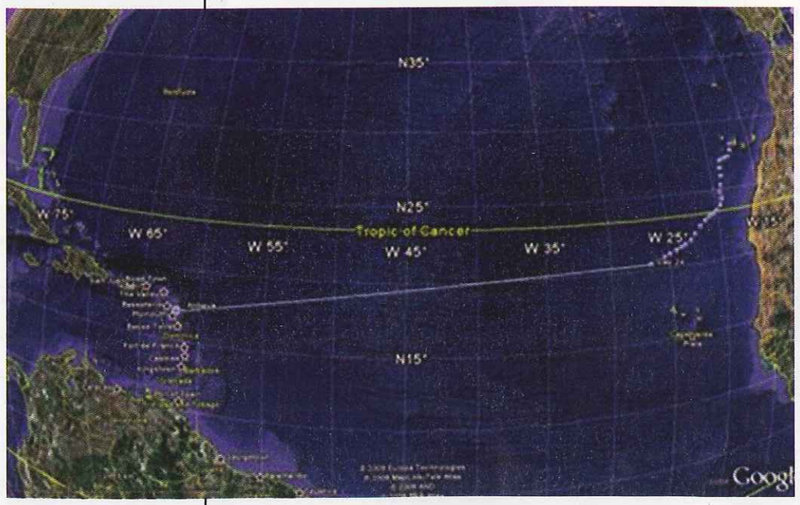
Solo Rower Gets Wind, Current Data Aid

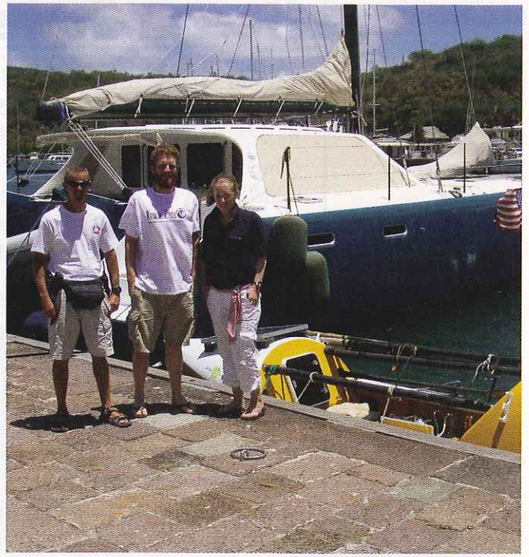
Trans-Atlantic solo expedition rower Paul Ridley completed a charity fund-raising ocean crossing from the Canary Islands to Antigua, on March 29, 2009. Ridley's three-month solo effort ended successfully with support from his friends, family, as well as guidance from the Antigua & Barbuda Search & Rescue (ABSAR) organization using technology developed by Rhode Island ocean science and technology company, Applied Science Associates (ASA).

Ridley completed a historic trans-Atlantic expedition to benefit cancer research, as he rowed for 10-12 hours per day with little help coming from anything more than favorable ocean currents and wind direction. "When the wind, waves, and currents did not cooperate, the journey called Row for Hope became more challenging and uncertain," said a Ridley family member.

Jonathan Cornelius of ABSAR organization voluntarily offered his time and expertise as well as advanced technology provided to ABSAR, ASA's SARMAP and EDS: Environmental Data Server developed in collaboration with the U.S. Coast Guard. A combination of search and rescue technology and real-time and ocean data forecasting system, ASA's software combined with Cornelius' expertise, was used to look at possible drift scenarios for family and friends who were awaiting Ridley's landing in Antigua when the crossing took longer than planned. "Jonathan (Cornelius) was wonderful, providing the perfect mixture of calm presence, knowledge of local waters, and up-to-the-minute computerized wind and current data," said Ridley's father on the Row for Hope blog as he described how Jonathan Cornelius and ASA's cutting edge technology were helpful in providing predictions, advice, and tracking how Ridley and his small craft, Liv, were affected by the Atlantic ocean's winds, weather, and currents.



In a 19-ft. custom built boat, provided by Aquidneck Custom, a Rhode Island boat building company, Ridley's ocean expedition began in December 2008. His planned route was to row as directly as possible from Africa to Antigua, crossing the whole of the Atlantic Ocean. While rowing more than 3,000 nautical miles, Ridley, in contact with a land-based support team via satellite phone, was entirely alone on the open ocean for 87 days with no chase boat or means of resupply. According to Ridley, Cornelius and ASA technology were especially helpful at the end of the journey as targeting the final destination became tricky due to strong shifty winds and currents.



"Using ASA's SARMAP and EDS ocean current module, I was able to plot his position and show Paul's team a drift prediction. I recommended that Paul turn his boat as much north as possible in order to take advantage of the current stream he was bordering. I further advised him to put out his sea anchor when not rowing in order to let the currents to pull him north and keep him from being blown southwest. Over the next several days Paul was able to make good progress to Antigua utilizing our advice and the information provided from the SARMAP program. He told me later that this information was crucial in allowing him to make it into Antigua." mentioned Cornelius after speaking with Ridley upon his landing.