

Around the world in 20 years!

Written by Administrator

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It is 24,901.5 miles round the Earth or 40,076 kilometres. It has taken 78-year old President of Nottingham Rowing Club Keith Atkinson 20 years to complete the journey, rowing over 5,000m a day on Concept 2 Indoor Rowing machines

The feat is all the more remarkable as he retired as Head of Tuxford School in 1996 because of Progressive Multiple Sclerosis and is unable to walk and often uses a wheelchair.

"Holidays have been a challenge", said Keith, "but hotels as far apart as Blackpool and Boston, Massachusetts have machines, and my wife Celia and I have been on P&O Cruises for the past 12 years, so I have rowed over a million metres on the Atlantic, Baltic, Mediterranean, Caribbean, Black Sea, Red Sea, Bosphorus and Suez Canal without getting my feet wet. P&O have the good sense to equip their excellent gyms with indoor rowers and keep them well serviced. Wherever you are in the world the Concept 2 monitor gives an equal and accurate reading.

Rowing on ships gives fantastic views of the sea and sealife. Chasing leaping dolphins alongside the ship as I row is magical. Our ship was recently moored in Barcelona harbour and, doing an early morning row, I watched boats from local rowing clubs training on the water; a great experience."

"Highlight of the last 20 years was in 1999 when, as part of the UK Concept 2 Education Team I entered the 'Crash B's' ('Charles River Has-Beens') World Championships in the States and won a Bronze Medal in the over-65 lightweight class, and repeated it again in 2000.

Daily rowing, yoga, rest and the strong support of family and friends at Nottingham Rowing Club helps me to cope with MS. Having been an athlete before the illness took hold, keeping to a training regime is no big deal, but someone from a sedentary background would not find it easy. I get up at 5.30am, do yoga for an hour, have a cup of tea and a light breakfast then spend an hour rowing between rests, and then clear my e-mails. I rest after lunch and then do a half hour stretch before tea and watch a little TV. Early bed, breathing exercises and sleep ready for another day. Staying alive!"

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