

# Sailing Into History

**A British teen becomes the youngest person to sail solo across the Atlantic Ocean.**

Michael Perham's recent **voyage**<sup>1</sup> across the Atlantic Ocean was full of surprises. His **journey**<sup>2</sup> included shark sightings, equipment failure and flying fish that hopped into his boat.

Despite the unexpected events, the teen from Hertfordshire, England, achieved what he had set out to do. In January [2007], at age 14, Michael became the youngest person to cross the Atlantic Ocean **solo**, or alone.

"It feels absolutely fantastic being back on dry land," Michael told BBC News after his journey.

Michael set out on his record-breaking **expedition**, or trip, in November [2006]. He began his journey from Gibraltar, on the southern coast of Spain, aboard his sailboat *Cheeky Monkey*. With his dad following in another boat, Michael completed the 3,500-mile journey, arriving in Antigua, an island in the Caribbean Sea.

During his journey at sea, Michael **documented**, or recorded, his voyage on his blog. One evening he watched a school of dolphins leap through waves. His self-steering **gear**<sup>3</sup> broke once, and on another morning a flying fish landed in his lap. "It's an amazingly good feeling when you are on the open sea and [there is] no land in sight," he wrote as he watched the sun set near the Cape Verde Islands.

When Michael arrived in Antigua, crowds gathered to congratulate him. "I was surrounded by loads of cameras, microphones, and people asking me questions, and, wow, it was unbelievable," he wrote.

---

<sup>1</sup> **voyage:** a trip usually by water from one place or country to another

<sup>2</sup> **journey:** travel from one place to another

<sup>3</sup> **gear:** a mechanism that performs a specific function in a machine; for example, on a boat, *self-steering gear* would allow a person to direct the boat in a certain direction without having to steer himself or herself