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Solo Sailor Completes 314-Day Record Setting Circumnavigation of the Americas

*Matt Rutherford Receives Hero's Welcome in Annapolis;
Voyage Hopes to Raise \$250,000 for CRAB Handicapped Sailing*

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (April 21, 2012) — Adventurer Matt Rutherford today completed his non-stop, record-setting solo voyage around the Americas, dropping anchor in Annapolis, Md., and receiving a hero's welcome from an enthusiastic crowd of admirers and well-wishers.

The 31-year-old Maryland resident arrived at the Annapolis City Dock near the National Sailing Hall of Fame at 12:00 p.m. As he stepped ashore for the first time in more than 300 days, he was cheered by hundreds of friends, fellow sailors, and public officials. Gary Jobson, president of US SAILING, author of 17 sailing books and editor-at-large of *Sailing World* and *Cruising World* magazines, served as the emcee for the welcome on land.

Just prior to the land welcome, a flotilla of boats met Rutherford at Horn Point and sailed or motored alongside him up the Severn River around Spa Creek and up to the City Dock.

When he re-entered the Chesapeake Bay on April 18, Rutherford also entered the record books as the first person to successfully sail completely around North and South America solo and nonstop. The historic voyage covered 25,000 miles – roughly the distance around the Earth's equator – and was accomplished in a secondhand, 27-foot Albin Vega sailboat – the Saint Brendan – better suited for coastal waters than an epic deep-sea voyage.

Rutherford made the journey to show people, particularly those with disabilities, that there are no limits to what can be accomplished in life. He is also seeking to raise \$250,000 – \$10 for each nautical mile – for Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating (CRAB), the Annapolis, Md., nonprofit that makes sailing available to persons with disabilities. “Matt dedicated his record setting voyage to CRAB,” said Don Backe, CRAB's Executive director. “By sticking to his goal, alone, in a very small boat, in an impossibly large sea, Matt has shown us that with a purpose and determination, big challenges are left behind, one wave at a time. We are incredibly grateful for all his efforts on our behalf.”

At the time of his arrival, more than \$60,000 had been received, and donations can still be made online at www.crab-sailing.org or by calling 410-626-0273.

When asked what it was like spending 300 days alone at sea, Matt said, “I've done two major single-handed trips nearly back to back, so I have spent three out of the last four years alone in one way or another. I'll be happy when I meet a girl who likes sailing – being alone gets old.”

Rutherford left Annapolis in June 2011 and traversed some of the most dangerous seas on Earth, including the ice-filled Northwest Passage. During this first leg of his trek, Rutherford broke a record by singlehandedly sailing the smallest boat in history through the Northwest Passage, which is a small water route from the Atlantic to the Pacific along the northern coast of Alaska. Once through this northern passage, Rutherford sailed south along the Pacific coast of North and South America to make his left-hand turn at storm-tossed Cape Horn. During this leg of the journey, he was nearly run down by a freighter, was blown over in a storm, and was menaced by an unidentified boat at night.

Much of Saint Brendan's equipment rotted, wore out or broke. Equipment failures forced Rutherford to receive re-supplies while at sea. By the last leg of his voyage, Rutherford's boat was without an engine, bilge pump, freighter radar, solar panels, wind generator, GPS, and VHF radio. Yet, throughout the record-setting trip, he never entered port, dropped anchor, step off his boat nor has another person stepped onboard. To read a firsthand account of Matt's adventures, visit his blog: www.solotheamericas.org.

For broadcast quality videos and photos of Matt at sea and as he steps foot on land for the first time, visit: www.thenewsmarket.com/CRAB

About CRAB

Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating (CRAB) is a nonprofit organization based in Annapolis, Maryland, that provides opportunities for people with physical and developmental challenges to experience boating on the Chesapeake Bay. Founded by Don Backe in 1991, CRAB maintains a fleet of Freedom Independence 20 sloops, which are designed specifically for use by mobility-challenged persons. To learn more about CRAB, visit: www.crab-sailing.org.

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