



Raymarine supplies marine electronics for Geoff Holt's Impossible Dream Atlantic Challenge

August 2009 Raymarine, the world leading manufacturer and developer of marine electronics has supplied essential navigation, communication and safety equipment for Geoff Holt's Atlantic Challenge. The first disabled person to sail single-handed around Great Britain in 2007, quadriplegic yachtsman Geoff Holt is now embarking on the yacht *Impossible Dream* with the intention to sail the yacht single-handed across the Atlantic, accompanied by his carer, and a camera man.

Geoff says, "There are four main cornerstones to the success of this project. The first is having a boat which is designed for sailing by a disabled person in a wheelchair, the second is my ability to actually sail that boat, the third is having the physical care I need personally to manage the journey, and last, but by no means least, it's having the latest electronic technology to enable me to navigate across the Atlantic. Thanks to Raymarine I now have that essential cornerstone in place."



The 60 feet, 18 metre catamaran *Impossible Dream* was custom designed and built specifically to be used by a disabled wheelchair user. Working with Raymarine, Geoff specified the equipment required to ensure he has all the essential navigation, communications and safety products on board for his voyage.

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As well as giving vital information such as where he is and where he is heading, as well as wind, weather and sea conditions, Geoff required electronic products that could be easily operated either by remote control or using wheel controls – essential for Geoff who has limited hand movement and no fine finger movement.

“The whole integrated electronics package is vital,” explains Geoff, “it’s like having your car sat nav on, but instead of just seeing your position overlaid on a small map, you get to see every other boat nearby, and even their course and heading, all on a screen the size of a TV. It’s my knowledge centre enabling me to make the decisions about the route to take, the hazards to avoid, the tides I need to help me, and the weather data to keep me sailing safely.”

At the heart of this knowledge centre are the C Series Widescreen multifunction displays. Numerous data collection points - from the top of the mast, to receivers fitted in the hull of the boat – receive and send information which is computed and displayed on the C140 screens. Together with overlaid information from the radar, electronic maps, and the AIS (Automatic Identification System) transceiver which shows other vessels in the area, this provides Geoff with up to the minute information required.

The information shown on the C140 is so vital that Geoff will be sleeping adjacent to the main nav centre, so he can see, assess and alter his course without even having to move from his bunk in an emergency. Two additional nav stations using ST70+ repeaters and C90 Widescreen displays have been set up on deck, one on the port side and one on starboard, so Geoff can control the boat easily from his wheelchair depending on which side of the catamaran he chooses to steer from whilst out on deck.

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Also fitted on board is a Raymarine autopilot. Geoff says that despite being used to sailing smaller boats where he has to keep control at all times, the autopilot is an essential luxury for a transatlantic crossing. "I can set the autopilot to maintain a course easily using the wheel control. But if I am out on deck or elsewhere on the boat, I can quickly and easily change or alter course using the SmartController wireless remote control, without having to physically move."

For ship to ship, and ship to shore communications, Geoff is using a Raymarine VHF/DSC radio, with a three station set up, enabling him to send and receive calls both on deck and from the main saloon.

Finally, as safety is a key issue in such a challenging environment, Geoff, his carer and cameraman, will be equipped with a Raymarine LifeTag Man Overboard System. The small wireless tags are easily worn or carried by the crew, and if someone falls overboard, the base station sets off a loud alarm. The man overboard position is then automatically displayed on the C Series Widescreen displays, enabling the crew to set course and return to the exact position at which the alarm was generated.

Ends

For up to date information about Geoff Holt's challenge, see www.geoffholt.com

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