

Pair pedalling to Ottawa to promote active living

# Pirate and yogi make fitness fun

By Cheryl Rossi  
Staff writer

ON APRIL 1, A PURPLE PIRATE and a smiling yogi will sail off on a giant banana to spread messages of healthy living to the nation's children.

Vancouver's Dustin Anderson, the Purple Pirate, and his fiancée, Farah Nazarali, the Smiling Yogi, will ride their prototype yellow-covered, recumbent tandem bicycle 4,600 kilometres to Ottawa, performing for and speaking to children along the way.

"We all have challenges in growing up and I had a pretty twisted childhood at times and what always kept me sane was being able to play and having endorphins rush through my body and just the idea of being able to lose myself in a game of soccer or playing in the park," said Anderson, a 35-year-old former commercial fisher, logger and professional dancer. "And I think that a lot of that's getting lost in technology."

Performing as the Purple Pirate since 1999, Anderson teaches six to 12-year-olds about the five "fundamentals" of fitness.

"Rule number four is get out the door. You know we get lost in a lot of 'We need all the equipment' and all the things that really don't matter in terms of play. You've got a park outside, go climb a tree," he said enthusiastically.

"Rule number three is doing your best is the key. You don't have to be the best. You just have to do your best and your best is going to change every day."

Fun should be the focus, not competition, Anderson said. "If it's not fun, it's just not worth doing."

He noted he wants to explore the whole country. "We're only going to see a small part of it. I want to ride to Nunavut. I want to ride to Prince Edward Island. I want to share this message with all Canadian kids because I think it's important that Canadian children have a Canadian icon, someone that lives in Canada that's accessible," he said. "This way they're going to be able to see me pedalling down the highway maybe, they'll go 'Hey, that's the Purple Pirate,'



The laid back Purple Pirate and the Smiling Yogi begin their ride to Ottawa on their prototype recumbent bike April 1.

you know. I'm not going to show up in some limousine and hide from them."

The pirate and the yogi will perform in cities and towns across Canada during their trip and will update a "5000 For Health" tour blog with video footage.

"It'll be fun kid-focused short little clips of the trip, maybe getting rained on, hailed on, snowed on, getting chased by a moose," Anderson said.

Nazarali will offer sessions on laughter yoga and the benefits of incorporating more raw foods into the diet. She will sit with her back to Anderson on the trip on the special bike and hopes to secure a Guinness Book of World Records for cycling the longest distance backward.

Appropriately, the tour kicks off on April Fool's Day at Hillcrest Park, between 29th and Ontario at 9 a.m. Anderson will perform an excerpt of his bicycle safety magic show and encourages families to join them in cycling to Commercial Drive for a free breakfast at Jamaican Pizza Jerk before he and Nazarali head off to Chilliwack for the first stop.

See [5000forhealth.com](http://5000forhealth.com) and [www.purplepirate.com](http://www.purplepirate.com) for more information.