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**PARALYSED SAILOR GEOFF HOLT MBE ANNOUNCED AS NEW PATRON  
OF SOUTHERN SPINAL INJURIES TRUST**

The Southern Spinal Injuries Trust (SSIT), the charity that supports the Duke of Cornwall Spinal Treatment Centre and people with spinal cord injury in the South and South West of England, is pleased to announce that Geoff Holt MBE has become a Patron of the Charity.

A record-breaking sailor and ambassador for disability, Geoff Holt became the first quadriplegic to sail across the Atlantic in January 2010. 25 years ago and aged just 18, Geoff was one of the first patients to be cared for at the Spinal Centre in Salisbury.

Geoff Holt commented: "I'm delighted to offer my support to the Southern Spinal Injuries Trust. The charity was not around when I was injured but on my regular visits to the spinal unit I can see the difference that it has made. The equipment that SSIT has provided helps enormously with the rehabilitation of patients."

Jeremy Major, Trustee of SSIT said: "It's wonderful news that Geoff has agreed to become a Patron of SSIT. He is the most inspirational man and having been a patient at the spinal centre himself he has a very real connection with the charity. We are honoured that we have his commitment and support."

Since its formation in September 2006, SSIT has provided £120,000 worth of equipment for the Duke of Cornwall Spinal Treatment Centre and £116,000 in grants for individuals to fund specialised equipment. SSIT's major appeal for 2010 is to fund the building of a specially designed rehabilitation garden at the Spinal Centre.

Image: Geoff Holt arrives in Tortola after his solo crossing of the Atlantic

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