

September 15, 2006 Friday

## 'Ben's trip of a lifetime in student rally'

**SECTION:** Pg. 20

**LENGTH:** 299 words

Benjamin Williams had the time of his life in the student gumball rally. He has returned to Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, exhausted after driving across Europe in a week, raising £2,000 for charity. "From the moment we landed in Calais we have been driving from dawn until dusk," he said. As well as France, the rally took in Germany, Holland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Croatia. Ben and his pals left from Dover and travelled a staggering 6,000 miles in six days. He said even the shorter legs of the journey took a long time to complete. "Sometimes the distances looked nothing on the map but the roads were so bendy it took ages to get to checkpoints," Ben said. "We had the most fun at the parties in the evenings. It was even fun when we all got stuck in a traffic jam together." The 22-year-old Plymouth University student says the Hungarian capital Budapest as his favourite location. "We seemed to click with the culture there straight away," he said. "It was somewhere I had never been before but will definitely be looking to return to." The four dressed up as Mexicans for the rally to add to the fun. The rally ended with a beach party in Croatia on Saturday before Ben had to say goodbye to his friends and return to normal life. He flew back to Britain this week, but will never forget the friends he made. "I've met people who I will definitely be keeping in touch with," he said. "Everyone got on well and it was all for charity." The four raised £1,000, which was matched by Kellogg's - which also provided a new Volkswagen Passat for the rally. Ben's team had already raised £800 before setting off. Gloucester-based Stephen Limbrick Limited, where architecture student Ben has been doing work experience, also supported the team. The money will go to St Luke's Hospice in Plymouth.