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Dutch sailor girl Laura Dekker to stay with father

A Dutch court has ruled that 14-year-old Laura Dekker can remain with her father, despite his support for her plan to sail solo round the world.



Laura Dekker began sailing solo when she was 10 years old

The court in Utrecht met on Wednesday to consider whether the girl should go into foster care.

Miss Dekker returned from the Dutch Caribbean island of St Maarten on Tuesday. By going there she violated a court order blocking her sailing trip.

Her lawyer has now said that she went there to buy a boat to start her trip.

She appeared in court with her parents, who separated when she was six.

The Dutch child welfare agency had asked for Miss Dekker to be taken into care.

Secret flight

She was discovered on St Maarten after disappearing last week. It is still unclear how she managed to make the journey unaccompanied.

Miss Dekker has been under state supervision since October, when the Utrecht court blocked her bid to become the youngest person to sail the globe solo.

The order remains valid until the end of her school year in July 2010.

A seasoned sailor, Miss Dekker was born on a yacht off the coast of New Zealand during a seven-year world trip. She had her own yacht by the age of six and began sailing solo when she was 10.

While her father, Dick Dekker, supports her attempt at the record, her mother has expressed some concerns.

Miss Dekker had planned to spend about two years aboard her 8m (26ft) boat, Guppy, to break the record set in August by a 17-year-old British boy.

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