



Headline News

Scattered to the Winds

Where do they all go from here?



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St Malo, France -- 29 Aug 2001 09:51 GMT Where will they go now?

As far from the water as possible was the answer from some of the sailors as they stepped onto dry land after almost two weeks at sea and seven weeks of hard racing. But like most things, as memories of recent events fade, ideas change.

Tomorrow the boats will leave St Malo and crews will be scattered to the wind, but most of these sailors will meet up again as they travel the world, competing in local and international yacht races. Others have said "Enough," and will head off on new adventures unrelated to sailing.

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For some the path is already paved and the next port and race is already known. Miranda Merron, who sailed on *ECOVER* at the beginning of the race, is set to sail the *Transat Jacques Vabre (TJV)*, the trans-Atlantic race that begins in November.

Frederique Brule, who sailed aboard *AlphaGraphics*, is sailing with Merron and is already in training for the race. This is a popular "next race" for many of the crew, including Massimo Ruffini and Bruno Laurent from *FILA*. The damaged sails are currently being repaired again and will be used on their qualifying sail to La Rochelle.

Roland Jourdain and Gael le Cléac'h have their work cut out for them to have *Sill* ready for the *Jacques Vabre*. The new mast still needs to be built and tuned.

Other *EDS AC* skippers and crew already signed up for the *TJV* include Anne Monmousseau, who sailed on *AlphaGraphics*, and Richard Tolkien, who did the last leg on *ECOVER* and will be sailing his own boat, *This Time*, aka *AlphaGraphics*.

Loïc Pochet and Patrick Tabarly have been busy working on repairing the keel bolts on board *La Rage de Vivre* so that they too will be ready for the starting line in November. *La Rage* was forced to retire from the *EDS AC* on Leg 2, when the keel bolts failed. Pochet sailed the boat to Calais for repairs.

Mike Golding and *ECOVER* are also a confirmed entry, as is Josh Hall and *Gartmore*.

Nick Moloney, the charismatic young skipper of *Kingfisher* is weighing his options. Coming aboard *Kingfisher* as co-skipper to the highly touted Ellen MacArthur initially cast him in the shadows. But his skills and personality soon shone through the hype and pushed him to the fore. When MacArthur left the boat at the end of Leg 3 to handle her sponsorship commitments, Moloney took over as skipper and has shone, becoming a superstar in his own right.

Moloney is any sponsor's dream. He is young, personable, knows exactly what sponsors need and to top it all, has the skills to take the sport, along with the sponsors, into the limelight. He is also looking at doing the *Transat Jacques Vabre*, but no boat or sponsor is confirmed yet.

Another winner, *FILA*'s Andrea Scarabelli is looking further ahead to a possible Volvo Race campaign, hoping to obtain a sponsor for the race four years from now. In the meantime, he is going home to Rotterdam to his wife and 14-month-old son, who started to walk while he was off sailing.

Aboard *ECOVER*, Alex Sizer is off on another adventure into the Antarctic. She is involved with **Mission Antarctica**, a project involved in the cleanup of the Russian research station at Bellinghausen.

Sizer did several trips down to the station last year aboard *2041*, the ex-*BT Global Challenge* yacht skippered by Andy Dare. For Sizer, more at home on a boat than land, this is just another type of extreme sailing.

Gartmore skipper Hall said that after 15 years on the solo sailing circuit, it's time for him to back off a bit. He plans to put a lot of energy into his public relations firm, Indigo Agency. But not until he has done the *Jacques Vabre*.

Then, depending on where and what his sponsor Gartmore needs, he will continue to sail in limited races. If there is another *EDS Atlantic Challenge*, he said he would be tempted to charter a yacht, just for the race, if he doesn't still have his current boat.

Javier "Cowboy" Sanso from Gartmore is in the planning stages. He said he has learned a lot from sailing this race and all he has learned will assist in the design of his new Open 60.

Another big race in the offing is the *Around Alone Race*, a single-handed race that begins next year in September. Brad Van Liew, who sailed two legs on Gartmore, is actively campaigning.

Van Liew sailed the last AAR, taking third in Class II. This time around, although he had hoped to have a new Open 60, finances precluded that option and he recently purchased *Magellan Alpha* from Mike Garside, the Open 50 that beat him in the race. Well prepared, and another sponsor-savvy young man, Van Liew is still actively looking for a sponsor for the race. The boat, as yet unnamed, will be named for the sponsor.

And MacArthur? She is currently in training with Alain Gautier on his 60-ft trimaran *Foncia-Kingfisher*, also preparing for the *Transat Jacques Vabre*, and attending to her many public-relation duties.

For many of the sailors crewing is what they love to do, and they have no wish to take on the responsibilities involved with skippering. It's not only the stress of taking on the crew and the boat, but as the sport of extreme sailing grows, skippers have to become fund-raisers and public personalities, something that many of these people are not willing to do.

The few who go on as skippers must be ready to give up years of their lives to their chosen profession, and to their sponsors.

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