



11th February 1990

4,478 miles to go

The weather has been really mild, with the sun blazing down in the past here days. Skip Novak (Fazisi) says they are getting warm weather at 54'S; Can't believe it! If this is the sign of mild weather through the Southern Ocean on this leg I have mucked up very badly by not diving south as fast as possible. L'Esprit is now 52 miles in front.

Everyone is being really good about it, but I feel as if I have let us all; down. I feel very low. Every mood I have is linked to the weather and boat speed. The warm weather is a mixed blessing, it puts us under enormous strain. If you are not wet and cold you are not going fast. This bloody High pressure looks as if it is attached to us by elastic. L'Esprit always seems to have more wind.

We have also had problems with the mast screws coming undone – and on the boom and gooseneck. As the weather is so mild we have been able to botch them up: we now check them every day. Rucanor has reached Wellington and should be leaving again tomorrow. NCB Ireland have broken their boom – AGAIN! It's crazy.

I still can't decide whether to be really radical and go south or follow L'Esprit. I took a chance today by going further south; I hope it pays off. If it doesn't we will have lost miles for nothing. We are now looking at an ETA of 9th March which gives us only 6 days in port before the re-start.

Down here, meanwhile, iceberg city is coming up at 56' and from 140'W to 11'W. Hell. I don't know what to worry about next. I just wish this blasted race was over. Not happy!

