

# Hubba Hubba

## Paris gets a taste of Mother Nature's power on solo Atlantic test jaunt

By Tania Theriault

The man attempting to become the first Bermudian to solo sail around the world had a strong taste of what he might expect on his journey last week.

Alan Paris is on a qualifying run in his new boat – *BTC Velocity* – between Bermuda and the Canary Islands at the moment.

It is a 2,300-mile journey and in addition to testing his craft and skill, Mr. Paris is testing communications equipment which will allow students at 16 Bermuda schools to follow his quest next year.

Mr. Paris is in preparation for the Around Alone race to begin in September.

To be accepted as a qualified entrant, he must complete a solo sail of more than 2,000 nautical miles.

The educational linkup with the schools is being coordinated by the Bermuda Underwater Exploration Institute (BUEI) and Mr. Paris has been e-mailing BUEI director Ralph Richardson with his progress on the test run.

The following e-mail was received Thursday evening from Mr. Paris:

"Hi Ralph, it is still blowing 25-35 knots but (here) is a quick summary of last night...

"4 p.m. 35 — 40 knots, third reef only.

"5 p.m. 40 knots, gusts higher, no main only a small cutter.

"6 p.m. until 2 a.m. solid 50 knots gale with gusts to 56.7 knots, just a handkerchief of cutter.

"(Expletive). It was everything I have seen on TV and read in books, majestic, a little frightening and boy do you have to keep aware.

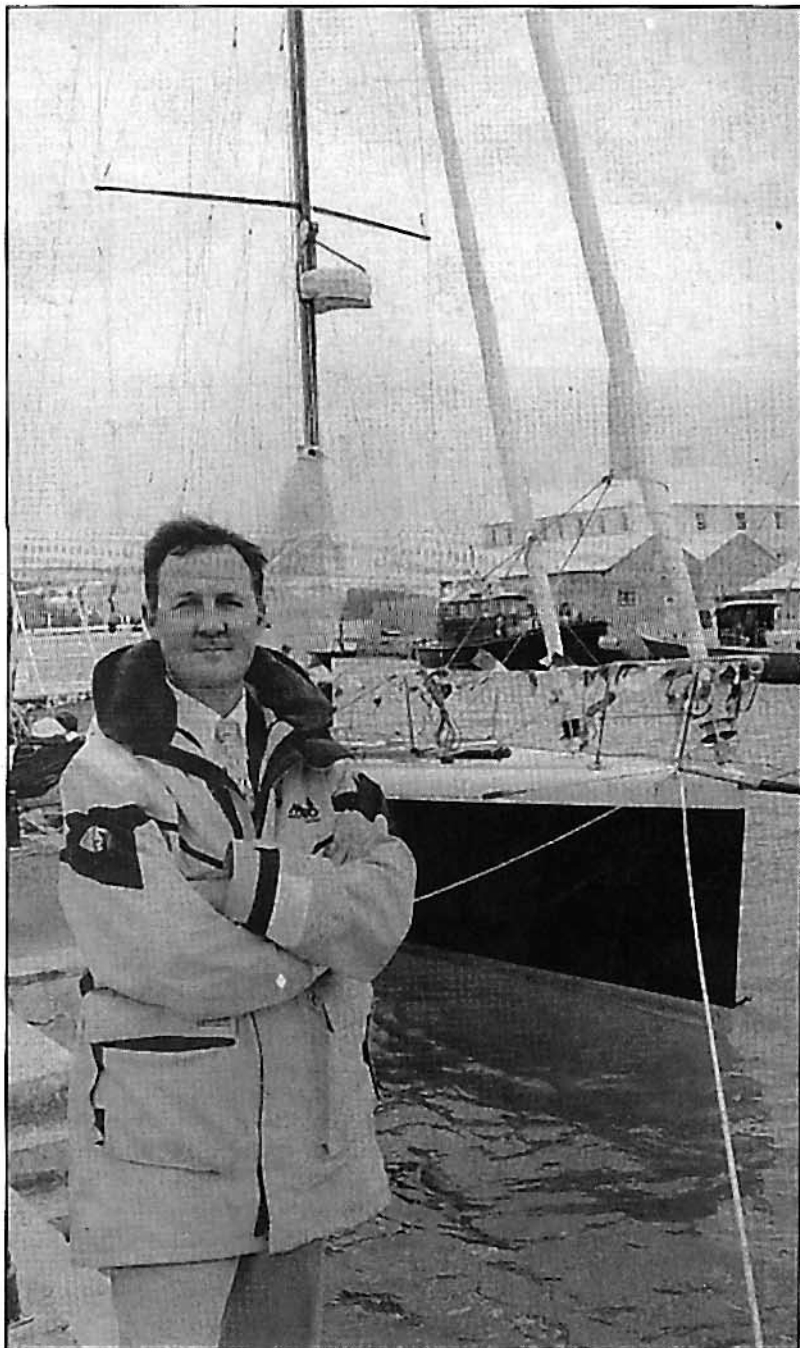
"I learned some new skills and hope I do not see too many more of those in my lifetime.

"The last Vendee Globe race went around (the world) with only experiencing 50 knots once!!

"Boat, OK.

"Only small damage to tiller, etc.

"Had one big problem in that



**Calmer seas:** Bermuda solo sailor Alan Paris in St. George's with *BTC Velocity*.

the engine batteries would not charge.

"Huge problem; so I traced the wires from the engine panel to engine and dried every last little piece.

"Thank god it worked, I don't want to think about hand steering the rest of the way to the Canaries.

"Tomorrow 10-15 out of the North. That will be nice.

"Alan.

"STOP THE PRESSES: Just hit a new top speed of 20.1 knots off the back of a 15 foot wave in a 38 knot puff.

"Triple reef main only.

"Hubba Hubba."