

News

Ger's hardy sea dogs arrive in Cape Town

OCEAN RACE

Alan Owens

AFTER a gruelling first leg in the Volvo Ocean Race, Team Delta Lloyd and skipper Ger O'Rourke have arrived in Cape Town, South Africa for a much needed rest before the race continues.

The 13-man crew completed the 6,500 nautical mile leg from Alicante to Cape Town in 23 days, 10 hours, 09 minutes and 22 seconds and scored four valuable points, meaning they now lie seventh of eight teams in the round the world race.

After a last minute entry to the race - Delta Lloyd's entry was only confirmed on September 11 - Limerick businessman Ger and his crew had a lot to learn about the boat and as a result didn't expect much from the first leg of the race. The much-modified ABN AMRO One boat won the race in 2005/2006 and the underdog team are running on a very tight budget for the race.

At the beginning of the race O'Rourke said, "I don't imagine we will be super competitive in the first leg because we need more time to learn about

this boat, but, by the second and third legs, I think we can be up to speed."

The boat met huge storms and sustained a damaged mast on the difficult first leg, and while they were at one stage running in fourth position, they had to sit and suffer for a time in the water as other teams passed them.

"It's been a big learning curve and it's not going to come overnight," said Ger this week on arrival in Cape Town.

"I'm looking at this as a stepping stone for 2011. We're learning how to improve every day. When the Russians passed us, the crew morale dropped a bit, but we were happy we could keep racing (despite the mast damage)."

He added: "It was quite a good repair we made at sea and from that point of view, we're happy to have sailed her here, we'll repair her and we'll be faster and wiser next time."

They suffered damage to their rig 10 days out from the start, when the starboard jumper fell out of the rig and bounced down the deck, narrowly missing the crew. It took the crew 12 hours to make a repair.

Ger explained that his crew will have a full day and a quarter to rest and



Delighted: the team toast their arrival in Cape Town



Captain Ger O'Rourke speaks to the press

relax before they set about the long job list which has to be completed before the fleet takes off again on November 15, this time bound for Cochin in India.

The Volvo Ocean Race will finish in St Petersburg, Russia next June after which the teams will have sailed over 37,000 nautical miles.



Team Delta Lloyd celebrates in Cape Town, South Africa after completing the 6,500-mile first leg of the Volvo Ocean Race

Funds granted for St Vincent's

John Hogan

GOVERNMENT funding for an adult day service at the Daughters of Charity, Lisnagry, has been con-

"I should not have had to raise this matter in the Dail twice, on July 1 and last Thursday for a relatively small amount of Government funding,

CLANCYS