

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 08 DEC 1998, Page 056**

**LIONHEART**

AT last, I'm away. The rush to get the boat ready in time was unbelievable.

But not as unbelievable as the moment I finally drifted away from the jetty at Sandringham Yacht Club on Sunday. Then it hit me - the scope of what was lying ahead.

I've been planning this trip since I was 13, but it was a shock to realise I was finally under way.

I had only two hours' sleep on Saturday night, we were so busy packing supplies and testing equipment. My dad didn't get any sleep at all.

I must admit it was a bit strange to be the focus of so much attention. To have 300 people come down to farewell me was amazing.

The emotion of leaving my family was something else altogether, with mum shedding some tears when it was time to get away.

My departure produced a funny moment which I believe confused some people. As I was getting under way, a friend, Ben Richardson, jumped aboard and sailed from the yacht club with me.

Some people thought I had already broken the rules of sailing solo.

In fact, I didn't start my record attempt until the Port Phillip heads. I was only giving Ben a lift to meet some mates who were on a boat in the bay. It's a pity the weather wasn't a bit better when I started, but I suppose it won't be anything compared with some of the stuff ahead.

I'm on my way around Tasmania, then it's straight east, below New Zealand.

I hope to hit the half-way point at the Azores Islands in the North Atlantic Ocean about April 20.

This is the antipodal point of my journey. That is, the exact opposite point to Melbourne on the globe. If all goes well, I'll be home on my 18th birthday on August 26, 1999.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 22 DEC 1998, Page 056**

**LIONHEART**

Position: 48 11.39s, 153 52.74e. The wind has only just picked up in the past two days.

At my current rate I should round the bottom of NZ in a little over a week. I finished the last of my fresh eggs for breakfast this morning, scrambled with Tabasco sauce. (I had been dreaming about it all night).

It's getting pretty cold down here. I'm on the same latitude as the bottom of NZ.

I have been reading through my Bob Marley music book and learnt No Woman No Cry.  
Unfortunately, my vocal capabilities tend to spoil the tune, even after a whole day's practice.  
Lucky for everyone's benefit I'm on my own.  
It is amazing what a transformation the sun can do.  
On an overcast day with the waves crashing over the boat, the sea looks a dull threatening mass but when the sun manages to squeeze through, the water turns to the most beautiful blue that you can imagine and lifts your spirits dramatically.  
Receiving e-mails each day is what I look forward to the most.  
It's great to hear of the amusing episodes from friends and family.  
Thanks to the use of satellites I have three different ways of communicating and at any time of the day that I wish.  
I have e-mail, a satellite phone and two HF radios.  
I have also put up my Christmas decorations and starting to count the sleeps.  
It is these types of things that keep me amused.  
May Santa bring what everyone wants.  
Jesse  
PS: my leg is doing very well.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 29 DEC 1998, Page 028**

### **LIONHEART**

Position: 46 56s, 165 34e.  
CHRISTMAS was not such a great deal.  
I woke to an albatross that squawked "Merry Christmas", then went below to open my presents.  
Thanks mum for the Tim Tams and Twisties, but what I want to know is how did Santa land on my yacht?  
Three seals did a couple of jumps at the back of the boat and the sunny day was something to be grateful for.  
Last week I had a huge fright when riding out a blow. I was in my bunk dreaming when I heard a loud tapping on the porthole.  
I looked up and, to my astonishment, I saw the bottom of a shroud (wires that hold up the mast) knocking against the cabin top.  
In a panic I got my wet weather gear on and harness attached and ventured out to the front of the boat, while ideas of fixing it were going around in my head.  
It was not a major problem but merely a quick release lever on the baby forestay which had been flicked undone.  
For the first Christmas in my life I think I really understood and appreciated what this time of year was all about.  
I had presents - my usual reason for enjoying Christmas - but this year it wasn't the same. I was on my own.

I would have given all my gifts away to have lunch with relatives and to hear Pop read out of the Bible.  
To chat to my cousins, who I hardly get a chance to speak to all year, and hear about what everyone has been up to. Good company is the most valuable gift . . . enjoy it.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 05 JAN 1999, Page 028**

**LIONHEART**

Position: 46 21s, 176 41e.

ABOUT a week ago I rounded the South West Cape of New Zealand where I had the first view of land in a while. I met with a crayfishing boat seven miles offshore where I threw off three bags of rubbish and some film, but didn't get off the boat. It was quite exciting speaking to the fishermen with their NZ accents, but when it came time for them to leave I felt a bit down.

There wasn't much wind so I went down below and started to make dinner as I made up my mind to focus on the next part of the trip. Conditions remain quite calm and I have seen a few seals playing around behind the boat.

It is amazing how finely tuned your senses get after only a month away from land. I was sitting in the cockpit enjoying the sun the other day when I got a whiff of a strange smell.

I stood up and there floating along about eight metres from the boat was a log of a tree. Luckily we didn't hit it because it would have made some considerable damage, but I was stoked that I could smell it.

On New Year's Eve I was trying to call my mates, but they were out having a good time so I celebrated by making myself pancakes.

I counted down and at exactly midnight I let out a whoo hoo and took a swig of water and a bite of a pancake. I sat there chewing as everything was so quiet except for the groaning of the boat.

I sat and thought about how much had happened in the last year, and it amazed me what things had had been done and how I had changed.

It got me excited to think how much is possible to achieve and what this next year would bring, and so I went to bed dreaming of the future. That is how my new year started.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 12 JAN 1999, Page 030**

**LIONHEART**

Position: 44 28 south, 168 13 west

I've just had time to quickly write this week's entry.  
A low pressure system formed on top of me yesterday giving no warning with a force 9-10 gale.  
I went up on deck to deploy the drouge (a type of anchor) to slow down and head downwind when a wave knocked me down.  
The force managed to wipe the spray dodger (canopy) off its steel frame and into me. I held on for dear life.  
In the tangle of ropes, bucket, dodger frame in the cockpit and my harness, I got the drouge off as quick as possible.  
I was knocked down again. That's it I said, this wasn't fun at all.  
Water was pouring in the cabin and the wind was howling. I decided to try the sea anchor.  
Stupid me threw it out on the leeward side and the boat drifted on to it, catching around the keel. I had no choice but to cut it free. This was harder than it sounds.  
I had to get downstairs over the washboards to get a knife then out again up the front, with the bow ploughing up and down in the swell.  
I had the same overwhelming feeling as though standing on a mountain staring out at other mountains. I felt so insignificant.  
Once the anchor was free I hand-steered for as long as I could but had to retire down below to a soaking mess of food, clothes and charts.  
I went to bed, but I was tense, always knowing when a wave was going to break over Lionheart. Luckily things started to die down.  
When I woke the barometer had risen a little and the wave were breaking less and less.  
The wind is now down to 20 knots but another low is coming. All I can do is wait.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 19 JAN 1999, Page 030**

**LION HEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

Position:

43 17 south,

159 47 west

THE weather has been great . . . if you are having a barbecue in the back yard.

But for a sailor it has been a bit slow.

It has, however, given me a chance to dry everything after last week's storm.

I have probably been doing 80 nautical miles a day compared with the 130 that I would like to average, but I'm thankful it's not rough.

I took the sextant out the other day to get a sun sight for something to do and realised I have forgotten the almanac which lists the positions for the heavenly bodies for every second of the year.

This is necessary to work out a reading. It leaves me totally reliant on the electronic GPS (global positioning system) to navigate.

This is unfortunate because, in the marine environment, electronic equipment can easily fail.

One of the things I am enjoying about the trip is that I am quite self-sufficient.

It's a real buzz when you turn on the CD player and you know that it is using power that has been generated without the burning of fossil fuels but supplied by the three solar panels and the wind generator at the back of the boat.

It is a feeling of completeness which loses something when you know you are reliant on the "outside help" of satellites in the sky.

A few people have been asking what happens to Lionheart when I sleep. Well, one of the most handy pieces of equipment on the boat is a wind vane bolted to the transom.

This piece of equipment steers using the power of the passing water from the back of the boat to correct the tiller when she goes off course according to the wind angle.

The best part is that it doesn't use any power and is quite sturdy and again, I like the fact that I am not putting my trust into temperamental electronic gear.

Just old fashioned simplicity - but it can't go wrong.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 26 JAN 1999, Page 034**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

Position: 44 31 south, 146 10 west

IT has been a pretty good week full of lightish wind with fog and a few sunny days.

But most of all because I know my friends will be going back to school for their final year of hard work while I'm trying to catch fish in the Pacific.

Well it's not all like that. It does have some bad points.

It was only this week that I had my first fresh-water shower since leaving. Actually you probably wouldn't even call it a shower.

The sky started spitting so I stripped off and ventured out into the invigorating chill of the Southern Ocean winds where I sponged up, collected water caught at the back of the seats and squeezed it over me.

To say I was blue all over would be an understatement.

However, it was well worth it.

I find I seem to go through phases.

For a week or two, I will do nothing in my spare time but write different things in my scrapbook while other times I will read a book in two days.

It was last week, in one of my reading phases, that I stopped and thought to myself: "I really need some exercise" and so all of a sudden I was doing step-ups in the companion way.

Then I introduced music and found I started to almost dance up and down the steps.

And so another routine was added to my list.

I had one of my first real breakages this week as well.

The steering line coming from the windvane to the tiller broke one night.

I sensed I was off course and soon found the problem.

It was easily fixed with a knot but what I plan to do is pull the line along a couple of inches each month so that the same area isn't getting worn all the time.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 02 FEB 1999, Page 028**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

Position: 42.33 south, 133.45 west.

THIS week I got caught by another unexpected low but it was only a weak one, luckily.

Still, enough to be uncomfortable though.

The waves were crashing and forcing their way under the companionway slide, mixing with the spilt cooking oil to produce a personal skating rink. There is also a leak above the navigation table which slowly oozes water on to my electronics.

Today has been sunny for a change and I have been able to dry everything and try to seal the leaks.

If it keeps up, though, the electronics could be at risk.

I made an exciting discovery the other day.

After my first shower a couple of weeks ago, I realised that I had forgotten to bring a comb or anything to keep my hair under control.

I had been forced to use an opened-out paper clip to tediously get rid of the knots until this week.

I found by simply taping a couple of forks together side by side I had a comb plus a handle.

I have been receiving a few questions in the e-mails that people have been sending.

Lloyd Franklin, of East Oakleigh, a chef, was interested in how I cook without using fossil fuels and what stores I have with me.

I have an alcohol or methylated spirits stove with a grill that I use mainly to heat things.

My weekly food bags, with everything set out in them, contain things such as pasta meals, freeze-dried gourmet food, cup-a-soups and packets that I can add to hot water to prepare a meal.

I also have the luxury of UHT milk with cereal in the mornings - YUM.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 16 FEB 1999, Page 032**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

Position: 43.02 south, 103.42 west.

I AM extremely pleased with this week's progress. Apart from one day, we have been doing above 6 knots constantly.

With the speed, though, comes overcast days, but I'm getting so used to it that it hardly bothers me now - anything for speed.

The Around Alone Race (previously the BOC) is catching up, and they are so fast they'll probably beat me to the Horn.

Their presence has got me dreaming about doing a Vende Globe some day, which is a solo nonstop race round the world on the most technologically advanced speed machines.

A pure adrenalin rush. I keep reminding myself, though, that I have to finish this dream first.

I've got a couple of questions from Sam and Ben, from Swan Reach (primary, I suspect). They want to know what I do if I get bored and whether I have a back-up motor.

I do have plenty of time on my hands, but I never find myself consciously bored.

My mind is always drifting around and dreaming. I've got lots of books to read, my guitar, cooking, filming and of course keeping Lionheart pointed in the right direction is a never-ending task.

About the motor, I do have one and it is theoretically ready to go in an emergency, but whether it works after all the water that has been through it is another matter.

I find it is safer just to keep far enough away from land so that there is no need for it.

We had one sunny day during the week so I cleaned all the spilled food from two months ago out of the stove and attacked the build-up of mould up the front where there isn't much light or circulation.

I would have forgotten about Valentine's Day if one of my friends hadn't mentioned it in an e-mail. It was just another overcast day for me, but I took the time to write this small poem:

Out all on your own,  
With nothing but your mind,  
To think, reflect and learn,  
And this here's what I find.  
One chance is all you've got,  
My turn I've surely missed,  
Now all that I have,  
Is the memory round my wrist.

**Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 23 FEB 1999, Page 032**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

Position: 49.10 south, 90.41 west.

THE week started with a rescue deep in the Southern Ocean for Isabelle Autissier.

It was a shock to hear she was in trouble but I suspected that it would be Giovanni Soldini who was closest and who would detour to rescue her.

I had been speaking over the radio to Neil Hunter, the only Australian in the race, and he kept me informed. Isabelle was about 1000 nautical miles away from me and I had a bit of a giggle when some media thought I was involved with the rescue.

It would take me about a week to reach her. I wonder how these ideas start?

Isabelle set off her 406 EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon) which sends a distress message to satellites which relayed her position to rescuers.

I have two EPIRBs in the yacht and the liferaft. The raft also has flares, a survival suit, VHF radio, GPS, compass and water maker to ensure the best possible chance of survival.

A few days ago I altered the steering gear and pointed Lionheart's bow towards Cape Horn for the start of my descent. It has become cold and I still have to go further south.

I received a report from my weather adviser telling me there was a BIG low heading my way.

Thankfully he meant BIG as in it covered a large area with winds no more than 45 knots.

However a second low has formed behind it and I got a message today telling me to slow down and head south as much as possible.

I've got the storm jib up and doing 4-5 knots.

I've got some more questions from a few schools. Year 5N at St Mary's Bairnsdale wanted to know my fastest speed clocked so far. I don't know exactly, but roughly 150 nautical miles a day.

As I get closer to the Horn this will increase as there is up to 3 knots of current going with me.

Elle from Leitchville Primary wanted to know if I get sea sick. Thankfully I haven't.

At the beginning my head was a bit stuffy but I believe the adrenaline got me through and since then I've been cured.

Russell also wanted to know if I have seen any icebergs. I haven't yet but I would like to.

Maybe when I get further south I will pick them up on the radar because my friends want me to tow one home, but I can't really see that happening.

**Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 02 MAR 1999, Page 030**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

56.01 south, 74.34 west

I 'M looking at the temperature gauge and it's reading 8.7 degrees celsius. Man, it's cold if you don't rug up!

The sun is going down after a rare appearance and the temperature will probably drop another few degrees, but it's been a good day of cleaning up.

I'm only a few days away from the Horn and the wind has died to 10 knots.

My nerves will have to put up with an extra day's wait until I round the Horn, which will hopefully be before the next low comes through.

Cape Horn has been feared by seamen for ages because of extreme weather conditions.

Lots of trading vessels that had to pass the Horn before the Panama Canal was built simply disappeared, presumably crushed against the unforgiving cliff faces.

There was a disease then which sailors claimed they had caught so they could get transferred to land before the ship had to pass the Horn.

Just on 200 nautical miles, or less than half the distance from Sydney to Melbourne, south of Cape Horn is the Antarctic convergence.

I'm not exactly sure what this is, but it sounds cold and I sure wouldn't like to go down there.

On Friday night I lay my head down for a rest just as it was getting light.

It had been blowing 40 knots and the seas were moderate but I was going the wrong direction so I "hove to" which is a method by which you stop the boat by pointing her into the wind and waves.

Two hours later I was woken by a knock down (when a wave strikes a boat and tips it over).

I had received small ones through the day but this was a full-on lefty in the jaw.

I must have passed the 90 degree point as objects were lodged in places that seemed to defy gravity.

Later that day I spoke to a competitor in the Around Alone race who was 180 nautical miles closer to the Horn than I was. He had 50 knots gusting 70 knots and was getting knocked down by 12-metre waves.

I now know why Cape Horn has such a bad reputation. I'm trying to get out of here as fast as I can.

My spirits were high today and the sun gave me a chance to clean things while I sang along to Pearl Jam's song I'm Still Alive.

Travis and Darren of Upwey wanted to know what type of strenuous activities I get up to.

It can be hard work changing sails and grinding winches and getting water from the tap is an effort.

I have to pump and pump until enough pressure has built to suck the water from the tanks, which can work me up into quite a sweat.

Daniel and Steve from Horsham Lutheran Primary School also wanted to know what music I listen to the most and what was the best meal I have had so far.

My favorite meal is cheddar cheese on Vita Weats with an iced coffee. I have this only once a month so I have saved one for the day I round the Horn.

Music ranges from Enya to Pearl Jam and Queen to Ben Harper, but the one I've been listening to most lately is Dire Straits.

I am trying to work every bit of speed out of the boat that is possible and can't wait for the moment I see that rock in the sea they call the Horn.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 09 MAR 1999, Page 030**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

51.37 south, 54.51 west.

THE day before rounding Cape Horn was one of the most memorable days of my life.

I went outside as the sun was starting to rise and, to my delight, I was being escorted by dolphins.

I watched them race each other as the forgotten warmth of sunlight made me feel human again.

Then, when I turned around to look behind me, I was blown away by the sight of a rainbow.

It was unbelievable, the perfect lead-up to rounding the Horn - like something out of a movie.

I sat and took it all in with an iced coffee in hand, while the chill of the morning air seemed to magnify the sights around me. Thank you, God. The wind slowly faded out during the day and I was up all of the next night, partly because I was keeping the boat going but mainly because I couldn't sleep.

Then, as the sun rose to another clear sky on the second day, I caught a glimpse of Cape Horn's unmistakable shape.

I never thought a rock could look so beautiful.

It took me all day in the varying winds until I finally rounded the Cape in mid-afternoon.

I was a bit sad for some reason.

Perhaps because it signified the end of something.

I felt I would have preferred to be miles away from civilisation, out where I felt comfortable, rather than this new frontier where the temptation of society meant I had to leave it once again.

After a huge sleep I was physically and emotionally looking forward to the next part of the trip. One that would see calmer waters and warmer temperatures. I was back to my old enthusiasm.

Apart from an annoying low that crossed me, there has been no swell all week.

It makes the sailing so much more enjoyable. I got on with jobs that needed doing, especially tightening the windvane which had worked up about 2cm of movement.

There are heaps more birds around and two consecutive nights I was woken by the radar which picked up a ship in my vicinity. One of them ended up passing only a mile to starboard. I can't wait for a couple of weeks when I'll be in shorts and T-shirt weather.

I received a question from Nicole at Bethany Catholic Primary School who wanted to know how my family felt about my decision to do the trip. I must say that I am fortunate to have my family totally behind what I'm doing.

My mum even mortgaged the house for me to buy the yacht. Everyone worked overtime to make sure I was ready in only three months, starting from scratch.

That included finding a boat, installing all the gear, organising food and, most importantly, finding a sponsor.

It was great to see everyone working for the same goal and it brought us together with one view in mind.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 16 MAR 1999, Page 032**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

44.11 south, 50.10 west.

THANKS to everyone who wished me well and congratulated me on making it around Cape Horn.

I thought the rest was going to be easy but little did I know that I was going to encounter more lows and little wind in between them.

I'd much prefer the Southern Ocean where the wind is much more predictable.

I had another knockdown and this time once we were upright again, I discovered half of the objects from the other side of the cabin lodged under my mattress.

The frame supporting the solar panels has now got a kink in it, but nothing that I would call a problem.

One of the frustrating things when we had no wind was that there was no sun either. I was just bobbing around in the middle of a grey overcast ocean with not much to do.

I had a treat yesterday when I heard the blowing of some whales. They were passing about 100 metres or so to starboard. I got a winch handle and kept tapping on the winch to attract them over.

A few diverted from their course and one swam right under my rudder. I think they might have been pilot whales, but I'm not sure.

The water color has turned to a dark green and sometimes looks black.

The South Atlantic is certainly different to the Southern Ocean.

The Herald Sun has been trying since I rounded the Cape to get a photo of me somehow.

There have been a few leads but our best chance lay with the Royal Air Force on the Falkland Islands. They were going to fly out and take the photos, but by time things got organised I was too far away.

The commander noted that it is ironic that a small yacht doing 6 knots has run away from a military aircraft.

Today the sun has appeared and later on I'm going to put the fishing line out to try my luck - I wouldn't mind a bit of fish at the moment.

The weather is getting warmer as well. Yesterday I had to take my jacket and overalls off as the cabin reached 20 degrees. Wooohooo!

Holly White at Seymour East Primary School asked me who I contact to find out what the weather is going to be.

Roger Badham does professional yacht weather reports and did Kay Cottee's weather as well as for successful Whitbread racing yachts. I get an e-mail from him every day or so with a forecast for a few days ahead. Grade 5/6 at Ararat PS also wanted to know if I take the sails down when I go to sleep.

No I don't. I use the windvane to steer the boat when I sleep and set the alarm for every hour to check that the wind hasn't changed and that we are still on course.

I haven't been able to make contact for nearly a week with a buddy of mine called Peter who is another solo guy heading home to England.

I think the area I am in is bad for radio signals because I haven't been able to make any radio calls either.

I've got the iridium satellite phone which I can use and is a great back-up for when I'm feeling down and want to hear mum's voice.

Isn't it amazing what satellites can do.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 23 MAR 1999, Page 032**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

37.25 south, 37.15 west.

EVEN with my binoculars and a strict watch system I haven't been able to spot any Brazilian women sunbaking on the beaches. The closest I've come to anything from Brazil was a man-of-war jelly fish.

The headwinds I encountered swung around a few days ago and it seems I've passed out of the roaring 40s and the conditions are dying down.

I could do with a bit of sunshine but I shouldn't complain.

The fishing line continues to trail behind and there are some birds hanging around, keeping an eye on the lure.

I got a question from Glenn, at Haileybury College, who wanted to know how I learnt to sail.

My brother and Dad wanted to do a sailing trip on a small catamaran from Cairns to Cape York in 1995 and so, before we left, we did a sailing course at Port Melbourne Yacht Club.

Then we bought our catamaran. It was good learning on a small craft because I believe you learn the principles easier.

Kylie Browne at St Leonard's Primary wanted to know why I am heading so far up into the Atlantic and why not cut straight across to South Africa. I have to go around the Azores Islands in the North Atlantic which is called my antipodal point.

This means it is the exact opposite side of the Earth to Melbourne.

Aleisha at Myrtleford PS asked how I have a bath in one cup of water. I'm sorry to disappoint a few people but I don't actually get into the cup (I tried at first, but my legs hung out too much!)

I have a freshwater wash when it rains sufficiently so I can mop up enough water to squeeze over my head.

The easier way of life means I have to start getting into some school work, though.

The boat also needs a clean. All the mould has dried and turned to powder and my food bags need to be dried out.

The jobs make me feel good as they keep me busy and give a sense of achievement. After a hard day's work I can lay my head down and enjoy the feeling of exhaustion.

I am finding that time is passing quickly. I am only really conscious of getting through each day and enjoying it - the finish line seems like something in my imagination, a lifetime away.

But it was pointed out to me that in only another six weeks I'll see my family at the Azores Islands.

Already the halfway point is creeping up on me.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 30 MAR 1999, Page 032**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

26.27 south, 32.44 west.

I 'M AT 26 deg. south (about 1200km off the coast of Brazil) and it is already boiling. All of my clothes are folded away and I have to wipe myself down with a wet facewisher and stand in the breeze to cool off. I know I've been hanging out to add some marine life to the menu, but my encounter this week was a bit more than I bargained for.

I was lying in my bunk listening to the BBC World Service when all of a sudden there was a loud thud which threw the tiller pilot off its attachment.

I quickly jumped up and re-attached the steering when I looked behind and saw what had caused the thud.

I had collided with a large whale which was swimming after me about 10 metres away.

The poor thing must have gotten quite a shock when sunbaking at the surface, but to tell the truth I wasn't really concerned about him.

Reports of yachts that had sunk when whales continually barged at them for no apparent reason mixed with my thoughts that at least this whale had an excuse for being mad.

I was relieved when he let me continue. He went back to his partner and I to my bunk, thankful that there was no damage, considering I was travelling at top speed.

Grade 5-6 at Foster Primary School asked me what date I expect to get back and how my family is coping with all this.

My family are coping well (as long as I don't have any whale stories or knockdowns to report).

It probably would have been harder for them at the start, but now that I've covered a fair distance, they know there is not a great deal to worry about.

I plan to get home at the end of August on my 18th birthday and hopefully before the snow season finishes.

Prep R from Warrigal Primary School was also wondering what type of birds I see.

I don't know what most of them are called, but there is a big variety. The albatrosses I saw at the Horn were the biggest I have seen so far, and it looked as if their wingspan was as wide as the boat (more than three metres).

At other times I have been followed by flocks of about 500 smaller birds for two days.

They were landing behind the boat and eating things out of the water that must have come from the weed under the boat.

I have also got a pet on board. His name is Barny.

In fact, it is a family of goosenecked barnacles growing at the bottom of the windvane paddle.

They've been with me for over a month and I'm encouraging them to grow so one day I can celebrate with barnacles kilpatrick.

The sun is quite low and the temperature outside is becoming more pleasant.

I'm just about to make a chocolate milk (have gone off coffee because it was giving me a headache) and sit out in the cockpit with a setting sun while I do some reading.

Before I go I would like to wish my grandma a happy birthday for yesterday when she turned 73. Congratulations Gran.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 06 APR 1999, Page 028**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

IF it wasn't for the wind which picked up last night, I may very well have gone crazy out here.

I had three days of the most pathetic breeze which turned the sea to an oily desert.

The sun continued to beat down, following me around the boat as I tried to hide in the shade. It was a different way to experience the ocean all right.

I noticed how many small man-of-war jellyfish were floating around with their air sacks on the surface of the water. I also saw some more pilot whales and had a visit by a curious turtle, but the most excitement came when I pulled in my first fish, on Good Friday, of all days.

I was drifting so slow that the lure was as deep as it was far behind me and I didn't even notice the baby dorado that was hooked.

Though these have been frustrating days, I had to marvel at the tempting water which has returned to its beautiful, refreshing deep blue.

Fortunately the wind is continuing to pick up, which cools things down.

The boat has dried out, but now I face another problem. Any water that lands on deck evaporates quickly, leaving salt everywhere.

It is more concentrated now than ever before and I have to be extremely careful with electronic gear. Apart from that, it is also sticky and attracts moisture in the early hours of the morning.

I was totally sucked in on April Fool's Day when my mates Paul and Chatri, independent of each other and confidentially, told me that another mate was planning to propose to his girlfriend.

There was no reason for me to disbelieve them, especially since they both said the same thing.

I don't even know the current date let alone when the first of April was going to pop up. It just shows how removed I am from the conventional way of life.

This week I got a question from Aimee at Research Primary School. She wanted to know if the voyage has been easier than I thought it would be. In a way I would have to say it has. Before I left I really didn't know what to expect. I had read all the books about people who had done similar voyages and they scared the living daylights out of me.

I just thought to myself: "Well they've done it so there's no reason why I can't."

I knew that somehow I would adjust to the conditions that I was bound to experience and learn heaps as I went.

I don't want to sound like I took off with no idea at all, quite the contrary, but I set out slow, cautious and eager to learn how Lionheart handled.

I knew I had an excellent boat, thanks to Mistral, which ensured my safety in the worst case scenario beyond all doubts. It was the unknown that made me anxious. I didn't know what I would encounter.

In fact the hardest part is having the courage to attempt it in the first place, which I'm beginning to see is the case with a lot of things in life.

Jacob from Mildura South Primary School asked what was the first thing I wanted to do when I get home.

Each time it changes. Sometimes I think I want to dig into a whole tub of ice cream, while other times a souvlaki from St Kilda occupies my fantasies.

I will probably be content with a warm shower and clean clothes and to sit on a couch that is dry. To sit down with Lionheart safely moored will be a great relief.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 13 APR 1999, Page 032**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

MY days are starting to become quite monotonous as they blend into each other.

It seems I've been in this hot weather for so long without many incidents that my memory has no time frame or order.

I feel very lethargic and haven't written in my journal for ages simply because there is nothing new to write. I think that my lack of speaking to people has played a part in this.

Ever since the bottom of South America I haven't been able to get through to any operators to place a call.

Everything seems to have slowed down in this hot environment - not only Lionheart's speed because of the fickle winds, but every action I make myself.

The dishes take twice as long to do and I make my way around the boat as if in slow motion. If I'm starkers I have to be careful not to get anything caught in the rigging.

I'm not sleeping the best because my head seems to be buzzing with unconscious thought and I find that my dreams are about the books I read and often I wake to myself sort of reciting them or making up my own endings.

My world is closing in as I continue living the same day over and over. There are no longer any birds around and I haven't seen a ship since Cape Horn.

I'm not sure whether these feelings are due to the long voyage, or if it is the sweltering heat with the never-ending sea and sky of the tropics that is to blame.

Either way I'm looking forward to some milder weather and the familiar faces of family at half way.

I am currently typing, but a minute ago I noticed the fishing line was tight.

I went up and pulled it in to find only half a tuna. It is a beautiful color, but those blasted sharks had to steal half of it.

Ah well, better half than none.

I was asked by Tammie and Margaret how big my 18th birthday celebration will be when I get home.

Well, I don't how big it will be, but I'm sure I will never forget it.

I'm disappointed I missed Ben Harper playing at Offshore so I might try and e-mail him somehow and get him around to play - that would be the best celebration I could imagine!

The Year 12 girls at Strathcona were also wondering what kind of books I've been reading.

I've got heaps of books to chose from which Dymocks gave me, from novels about terrorism in the Middle East to inspirational stuff about a paraplegic's struggle to walk again.

Most of all though I like reading books by Thor Heyerdahl and Tim Severin, two great adventurers, as well as the odd psychological-minded book and, of course, the Bible.

Well I'm off now for a bit of fresh tuna. A hot pan with a little oil and a few drops of Tabasco. Mmmmm!

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 20 APR 1999, Page 032**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

DAMN those milk cartons. I spent an unpleasant afternoon scrubbing a cupboard that was floating in curdled milk.

Some had started bulging when water got through the seams and finally burst.

Unfortunately this must have happened a few days ago and if only I noticed, I wouldn't have needed the peg.

To make matters worse my nose is sunburnt and as a result is even more tender.

I've been able to get on to my old solo friend, Peter, who has flown past me since we were last in contact at the Falklands and is now above the Azores.

He has been sailing non-stop since New Zealand and is only 10 days away from finishing in the UK.

This of course means that I've only a few days left to chat with him.

Two days ago I crossed the equator into the northern hemisphere, but my plan to observe the Coriolis force by seeing if a cup of water would drain the opposite way when I crossed the equator will have to wait.

It was during the middle of the night and I didn't feel like getting up to fetch a bucket of water.

I will make sure I don't miss it when I cross back into the southern hemisphere after rounding half way.

I've been having a pretty good run through the Doldrums compared with the experience of others, however it has still been extremely frustrating just bobbing around as the wind always dies.

I got a question from Brad, at Mirboo North Secondary, and he wanted to know what will happen to Lionheart when the voyage is over.

Well, she is such a fantastic boat and the only one I would want to have of her size. However, I'm already planning the next trip which will require a larger vessel and so I'll have to part with her a little time after I return.

Last Sunday the Melbourne to Osaka race left from Portsea and with them went my mate Vinny on his yacht Vision Quest.

He is sailing with one other person, but what is amazing is that Vinny is confined to a wheelchair and his crewmate Graham is missing a leg.

If you think that is determination then wait until you hear about Vinny's ultimate goal which he has been working at for more than eight years - a solo non-stop circumnavigation like myself.

His progress with sponsors is coming along and I can't wait for the day he returns and his book comes out so I can learn a few tricks about perseverance.

I am experiencing a rather annoying occurrence with my guitar. The second string keeps breaking in exactly the same position after only a couple of days. I've tried oiling them to keep the salt off but nothing seems to work.

I've got six or seven spare sets left - this could be a real disaster if things keep going the way they are. I'm going to have to monitor the situation closely. I'll keep you posted.

The shipping is certainly picking up and I've seen ships at night for the past five days.

This is because I am on a major shipping lane from the US to Brazil. Most of them I've called on the VHF haven't spoken English so I don't usually try calling them any more. Hopefully this week I'll be much faster as I get into the NE trade winds.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 27 APR 1999, Page 034**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

I AM DEFINITELY out of the Doldrums and into the North-east Trade Winds. I know this because if I run my finger along the windward side of the rigging, I'm left with a deep-red patch of fine grit which has been carried by the trades from the Sahara.

Along with the sand is an increase of flying fish which are landing on the boat. If I don't hear the slight thud and flicking when one gets stranded during mid-flight then I can smell the scales of fresh fish as it tries desperately to get back to its old environment.

The other night I could smell one of our visitors in the cockpit area, but several minutes with a torch failed to find the hitchhiker.

It wasn't until the morning when another one landed in the cockpit that I saw it slip down the gap beside the life raft, and in my rescue attempt I discovered the mystery one from the previous night. Another guitar string broke, the same one, and so I'm getting into the practice of washing my hands of any salt before I open the case.

I've found that time passes more quickly if I'm kept occupied by an activity, which in turn makes me enjoy everything much more.

However, I feel so lethargic and sedated that it's so hard to get motivated into the exact thing which will bring me out of this state.

It also doesn't help when you know that home is in the opposite direction to where you are going.

Once I'm around the Azores and on my way home via the shortest route possible, I hope it will be better.

I'm out of the main shipping lanes now and haven't seen any other vessel for more than a week.

Nor have I seen any birdlife - just flying fish and the odd man-of-war jellyfish.

I'm hanging out to see the Pole star now that I'm in the Northern Hemisphere. This star is quite important to a celestial navigator because it is almost right over the Pole, which means you can get your exact latitude by observing its angle above the horizon.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 04 MAY 1999, Page 032**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

MY great run has continued all this week and I've been averaging 140 nautical miles a day.

But lack of wind may hamper my goal of making the halfway point of my trip by the end of the week.

My weather adviser, Roger, has had to take me in a round-a-bout way to get to the Azores because of a high pressure system which sits nearly on top of them.

I was hoping to see my family at the Azores Islands in a little over a week, but because of the high pressure system it could be another two weeks.

This system hardly moves . . . until I'm in the vicinity. After weeks of being stationary, the high has decided to ridge out in front of my path and hamper the momentum which was building up.

Today has been the first day of light winds and I hate it. I don't mind so much slowing down but I despise the sound of the sails back winding and sending a shudder through the rig.

It is like sandpaper on my nerves. I know that each time I hear the crack and the stays vibrate that it is more stress on the rig and more chance of the whole mast coming down in a time of chaos.

I have finally spotted the Pole Star. I double checked that it really was the one by measuring its angle to the horizon and comparing it with our latitude according to the global positioning system.

They came up close enough, so I was satisfied.

I had a shock a couple of nights ago when I spotted the first ship since before the equator.

I got up after an hour's sleep and stepped up the companion way steps when I saw, to my horror, a huge tanker with all its lights blazing only a couple of hundred metres behind my boat.

It was heading at right angles to my course and I hate to think what would have happened if it hadn't been a full moon to light up my sails because I have a feeling he dodged me.

I was too scared to turn on the radio in case he was there abusing me for not keeping a better watch. I swore from then on that the radar would be keeping watch full-time while I was in any part of this busy Atlantic.

I received a question from Amy Ginsburg from Mount Scopus Primary School.

Amy was wondering what I sleep on and if it is a proper bed.

I sleep on a seat which runs along the starboard side of Lionheart.

It's about a metre wide and I have a sheet which comes from under the cushion and ties to the roof to hold me in so that when Lionheart rolls, I don't end up on the floor.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 22 JUN 1999, Page 034**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

I HAVE had my first real piece of equipment failure after about 15,000 nautical miles. It started when I noticed a grating sound in the furler, which rolls the forward genoa around itself and allows quick and easy deployment of the sail.

I spoke to dad and we assumed it was dried salt. However, the next day the furler had visibly come apart and I could see and feel where the bearing seal had separated.

Dad looked at some of the models and we spoke to the manufacturer about what could be done.

There were two options - pick up a replacement part in Cape Town and forgo the unassisted aspect of the record or take the furler off and hoist the sail in the conventional method.

I decided to remove the furler.

It took a whole day by the time I removed hanks (sail clips) from the spare sails and altered the genoa to slide on the forestay.

To take the furler off I had to undo the forestay (wire holding up the mast) and take the sections of aluminium tubing apart.

Even though the wind was light, there was enough sway up the top of the mast to send the forestay with all its weight wriggling like a snake.

I felt like a fireman trying to control a high-powered hose while undoing impossibly small screws at the same time.

I cried in frustration and wondered how the job was ever going to get done.

There was nothing else to do but cry or persevere and it took too much effort to cry. Eventually I worked out how it was put together and got the whole thing off.

I tell you what though, it was with great satisfaction that I hoisted the altered genoa and Lionheart slowly picked up speed again. I slept like a baby.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 29 JUN 1999, Page 034**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

WELL, it's another good friend's birthday. Happy birthday, Andrew. Next birthday will be mine - another sign that I'm getting closer to home. It was on a quiet night this week that I got out of bed to see if the wind had picked up.

I stuck my head out of the companionway and surveyed the horizon for any shipping.

As I faced towards the bow of the boat I met my hitch-hiking friend for the first time.

Only centimetres away from my face was a bird perched on the companionway slide and he wasn't the least bit scared of my big ugly face gawking at him.

I couldn't help but test how tame he was, so I tapped softly under where he was roosting.

He didn't care one bit and so it wasn't until I reached out and touched his wing that he leaped a couple of feet away, only to resume the same, perched sleeping position.

I went back to bed and it was nice knowing I had some company - even if he wasn't much for a conversation.

I have received a question from Ben Curtis at Ballam Park Primary School. He wanted to know if I have found any messages in a bottle.

No, I haven't, but I've been thinking of sending one myself.

Firstly, I have to wait until the barbecue sauce is finished, though.

Chris, from Eastbourne Primary School, asked what the temperature was at the equator.

During the day it hovered between 20-28 deg. and at night it dropped only one or two degrees.

I had to use a fan above my bunk or else I couldn't get to sleep.

Thanks to everyone who sends me questions but I have been getting 200-300 a week and obviously I can't answer them all.

I try to answer the questions that haven't been asked before.

I was shocked and saddened to hear of the death of the mum of one of my good mates.

I can't even start to comprehend what it must be like, but I'd like to tell Dan and his family that I am praying for them.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 06 JUL 1999, Page 028**

### **LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

ANOTHER week goes by and I'm closer to the finish line.

I'm still not that far off the coast of Brazil. This is because the south-east winds have kept me on a hard tack for more than two weeks.

I have been averaging only 80-100 nautical miles a day.

My weather adviser, Roger, says the wind should be going around to the north-east soon and then a front will come through and take me further south and into the Westerlies of the Southern Ocean.

The past two days I've had 25 knot winds and it's been a bit wet outside so I've spent my time in my bunk eating, reading and listening to music.

I haven't seen any shipping since the northern hemisphere, but I keep the radar switched on just in case.

Usually I automatically wake up when Lionheart needs my attention.

I can be asleep and notice a change in the way she handles or the sounds generating from all over the place bring me back to consciousness and I get up and attend to it.

It is quite an advantage because it allows me to rest when things are under control while being on standby for adjustments.

Emma Stephans at Melton South Primary School has e-mailed me to ask if I think I would do a trip like this again. Probably not, but who knows.

The reason I say no is because I would have already achieved it and there are other challenges and places I want to see.

However, I would recommend the voyage to anyone. I have no regrets for undertaking it in the first place.

I was also asked by Susie and Natalie from Mt Gambier North R-7 School what it is like being on a boat by myself.

Well, I suppose it is like living in your bedroom.

There is not a great deal of room to move around and I never make my bed!

I often just sleep-in in the mornings until I can't any longer and then I munch on something for breakfast (if I haven't eaten it the night before) and take up reading a book of some sort.

This is punctuated by checking the horizon for shipping and making alterations to the sails and boat course.

I'd say there's about two square metres that I basically live in.

The remaining small amount of surface space of Lionheart gets visited only every now and then.

It's a bit tight and repetitive but I have my whole mind that I can explore and so I often just sit or lie down and think about anything and everything.

I love my bunk. It is such a nice feeling to get horizontal.

You can really feel what the boat is doing as it rocks you in between dreams and reality and it is always cosy no matter what the conditions outside are like.

I'm so used to my environment moving all the time that I wonder if I won't go mad trying to sleep on a still bed in silence when I get home. Who knows - when the time comes I might just keep sailing . . . forever!

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 13 JUL 1999, Page 030**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

WHOEVER said solo sailing wasn't dangerous? It has nothing to do with the sailing . . . just watch out for those nasty Saladas.

I was munching on one of these dry biscuits when a sharp piece broke off and took a chunk out of my gum. OUCH.

My progress this past week has been dismal. It has been either strong head winds or no wind at all.

I was surprised several days ago to find an island on the horizon. Talk about a shock. I knew Trindade Island was out there somewhere, but for the past three days I had been trying to steer clear of it.

Wind conditions changed, however, and took me into its immediate area.

I thought I would be far enough away not to spot it, but obviously not.

The quirky part is that out of all the sea area in the Atlantic and the effort to steer clear, I came across this rock which is only 5km long. Ha.

A few days ago while becalmed I came across a floating bottle - the perfect type to hold a letter.

It took me 30 minutes to turn the boat around by pumping the rudder and coaxing the sails to fill until I made two passes of it.

Unfortunately I could not manoeuvre the boat to get it. Oh well.

A few people have been wondering why I am so close to Brazil and why I didn't head straight for South Africa.

There is a high-pressure system in the South Atlantic and if I headed where I needed to go I would be left in the centre of the high with no wind.

I have been forced to head around the side of it into the south-east winds.

The plan is that when I get to the mid-30s latitude, the wind changes and slowly becomes the more westerly flow of the Southern Ocean.

On days when it is wet outside and the boat is bucking around, making it hard to type, I spend most of my time in my bunk reading or snoozing.

As it gets dark I can pick up the BBC on the radio, so I stay up late listening.

In fact, I am addicted to the World Service and wouldn't be surprised if I get square ears.

This is the least of my worries, though . . . I'm terrified at the possibility I might be badly influenced and return in disgrace . . .

with a pommy accent.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 20 JUL 1999, Page 028**

### **LIONHEART: THE JESSE MARTIN ADVENTURE**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

THE wind is turning westerly and I'm moving at a respectable speed towards South Africa.

My weather adviser, Roger, tells me I should drop to about 36 degrees south, so I'll slowly angle my way down but keep heading mainly east. Without being too exact, if I average 100 nautical miles a day I'll be home at the end of September. If I average 120nm, as I hope to, then I'll be back towards the beginning of September.

I was asked by Bryan Stamp at Camberwell Grammar about the electrical requirements for everything on board.

I have a 12-volt electric system. A digital read-out tells me the charge within the batteries. When they are full it reads 00Ah (amp hour). I can let it drop back to -240Ah before I have to stop using everything.

This would take about three days if I were generating no power at all and using a liberal amount of energy.

The instruments drain electricity and their consumption is rated in amp hours, which means how many amps they draw in an hour.

If, for example, the batteries are full, then I will run whatever I need for the day. In 24 hours time I can expect the batteries to be around -60Ah to -80Ah.

But don't forget I am generating power nearly all the time. Another digital read-out tells me how many amps I am receiving from either the solar panels or the wind generator.

Two of my three solar panels no longer work because of the knockdowns, but the wind generator is enough when there is a steady wind blowing.

Bridgett and Ashley at Leopold PS, near Geelong, ask what Lionheart is made of.

The outside fittings are made of stainless steel, which doesn't rust easily, and the interior is made of teak, timber which comes from Indonesia.

The trees are cut down, then lie in the swamps for 40 years to mature before they are milled.

It is a very good timber for boats because its natural oils aren't affected by salt water.

Lionheart's hull was constructed about 20 years ago in Perth from fibreglass out of a mould. These are actually thin fibres of glass arranged into mats which are set together with a hard resin into the shape of the design.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 03 AUG 1999, Page 028**

### **LIONHEART**

By **JESSE MARTIN**

SEVERAL days after last week's gale, it was again blowing 30 knots but the seas weren't too bad.

As night fell it started dropping back to 20 knots and I was pleased at the situation, but soon after getting into my bunk the boat was knocked down (rolled 90 degrees onto its side).

A few heavy cases went flying and water spurted over the chart and galley.

However, it wasn't until I was replacing the washboards protecting the companionway after I had stepped outside that a second wave broke into Lionheart, sending water pouring down below and totally drenching me. I wasn't wearing full wet-weather gear either so I was soaked to the bone and am still puzzled because the sea conditions weren't that bad.

All the rope clutches on the starboard side came undone from the water pressure, presumably as we surfed on our side and the plywood wind vane snapped right off.

I came to the conclusion that it must have been a couple of rogue waves. Damn those rogue waves.

The next day the cabin looked like it belonged to a washerwoman, and it did because I had clothes hanging up all over the place with the stove turned up full.

I have been moving quite well over the past week, averaging about 110 miles a day. My Global Positioning System and wind instruments stopped working but I think it is a problem at the switchboard which I will try and repair when things calm down.

I have resorted to using my spare hand-held GPS and worked out that some time today I should hit the point where I have 6572 nautical miles to go. In other words, I will have completed three quarters of my journey. The good news is that it should only take one fifth of the total time to complete now that I've got the westerly airflow behind me.

If I average 110 nautical miles per day then I should be back on October 6, exactly the same age as David Dicks when he returned home - 18 years and 41 days.

God willing, I'll also have done the trip unassisted.

Even though, with 10 miles more or less per day, it could be a week before or after this date.

But I'm out on the ocean where you could say that time doesn't exist. All I can do is take advantage of every breath of wind and tackle each day as it comes.

The past few days have been excessively cold but should go back to normal soon.

All of last night it rained with baby hailstones and, combined with the wind-chill factor, only allows about five minutes outside in bare hands and even then they need to be thawed out over the methylated spirit flame.

I am grateful though for my small luxuries. A warm and dry (if not salty) bunk, enough food and water and my old friend, the BBC, to keep me company. Goodnight.

## Herald Sun

Edition 2TUE 10 AUG 1999, Page 028

LIONHEART

By JESSE MARTIN

I AM moving well, doing 120-130 nautical miles a day. At this rate I should pass the Cape of Good Hope about Thursday, but the forecast shows there might be nasty weather around then so I have been advised to stick to 40 degrees south.

That is low enough from the shallow Agulhas that kicks up the waves and high enough to minimise strong winds.

Earlier this week some of my electrics stopped working. When I tried to put on a Bob Dylan CD and it wouldn't start, I decided enough was enough and got into repairing the loose connections.

I pulled out the switchboard and re-connected about eight or nine wires that looked as if they were on the way out, as well as the ones that had ceased to work.

I was glad when finally the speakers kicked into life "..owing in the wind". Several days later, I was sticking my head out of the cabin when I heard a bird squawking.

I turned toward the bow and there was a big albatross struggling to free itself from the safety lines.

Panicked, he tumbled into the water and swam away, taking flight when he built up enough momentum.

He must have tried landing on the boat and slipped. It was a side of an albatross I had never seen before. Usually they are so graceful as they soar up and over the waves with their huge wingspan clipping the surface of the water. They definitely rule the air out here.

I was almost as impressed yesterday, when counting a new box of matches, to find there were exactly 50, just as it says on the packet. Amazing! I feel sorry for the poor bloke whose job it is to count them, though.

Jessica, Lisa, Courtney and Steven from Taylors Lakes Primary School asked if I ever face a situation that I don't think I can fix.

There have been times when I've thought: "I wonder how this situation is going to turn out." Especially when I removed the furler from the forestay while in the tropics.

It got stuck and there were all these problems, but there wasn't much I could do about it except keep going.

If I were at home with other people around, then I may very well have just given up, claiming it was impossible. But out here you can't afford to do that.

However much you don't like a situation, you have to take it by the horns. It is probably one of the more important things I've learnt from the trip. Last night the wind was blowing 15-20 knots and things were going well, until all of a sudden a horrible grinding noise started.

I flicked on the deck light and rushed outside. The noise was coming from the wind generator, so I rushed down below again and switched on the electric brake to stop it from rotating.

The noise slowed down as the spinning stopped, but it was too dark to see what the problem was and none of my torches was working. I had to wait until daylight to see what I was facing.

Thankfully it was only a couple of broken blades, possibly from an ugly collision with a bird, that could be replaced. I was concerned at the time because I rely on the huge amount of power it generates to operate all my electrics.

In the higher latitudes I could live without the solar panels, but not the wind generator. Best of all it is non-polluting.

In the US, clean wind energy is cheaper than coal. What fantastic news! Non-polluting cars that run on hydrogen are due for release in 2006.

Come on politicians, this is the way of the future. The technology is there. What are we waiting for?

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 17 AUG 1999, Page 030**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

WELL, this is the last major milestone until home - South Africa and the Cape of Good Hope. It is also a bit of a danger zone in that the pressure systems get squeezed under the land mass and combined with the Agulhas current, which is reported at running at two to five knots, can build the seas into quite a dangerous state.

It is very exciting because I have just now moved on to a new chart that has the coast of Western Australia on it. Finally I can see home (in a way).

Winds got up to 55 knots during the night and had five knockdowns.

Three of them were five minutes after each other (rogues I think) and were very hard, shuddering the boat.

One of them I was standing up and swung staying vertical as it went over.

I saw the nav table open up which means we went past just horizontal.

My guess would be about 120 degrees over. Lost a drogue when the rope broke, one solar panel ripped off, pulpit (forward rail around bow) totally bent to starboard and the lifelines all slack. The stove won't start meaning I can't dry anything, and the sleeping bag was drenched and all of the bedding.

I was pretty scared at the time and am annoyed now because there is another front (not meant to be as bad) coming tomorrow. At least it is not cold.

I've been told that some people have been thinking if I don't get back by my birthday in two weeks, I'll miss the record. Basically the situation is that in seven weeks on October 6, I'll be 18 years and 41 days old - the same age as David Dicks when he returned home.

Who knows what's going to happen and how long I'll take. However, I do plan to complete the trip unassisted.

I've decided that I'm not going to be pressured into going faster than I feel comfortable with.

In my opinion the record isn't all that important.

When the day comes and the trip is over, I'll be taking away something very personal and 10 times more valuable than a record. That's what I'll be content with.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 24 AUG 1999, Page 032**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

AT the start of last week I encountered the worst weather to date. For four days I had front after front pass over with the wind not dropping below 25 knots except on one occasion for a few brief hours.

With the wind blowing straight from South Africa, the temperature was quite pleasant, and on the first night I stood outside willing a few clouds with bolt lighting to keep their distance. I couldn't help thinking of the song by Enya called Storms in Africa.

It was during the third day that the wind started to increase. Instead of 25-40 knots, it was 40-50 knots and with no sails up, Lionheart kept getting thrown around. I was having to hand-steer and it was getting dark. It would be dangerous to stay outside in the dark without any warning of large waves, but the wind vane couldn't handle the steering alone. Then the line towing the drogue broke and made the decision for me. I stopped Lionheart by turning her into the wind and lay a hull carrying no sail.

It was a bit wet down below, so I undressed and climbed into my bunk to try and get some sleep. I was woken by what seemed like a bucket of water aimed directly at me.

I flicked the light as Lionheart came up from a knockdown. I searched for a broken porthole which I assumed was the reason for so much water but they were all intact. I was dumbfounded. I flicked the switch on the electric bilge pump, then the second wave hit.

This time I saw where the water was coming from. It was spurting in through the small crack from the companionway slide. The stove was upside down on the ground leaking methylated spirits into a stew of pencils, books, pots and pans and food on the floor.

I was worried for the mast. Two knockdowns in five minutes, what else was to come? I threw everything into the front of the boat where it would do least damage if we went over again and took a look at the wind instrument - 50-55 knots!

There was not much I could do except wait for it to blow over. I got out of my soaking thermals and cringed as I pulled a soaking sleeping bag over my goosebumped skin. And so continued the worst night of my life.

By morning Lionheart had been knocked down five times and the wind had only let up a little. The knockdowns had bent the 2.5cm diameter

steel rails of the solar panel frame even more and the starboard panel had been torn completely off.

Most annoying of all was the stove, which wouldn't work. It took me another day before it was up and running so I could start the long process of drying. Since then I've slowly been getting away from the land mass which is to blame for tampering with the pressure systems. Hopefully, the Indian Ocean will be a bit kinder.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 31 AUG 1999, Page 030**

**LIONHEART.**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

FIFTEEN knots of wind, moving along at four knots with the sun glistening off the water. What could be better you ask? Well, how about if I was going in the right direction!

For the past four days I've had easterly winds, making progress very slow as I can only point 30 or 150 degrees.

To add insult to injury, I finished my last bag of food this week and have been living off damper. A few quick calculations tell me that about two weeks before I arrive home, all the flour will have run out, forcing me to eat the stuff I don't like. Even more reason to get home quick.

If only the wind would turn around!

I've already made up my mind about what I'd like as soon as I cross the finishing line - two Danish pastries from the local bakery, a bottle of drink and one of those huge hamburgers where you need a skewer to hold it together.

On the 26th it was my 18th birthday. I spoke to my friends but other than that it was just a normal day. In fact, I nearly forgot about it.

I was outside tying the genoa down and when I came back into the cabin the orange light was on, indicating an awaiting e-mail. It was from mum telling me that it was 12.15am at home and that I was now 18. Talk about a shock - one minute you're a kid tying down a genoa, the next you're allowed to vote!

I'm not usually one for poems, but this one which Romy Schurrmans found for my birthday is one I can appreciate:

There comes a time in life when there is nothing else to do but to go your own way.

A time to follow your dreams, a time to raise the sails of your own beliefs. Where you are headed there are no trails, no paths just your instinct. You have followed the omens and have finally arrived.

Well, I've got to follow that omen and raise a bit more of that sail if I'm to munch on any hamburger this side of Christmas! Let's hope the wind turns around as well.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 07 SEP 1999, Page 030**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

ANOTHER week of terrible progress! In the past 16 days I've only averaged 50 nautical miles a day. I'm supposed to be in the strong westerly air flow but I've had varying easterlies and squally weather making constant movement in the right direction very hard.

I've been told that some people think I'm going to starve to death because of my food situation. This is not the case at all.

What I didn't reveal last week was that all through the voyage I have been sneaking into the next day's bag and only eating all the goodies. So it's my own fault!

I have plenty left over but it's the nutritious food which I usually chose not to eat and it's these items which I'm now left with. At least I should be strong and healthy by the time I do get back.

David and Ben from Hill Crest Christian College wanted to know how my electrics were going since I lost the solar panel. There is no problem because the wind generator and the other panel are still working. The panel which was ripped off had stopped working anyway.

Two days ago, just after a squall had come through, I was looking over the water lost in thought. I'm sure this isn't new but I was thinking about the similarities between events in life and a rain squall.

When it's approaching it looks pretty mean, all dark and gloomy and then all of a sudden it hits with a torrential downpour, sending you off course and out of control. You can't see anything around you except mist and rain, but it doesn't last forever and eventually the first rays of sunlight peep through the tail end of the cloud.

This light refracting from the tiny droplets of water suspended in mid air puts on a show that is truly spectacular, and it's at that point you are the closest you'll be to heaven on earth.

It was this show that had captured my attention. Out to starboard was the most brilliantly colored rainbow I had ever seen. The dark clouds in the background made each and every color stand out as if they were alive with electricity. It was so close that I could see the end fading into the water only 30 metres away.

I concluded that the heavy pot of gold must have sunk but I didn't mind because I felt invincible to the passing squall or any nasty weather which this world could throw at me.

The thing is, had I not encountered the squall, then I would have missed this feeling of jubilation which I was now floating in. It made me think that sometimes bad times are just preparing the way for better things to come.

**Herald Sun**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

I AM IN an area renowned for strong winds - 70-90 degrees east in the Indian Ocean. Apparently most of the Clipper and Whitbread racing yachts hold their speed record attempts in this area because of the tendency for fronts to develop small lows on them.

And it's lived up to its reputation.

It has been up to 40 knots and rarely below 25 for the past week with a similar situation predicted in the outlook.

It has also been very cold but I can't tell exactly because my temperature gauge has been out of order since the Cape of Good Hope.

I also have an annoying leak somewhere above my bunk which means an ice-cold drip landing smack bang in my ear. This is quite a shocking experience, especially when one is snuggled into a sleeping bag, half asleep and dreaming up the ingredients to put in the ultimate hamburger. My sail configuration recently has mainly consisted of just using a headsail. To keep the boat moving at four to five knots doesn't take very much sail area and it's easier on the boat, not to mention my nerves.

To keep the boat on a steady six knots, nearly double the sail area is needed, causing double the amount of strain on equipment. I would rather get home a few days later than risk equipment failure.

It has been months since I took any multi-vitamins and I've been feeling normal with no obvious effects - until this week.

I noticed my gums turning a whitish color and vaguely remembered learning in school about the diseases sailors of old used to contract. Words like rickets, gangrene and scurvy entered my head and even though I forgot which one was which, I thought I'd better start taking the pills again.

I got an e-mail from Jack Fletcher at Brighton Secondary who asked how my fresh water was going.

Well, I'm glad I collected about 50 litres when I passed through the Doldrums. I sponged up the rain water collected along the toe-rail and squeezed it into a bucket. I now have about five litres of my original stores left and the extra that I collected should see me through until I get home.

A few people have told me they envy my position and hope to do a trip like mine one day.

Go for it because I know it can be done and that it doesn't take a genius to do it (I'm proof of that).

I have a theory and it goes like this; Brian Caldwell Jnr, Robin Lee Graham and Tania Aebi, all from the United States, and David Dicks from Western Australia were young people who attempted to sail solo round the world and all were successful.

The odds are heavily leaning one way - those who give it a go have succeeded.

What we need to do is not limit other people's abilities by our own. We need to encourage and help in every way possible, particularly our youth, and then we will start to see great things happen.

You could look at it like this - I was just a normal kid with a dream who was serious about what I wanted to do but without the support of my family, would never have made it and would have eventually lost enthusiasm with age and become like the rest - unsatisfied grown-ups who don't believe in themselves.

There are many people out there dreaming of great things and it's a good chance that your son or daughter is one of them. Don't let them lose one of humanity's most prized assets - the vision.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 28 SEP 1999, Page 032**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

WHILE most people were watching or listening to the grand final on Saturday, I was lying a hull waiting for a front with gusts to 45 knots to pass me. I sure know where I would have rather been!

I remembered back to last year's final. It was a beautiful sunny day and one mate had a BBQ so the rest of us piled over there.

It was a great day.

I remember us all standing on the balcony trying to get a glimpse of the jets flying overhead and then being told off by a neighbor for repeatedly playing Hunter and Collectors' Holy Grail too loud.

I just have to remind myself that it's only another few weeks and I'll be seeing them all again.

The latest news on board **Lionheart** is that the electric bilge pump has stopped working so I have to spend 5-10 minutes each morning and night manually pumping the water out.

I also made contact with Sydney radio for the first time since I lost contact while approaching Cape Horn. It's great to hear an Australian voice over the radio and it's one more little milestone that I can cross off my list.

I'm fast approaching the end of this well known rough patch, so hopefully I'll be into some of the warmer and calmer weather that I hear Melbourne has been having.

There's still another front expected which shouldn't be too bad as long as I can keep the boat moving towards home.

This past week I've averaged over 100 miles a day and should be 23 days away by the time this goes to print.

I'm even down to crossing off the days, which I have numbered at the bottom of the chart.

I got a question this week but I've forgotten who it was from. However, I remember how it went. This person wanted to know when exactly I thought to myself "I can really do this now".

To tell the truth, it wasn't like I woke up one morning and all of a sudden I was full of confidence.

It has slowly dawned on me the whole trip (and continues to do so). There have been moments, like when rounding Cape Horn, when I had a little extra something which filled me with confidence but generally it has been quite gradual.

For example, one of my main worries was that I was putting too much strain on the rig and that, in a time of intense pressure, a stay would go and I'd lose the mast overboard.

However, since the knockdowns off the Cape of Good Hope and the continual fronts that I've just experienced, I have much more faith in the strength of the rig and I expect that by time I reach the finish line I'll have even more.

I was told by someone that the more time you spend sailing solo, the more you enjoy it. I would have to agree.

With time comes more faith in your equipment and ability and therefore less worry and more enjoyment.

However, I think I'll still be relieved when **Lionheart** is safely tied at Sandringham and I'm in the comfort of a car driving home ... then again, there are some dangerous drivers out there!

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 05 OCT 1999, Page 030**

**LIONHEART**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

THE strong winds continue. I had to stop the boat for two days earlier this week while a particularly nasty front passed me.

This means another two days longer before I get home.

It has been quite cold also, with one rain cloud pelting down small hailstones.

It only takes about a minute outside with bare hands before they start to sting - and less if you touch any metal.

My weather adviser had warned me about the possibility of 40 knot winds so, before it arrived, I ventured outside to get things ready.

**Lionheart** was only carrying a storm jib and travelling well as she surfed the moderate swell.

I had to tie down the spinnaker pole because the bungies were wearing out and large waves were forcing the pole free.

So I knelt down amidship at **Lionheart**'s widest point while I replaced the bungy.

It was just bad timing because at that point a gust of about 40 knots came, as did an extra large swell, which caused us to catch the wave and heel right over as we surfed uncontrollably, turning sideways.

It just happened that the boat was thrown over on the side that I was and **Lionheart**'s shoulder dug into the water.

The safety lines went under and I was half submerged hanging onto them. The pressure increased until the point where I felt at the mercy of the water rushing by.

By then though we had, luckily, come to the end of our ride and swung back into position with me left high and dry straddling the safety lines. If I had gone overboard then I think I could have got back on deck because I had my harness on and the boat was surfing then stalling as the wave passed, which would have given me enough time to scramble on board.

Even so, I was not very happy with the situation. The inside of my cosy wet weather gear was now wet and I was in a bad mood.

I was flicking through the radio channels a couple of days ago and came across a French music radio station.

I wouldn't have a clue what the DJ was talking about but he gets quite excited sometimes.

The music is weird too but I just leave it on as it's nice to have a human voice in the background, even if I can't understand what it's on about.

A birthday wish to David Dicks who is turning 21 tomorrow and will be celebrating out at sea. What a place to celebrate!

I'm now an estimated 19 days away and looking forward to some sunshine. Most of this week looks like being 20-30 knots which should push me along quite well . . . hopefully.

## **Herald Sun**

**Edition 2TUE 19 OCT 1999, Page 036**

**CALLING HOME, BUT NO REPLY**

**By JESSE MARTIN**

I AM only 900 nautical miles from Melbourne and I still can't make radio contact with Sandringham Yacht Club.

We must be using a frequency which is too high for the time of night because instead of hearing Stewy's voice coming through like I'd expect, I'm receiving some guy as clear as a bell saying in an Indian accent: "So you want to come into Bombay?"

Radio signals can be strange. It all depends on the atmospheric conditions, weather and position of the sun.

After my comment last week about most things that can break already having done so, I have to report two more casualties.

First, and very annoying, is the chrome handle on the left of the companionway. One of the two attachments holding it to the wall has rusted through.

Every time I go to climb into the cockpit I almost give myself a heart attack when it comes out and I nearly topple backwards.

Second, and equally annoying, is the computer. The screen no longer shows anything understandable and one of the hinges has broken.

I'm now using the spare computer and finding the keyboard strange.

One foggy day last week I just happened to feel like standing at the stern of **Lionheart** and feel her taking on the waves.

I was outside for only a few minutes when I saw something ahead and to starboard as we were on the crest of a wave.

The next swell disclosed what had caught my eye.

It was a motor vessel heading north on a collision course and gaining quickly.

It was about half a mile away and I had about five minutes to spare, so I dropped the headsail and jibed over to run a parallel course in the opposite direction.

I waited until it passed, then put the boat back on course before going below to call on the VHF radio.

I received no reply.

They probably didn't expect to see anyone down here and neither did I. I looked on the chart but there were no islands south of our position, so my only guess is that it was perhaps a survey vessel, a fishing boat or even a supply ship from Antarctica.

I believe this is the second-last diary entry that I'll have to write.

Woohooo, because I'm running out of things to write about!

It usually takes me about half an hour or 40 minutes to complete a diary entry and send it off.

This is a long time to sit still and have the computer open when water is coming in and the boat needs attention.

I'm pleased to say it's only 20 knots at the moment and the sun is out, making it such a glorious day that I feel like letting loose with an Italian opera song. I don't know any opera songs and I can't speak Italian. But I would if I could.

With only one more entry after this, I'd like to thank the following people who have been greatly involved and assisted in getting me away with a positive attitude and a "head-down, bum-up" approach:

Dr GEOFF Broomhall, who instructed me in applying first aid treatment and organising my comprehensive medical kit.

JACINTA Oxford, who spent countless hours walking down supermarket aisles taking notes and drawing up my nutritionally balanced menu.

PHIL Carr and Dad, for their very hard work in co-ordinating the tradesmen in the boat yard and their many skills put to use in installing equipment.

SCOTT Eccleston, from Sandringham Yacht Club, for helping me boost sailing's profile throughout my journey.

JOHN Hill, for his moral support and fastidiousness in teaching me navigation, survival and maintenance and his behind-the-scenes phone calls.

STEVE O'Sullivan, for his introductions and being the first organisation to take me on.

ROGER Badham, for his correspondence with weather reports and advice every day.

MUM and Andrew, who seemed to do all the jobs that go in between.

MATTHEW Gerard, the cornerstone to it all.

And finally, thanks to Claire Bolge, of Grade 4, St Joseph's, Warragul, for this poem:

Sailing through the icy sea, heading back to home.

Determined to get back to shore, ambition made of stone.

Bravery's important, when you set out on a quest.

When you handle things like you do, you will come back like the best.

Schools wishing to welcome Jesse home should contact Sandringham Yacht Club on 9598 7444 or e-mail [office@syc.org.au](mailto:office@syc.org.au) to organise bus parking.