



Team Delta Lloyd works on strong comeback

19 februari 2009 22°10'48"N 114°05'59"E

Team Delta Lloyd works on a strong comeback in the second half of the Volvo Ocean Race, starting from Rio de Janeiro/Brazil. The Italian company Eligio Re Fraschini S.p.a., specialized in the production of metal and composite parts, has started the process of building the new bow section. At the moment, they are milling the mould out of a big block of polystyrene. Meanwhile, Nick Bice (31, AUS) joined the sailing crew. He replaces Guillermo Altadill (ESP), who was only contracted for leg four and five.

According to Killian Bushe (IRL), who built the Delta Lloyd and who is responsible for the repairs, the boat did not suffer from the usual delamination: "The ultrasound test proved that the damage was caused by some impact. The hull is made of a sandwich construction, which means there are skins on either side of the core material. That core material was fractured by the collision. The damaged area was initially about 400-500 square millimeters, but by being unnoticed by the crew and the subsequent flexing from the continuous pounding in the large waves at the time, it increased to 3,5 meters by 1 meter wide. Once the core in a sandwich is damaged the panel can no longer support itself" In addition, the forward ring frame is also cracked and needs to be removed and replaced. Due to good seamanship and regular boat checks every four hours, the Delta Lloyd crew recognized the seriousness of the situation in time to secure a safe stop in Taiwan.

The repairs

Bushe and his team of seven boat builders will take care of the repairs in Rio: "We will first remove all the structure in the bow and cut away the damaged panel, which will then be replaced. Eligio Re Fraschini is one of the few companies in the world that is able to shape a new panel that exactly fits the Delta Lloyd at extremely short notice. The panel measures about 12 square meters, it is a bit oversized, because you never know exactly how much you need until you finally cut out the damage area. The whole process will take us about twelve days."

Juan Yacht Design, in the person of Juan Kouyoumdjian himself and Lucas Suar, provided Team Delta Lloyd with the drawings for the repair. Eligio Re Fraschini will convert them into the new bow section. Fabio Rusconi (ITA), project manager at Re Fraschini, reports on the work in progress: "At the moment, we are milling the mould. After this, we will cover it with fiberglass and some paste and then remill it in the right dimension. The planning is to start laminating the panel on Monday, as well as the bulkhead."

Nick Bice returns to Volvo Ocean Race

Nick Bice, nicknamed Bicey, will join Team Delta Lloyd in the second half of the Volvo Ocean Race. He is a qualified boat builder and skilled sailor. Bice gained a wealth of experience at Blue Sky Composites in Australia and worked initially as boat captain for Team ABN AMRO in the 2005-06 Volvo Ocean Race. He ended up being the watch captain of the young ABN AMRO TWO crew and finished fourth overall in his first circumnavigation. He was also involved in Team Amer Sports at the 2001-02 Volvo Ocean Race. His sailing career on the highest level commenced with Young Australia, the Australian entry in the 2000 America's Cup. Bice made his debut as a trimmer. In 2003, he took the line-honours of the Sydney to Hobart Race with Skandia Wild Thing. More recently, he joined the British America's Cup challenge Team Origin as boat captain and pitman.