

John Martin knocked down in 'hell-ride'

By ROGER WILLIAMS

JOHN MARTIN, the latest solo skipper in the BOC round-the-world race to be knocked flat in the "hell-ride" in the Southern Ocean, was heading for Melbourne in south-east Australia yesterday for repairs.

Although he escaped injury when Tuna Marine's Voortrekker II was bowled over in heavy weather on Sunday, Martin sounded "very tired" when he contacted Cape Town by radio yesterday.

He said he needed to get his auto-pilot working before completing the second leg of the race, to Sydney. He was still pumping water out of his flooded cabin, he added.

Martin said a wind-vane he had been using as a self-steering standby when he tried to get some sleep between long spells at the wheel, had been smashed in the knock-down. He did not want to tackle the busy and hazardous Bass Strait, between the Australian coast and Tasma-



The approximate positions yesterday of the first 11 yachts in the BOC round-the-world race. The precise position of Ecureuil d'Aquitaine, which lost its Argos position-reporting transmitter in a knock-down, was not known but the yacht was reported to be heading for the Bass Strait and maintaining the second-leg lead. Tuna Marine is heading for Melbourne for repairs, after a knock-down on Sunday.

nia, without an auto-pilot.

He had been working a routine of 18 hours at the wheel, with a six-hour

rest break. He added that once repairs had been done at Melbourne, he would continue to Sydney.

Tuna Marine slipped back from eighth to 11th place yesterday.

Meanwhile the French leaders, Ecureuil d'A-

quitaine (exact position unknown since the boat's Argos position-reporting transmitter was lost in a knock-down two weekends ago), Credit Agricole III and UAP-Pour Medecins Sans Frontieres were heading for the Bass Strait yesterday at a scorching pace. UAP was shown to be averaging 12.5 knots.

At this rate they could be through the strait up the Australian south-east coast and across the second-leg finish line in Sydney harbour by this weekend.

□ Australian Ian Kiernan in Spirit of Sydney moved up to fourth place yesterday, behind the French leaders. He was followed, in order, by Biscuits Lu, Skoierm IV, Legend Securities, Stabulo Boss, Airco Distributor, Thursday's Child, Tuna Marine, Belmont Finland, Let's Go, Declaration of Independence, Colt by Rettig, Lone Star, Joseph Young, American Flag and Double Cross skippered by Harry Mitchell, 62, who was said yesterday to be "holding up well" after injuring himself in heavy weather last week.