

Yachting

Dias chase on for SA skipper

By Sue Valentine

A week ago the youngest South African skipper in the Bartolomeu Dias 500th anniversary race set off in his 41 ft craft — French Connection — on the first leg of the Lisbon-to-Cape Town contest.

A University of Cape Town law student, 25-year-old Patrick Holloway is a veteran of local yachting events and has won five major events this year.

Holloway has carefully thought out the voyage which started recently.

"The second half of the race is going to be tough and the whole idea is, to finish intact and not to push the boat too hard," said Holloway.

"We can't put in at Luanda for repairs."

His crew of five includes three fellow UCT students — Holloway's brother Richard, Russell Ephron and navigator Michael Matter — as well as veteran women sailors Lianne Hardie and Judy Provoyeur.

"We're hoping to average 150 miles a day in the first 522-mile leg to Funchal in Madeira," said Holloway.

"The next warmer leg to the Cape Verde islands is 1 000 miles long and should take about six or seven days."

After the compulsory 24-hour stop at Cape Verde, the next problem will be getting through the doldrums.

The first contestants are expected in Cape Town during the first week of January.