

Yachtsman to go it alone again

Own Correspondent

MELBOURNE. — Australian yachtsman Jon Sanders is about to go into solitary confinement for three years — voluntarily.

He will escape the rat race by sailing around the world three times non-stop and without reprovisioning.

Mr Sanders already holds the record for the longest time alone at sea during a continuous voyage of 419 days, among the many records set when he completed a double circumnavigation of the globe in 1982.

This time he plans to leave Fremantle in 1986. He will sail west to South Africa, around the Cape of Good Hope, north into the Atlantic, using the Azores as his rounding mark. Then south to Cape Horn, westwards below New Zealand and Tasmania and north-west back to Fremantle to round the America's Cup course in 1987 as a publicity gesture for the challenge series that year.

Mr Sanders then plans to turn in his wake and circumnavigate the world twice from west to east, finishing in Sydney in 1988.

During the three years this will take, he expects to follow the same schedule and lifestyle of the previous voyage: a daily diet of about 10 cups of coffee, freeze-dried meals, biscuits, fresh fruit as long as it lasts, a daily vitamin C tablet, a multi-vitamin pill every second day and no alcohol or cigarettes.

What drives this man to drop out of the human race and risk his life?

"It's a challenge," Mr Sanders says simply. Then he admits he is a loner and innately shy and adds: "The truth is I get along very well with myself."