

Voortrekker leads monohulls

By ROGER WILLIAMS
THE South African ocean racer Tuna Marine Voortrekker, crewed by John Martin and Rob Sharp, was well in the lead yesterday among the monohulls in the Carlsberg Transatlantic Race, with only about 400 nautical miles to go to the finish at Newport, USA.

Martin, the skipper, had not been heard from for several days because of problems with Tuna Marine's radio-transmitter, but

he managed yesterday to tell Nick Simson, formerly of the SABC, that he had overcome his initial steering-quadrant problem and that the boat was sailing well under spinnaker.

He expected to cross the line tomorrow afternoon.

Simson, now living temporarily at Newport, said in a transatlantic call that Martin sounded cheerful.

He said race officials at Newport estimated that Tuna Marine was

a good 100 miles ahead of the next monohull, Colt International of Finland. This in spite of the fact that the South African yacht had lost considerable boat-speed early in the race, because of the steering problem.

● Meanwhile the overall leaders of the race, the multi-hulls Royale, Formule Tag, Apricot and British Airways have arrived at Newport.

Royale, which got in at the weekend, took

line-honours in an unofficial time of 13 days and six hours.

The 3 000-mile race started with a fleet of about 50 yachts, several of which have had to retire because of storm-damage.

For many of the boats including Tuna Marine Voortrekker, this is being regarded as a run-up to the BOC Challenge Singlehanded Race, starting from Newport in August and with Cape Town as the first port of call.