

Martin and arch rival Jeantot neck-and-neck

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ONLY three miles separate old adversaries John Martin in Tuna Marine Voortrekker II and Philippe Jeantot in Credit Agricole III in the BOC Challenge round-the-world yacht race.

After moving into second place yesterday, Martin has slipped back to fourth overnight, trailing Jeantot in third.

Martin won the first leg of the race from Newport, Rhode Island, to Cape Town after sailing neck-and-neck with the Frenchman most of the way.

Bertie Reed

Titouan Lamazou in Ecureuil d'Aquitaine is leading the fleet, 85 miles ahead of Martin, with Jean Yves Terlain in UAP-Pour Medicine Sans Frontières 42 miles astern in second place.

Bertie Reed in Stabilo Boss has dropped to 10th position, almost 200 miles behind Lamazou.

Martin said in a radio-telephone interview yesterday that he had equipment problems again — he had lost two of his three auto-pilots.

But he said this would not deter him in his quest to win the last leg, which started in Rio de Janeiro at the weekend.

Three hours' sleep

"I am getting only about three hours sleep a night and although I am tired, I don't intend letting it get me down."

He said he was averaging eight knots and running into squalls of rain. The wind was blowing between 10 and 30 knots.

Martin said he was happy with his strategy to move away from the South American coast.

"I intend heading straight for the equator now and will decide after I have passed through the doldrums what my tactics will be," Martin said.