



Press information

January 2009

THE HIGHLIGHTS OF AN HISTORIC VICTORY!

**PRESS CONFERENCE
ARRIVAL MICHEL DESJOYEUX / FONCIA**

Sunday 9th November at 13h02

The start of the Vendée Globe 2008/2009 is all shrouded in grey! Low cloud and boiling seas welcome the thirty solo sailors off Les Sables d'Olonne. The schedule is nevertheless respected with the start given at 13h02, coloured by 10/12 knots of SW'ly wind on zone with a pronounced 2 to 3 metre swell. As regards sail configuration opinion is divided with one reef mainsail for some and full mainsail for others. Michel Desjoyeaux on his 60 foot monohull FONCIA opts for the maximum configuration to make headway with the wind on the nose: full mainsail and solent jib. The tone is set!

Monday 10th November at 05h00

Michel Desjoyeaux on FONCIA is in 6th position, 9.6 miles behind Marc Guillemot on Safran in pole position. The SW'ly wind has increased to over 30 knots and there are big seas (4 to 6 metres). Michel is positioned the furthest west of the fleet.

Monday 10th November at 09h19

Positioned 200 nautical miles from Les Sables d'Olonne, Michel Desjoyeaux - skipper of the 60 foot monohull FONCIA - informs his shore crew of his decision to turn back and return to port. Michel explains why he is forced to head back: a leaking ballast tank cover has gradually flooded his engine compartment, causing electrical problems.

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux: *"I had a small leak around a ballast tank cover and I slightly underestimated the scale of it and the damage it could do. Some water has got into the engine compartment... I thought this was just a small amount but this morning, as I ran the engine, there was a smell of burning after 40 minutes..."*

Tuesday 11th November at 00h40: Michel Desjoyeaux aboard his 60 foot monohull FONCIA makes for Les Sables d'Olonne despite conditions hampering his entry into port. He enters the channel under sail (three reef mainsail and ORC) and the shore crew 'take possession' of the boat.

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux: *"A circumnavigation of the globe is long and hard. Certain skippers have paid an even higher price than me. I'm not surprised there's been breakage because it was pretty violent. However, the boats are nevertheless built to last. I'm lucky to have a mast, sails and the desire to get back out there"*

Tuesday 11th November at 06h00: Michel Desjoyeaux leaves the port of Les Sables d'Olonne. The 60 foot Imoca FONCIA exits the channel in the morning accompanied by three support ribs and four crew aboard in survival suits. The latter are disembarked at the last minute; one of the team members even jumping into the water. FONCIA has a deficit of around 360 miles on the leaders as he approaches Cape Finisterre (Spain) and he heads back out into the race with a 41 hour deficit.

Email from Michel: *"FONCIA heads back out to sea at around 05h40 after a pit-stop worthy of a Ferrari, good as new. A huge bravo to the shore crew and the two guys from Nanni Diesel (the brand of engine equipping FONCIA). The seas are still big and the wind has dropped right off as it's shifted round to the W/NW. There were still a good number of locals on the quayside and the pontoon in Les Sables: it was fantastic! Setting out with a two day deficit isn't great, but there's still a long way to go yet... And though we all know that the Vendée Globe is difficult, impossible just isn't French"*

Technical evaluation by Jean-Paul Roux, director of Team FONCIA: *"As Michel was heading back towards Les Sables d'Olonne, we had already quickly deciphered the information he'd given us. After that, each member of the team tried to picture the collateral damage that could have been caused by the ballast tank, according to each of*

their different areas of expertise. I got in contact with the various suppliers to ensure they were on the alert. Indeed we'd like to thank Nanni Diesel (supplier of FONCIA's engine), who had nothing to do with the damage caused by the water leak, but were able to send us two technicians from their factory in La Teste. They arrived quarter of an hour prior to the boat's arrival with all the parts which might need changing. An engineer was also on standby on the telephone in case we had any questions... There wasn't a minute of downtime as we were able to have a technical debrief from Michel the second he tied up to the pontoon. Following that, three people worked on the engine electrics and performed a thorough check of it. Another team took charge of repairing the pierced ballast tank cover and made the most of the opportunity to check the others. Each team member had a job-list to check certain areas of the boat and the whole thing concluded with a thorough clean down below!"

Wednesday 12th November at 11h00

Michel Desjoyeaux is 450 miles behind the leader, Jean-Pierre Dick (Paprec-Virbac). FONCIA is making 14.3 knots VMG in a NW'ly air flow, which is enabling him to make headway across the Bay of Biscay. That same evening, he passes offshore of the Spanish headland of Cape Finisterre.

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux: "On the approach to Cape Finisterre, it was still really slamming... In fact, that was the case throughout the entire crossing. Even though I got across the bay on a single tack, I was driving into the wind and the sea, which made it pretty violent. The wind had shifted but not the waves, which led to some almighty wave jumping! It was high time I hung a left and brought the hurdling to an end..."

Friday 14th November at 16h00

The deficits are increasing and Michel Desjoyeaux is battling in the light airs off the Portuguese coast, performing a series of gybes to remain in the NW'ly air flow. He is positioned 650 miles astern of his playmates who, as he repeats, "aren't here to hang around!" And they certainly aren't hanging about as they slip along in a different weather system, boosted by a generous and powerful E/NE'ly tradewind. Whilst Loïck Peyron (Gitana Eighty) is slipping along at 15 knots, FONCIA is racking up an average speed of 10 knots. The first positive point: Michel slips past Norbert Sedlacek (Nauticsport-Kapsch) and moves up into 22nd position.

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux: "We're sailing downwind from the tip of Spain. We haven't had a lot of wind compared with those at the front so I lost a bit of ground yesterday, but it doesn't matter! Right now I've caught up with Norbert Sedlacek, who had keel issues. In principle we should both have got moving again together... I didn't pass that far off him and now I have a few more playmates in my sights a few hundred miles ahead..."

Saturday 15th November at 05h00

FONCIA is 670.3 miles behind Loïck Peyron (Gitana Eighty) who is currently leading the Vendée Globe. This will be the greatest distance separating Michel from the head of the race!

Wednesday 19th November at 05h00

A favourable weather sequence after a laborious descent down the Portuguese coast, some judicious course choices and a straightforward trajectory with a W'ly option around Madeira and the Canaries, have lead to a 670 mile deficit being reduced to one of 458.9 miles. FONCIA claws back mile after mile and moves up from 22nd place to 18th in the general ranking by drawing on a playful tradewind and judiciously sailing to the west of the archipelagos, which can be real wind traps. The 60 foot monohull even treats herself

to the luxury of racking up one of the best performances of the moment: three out of four of the top speeds on Sunday 16th November, including 298.7 miles with a 12.4 knot VMG. Cape Verde is on today's menu, whilst the frontrunners enter the Doldrums.

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux: *"The objective aboard FONCIA is still to continue making headway towards the finish line, even though we're a long way off. One thing for sure is that the concertina effects have had an influence in one direction and right now they're more favourable to me..."*

Friday 21st November at 16h00

What a week! In 22nd position last Friday, 647 miles behind the leader, Michel Desjoyeaux is in 16th position this Friday 21st November, 273 miles behind the leader Loïck Peyron (Gitana Eighty). FONCIA has made up 374 miles in 7 days, which translates as a 53 mile gain per day, at an average speed of over 10 knots. Suffice to say that the heavy spinnaker aboard the 60 foot monohull FONCIA was called upon and fully fulfilled its mission. A W'ly option around Madeira and the Canaries, a zigzag through the centre of the windward islands of Cape Verde, a W'ly separation from the leeward islands to avoid the wind shadow of the island of Fogo with its 2,829 metre summit: all of a sudden FONCIA has outpaced six competitors and altered his targets. Michel is increasing the series of sessions at the helm and honing the trim. He now has Marc Guillemot (Safran), Dominique Wavre (Temenos), Brian Thompson (Bahrain Team Pindar) and Sam Davies (Roxy) in his sights. The only hitch in proceedings is the famous Doldrums, which has slowed the head of the fleet and lies in wait for Michel in 24 to 48 hours time.

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux: *"I've made up a little ground thanks to the nice weather but I'm going to have to keep an eye on when the others get moving again... They didn't have luck on their side when they hit a wide Doldrums. Whilst they were in there I was coming up on them with a breeze, which has enabled me to catch up with the leading group... It's certainly enjoyable making up 300 miles on boats which have a 600 mile lead over you, as well as knowing that you're the fastest of the fleet almost every time. Even though you know why that is and that you haven't played a big part in it, it's still satisfying... I'm not annoyed about anything... And we're lucky to be at sea. It feels good to be on the water... When you see the pressure of the job, personally I like being in the office! (laughs). After all, we have the finest bathrooms in the world with a 360° view of the sea, and 180° of sky... It makes a change from the 30 centimetre wide barred window with a view across to the back of the neighbouring building..."*

Sunday 23rd November at 04h43

Michel Desjoyeaux aboard FONCIA crosses the equator at 03h43 (UT). At this point he is in 15th position, 360 miles behind the top trio made up of Loïck Peyron (Gitana Eighty), Sébastien Josse (BT) and Jean-Pierre Dick (Paprec-Virbac). Obviously slowed by the Doldrums, he manages to the limit the extent of the damage. Michel is sailing in a 15 knot SE'ly breeze with a 10.7 knot VMG. The hunt is on again!

Email from Michel Desjoyeaux: *"Well, it's certainly true that if you don't like it when you're heeled over, you shouldn't sail a monohull! And if you prefer going down the waves, you have to have the patience to sail into the wind. We're a bit stupid in sailing circles. We haven't yet invented mechanical lifts so we continue on our way with our sealskins. There's something charming about sealskin though... We make the most of nature, such as now, with five or maybe eight days close-hauled on a single tack. If you look back at a few of the earlier 'Vendées' where it was said that "to win the Vendée, you have to go fast in the South, upwind conditions don't serve much purpose". Darwin was right; it isn't the sturdiest of us who survive, it's the ones who adapt."*

Wednesday 26th November at 05h00

Some find average speeds for Michel Desjoyeaux with 339 miles in 24 hours. He is 14th and 416 miles behind Loïck Peyron (Gitana Eighty), who is struggling to put some easting into his course. The chasing pack gets back in contact with the skipper from La Baule, on France's Atlantic coast. FONCIA is also making the most of the opportunity but the sailing conditions remain hard with the boat lurching, pounding and slamming... it's exhausting work!

Email from Michel Desjoyeaux: *"Gosh, in a few hours, a great basic principal, one which we teach our little darlings, of which I was one once, will collapse. I'll explain myself: "Tell us the story about the sun on your back grandfather!" Well here we have it, some twenty years earlier, whilst making my way down the Southern Atlantic to round this wretched Saint Helena High, which just went on forever, I took up my watch at the helm early in the afternoon, south bound the previous helmsman had said. I look at the compass: 180°, all's well; I look at the sun, everything's gone pear-shaped! It's on my back! I'm amazed. I check the compass: 180°. Would they have lied to me? They taught me, I tell myself: the sun rises in the East, is at its zenith in the South, and sets in the West. East and West, OK. For the South you have to see! Sometimes yes, sometimes no. That's fortunate, some practical work! From what point will you have the sun to the North of you? Still 3 days of southing to make, we'll have time to get used to it before hanging a left. Ah yes, sailing, well at night without a moon and stars, with waves from every direction, it's impossible to go fast; it lurches, it slams, it shakes, it's not cool, there's a variable wind and speed too as a result".*

Friday 28th November at 16h00

And though the figures remain as they are, namely a deficit of 290 miles on the head of the fleet, these days are resolutely positive. Positive in terms of the progress made by the man/boat, positive because they're marked by the omnipresence of the Saint Helena High which, unusually, has positioned itself a long way over to the west and, it has to be said, really suits FONCIA. At the front they're stumbling and cogitating, whilst behind them they're bang on target. Michel makes the most of the situation and clocks up some superb days in excess of 300 miles. It's a great morale boost!

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux: *"This weather situation is enabling me to make up ground. The head of the fleet must be making 8/9 knots as it tacks upwind with the chop. It can't be very quick... Meanwhile I'm making 12/13 knots of boat speed the whole time. This is also enabling me to stay on the pace and continue to seek the optimal course. By the time I get to where they are, the weather situation will have greatly evolved and the Saint Helena High is on the point of moving... As a result I won't have to deal with this situation. This is all part and parcel of the little concertina effects you get and you simply have to make the most of them and use them to best effect so as not to miss out on any".*

Sunday 30th November during the course of the day

Michel Desjoyeaux drops his Atlantic staysail and hoists his special Southern Ocean staysail on FONCIA, which is made of Cuben Fibre (a material which is indestructible but distorts). The Atlantic staysail is stowed away in the sail locker in a 45 minute manoeuvre.

It is a sail he is to reveal the existence of two days prior to Cape Horn and about which he says: *"I've made a staysail – a sail which you hoist in 28/30 knots of downwind conditions and you keep carrying until the wind reaches 50 knots – it's a bit special. It's made of Cuben Fibre, a material which is indestructible even though it becomes distorted with time. I hoisted this particular sail on exiting the Saint Helena high and I stowed the other one down below, where it was nicely protected. All of a sudden I ended up with two staysails and rather than trashing your one staysail in the south where, in order to conserve it you furl it in earlier and you end up with not quite enough sail area, in this*

instance I had a staysail I could really thrash. I had the same system 8 years ago and I'm rather happy with the choices I've made as I've sailed a great deal under staysail in the south. Right now I'm going to get out the sail I used on my descent of the Atlantic which is in perfect condition. It'll be great for the climb up where it's important to have a very flat, solid sail".

Monday 1st December at 05h00

14.3 knots VMG this morning for FONCIA and three competitors are devoured for breakfast - Roxy, Pindar and Temenos - between Sunday and Monday! Michel Desjoyeaux isn't standing idle as he racks up some very fine 24 hour performances throughout the weekend. He's in 11th position, 226 miles behind Sébastien Josse (BT)... The top 10 is within reach as Michel and FONCIA prepare to enter the kingdom of the Southern Ocean!

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux: "I've finally managed to get past Roxy thanks to rounding the zone of high pressure. I've also overtaken Pindar and I'm now neck and neck with Dominique Wavre, who I've made good ground on. In terms of distance to the goal, we're very close. After him, it'll take bigger, faster bites, so it'll be harder to close on them, but I'm not giving up hope. They're sailing well at the front but I can sail quite well too!"

Wednesday 3rd December at 16h00

With the afternoon's position comes a twofold satisfaction for Michel Desjoyeaux: he makes it into the Top 10 just 193 miles behind Sébastien Josse (BT). Less than 200 miles separate him from the leader. He's made up 470 miles since Saturday 15th November at 05h00 and climbed thirteen places. There's bad news the previous day though: his heavy tears on hoisting and goes over the side, forcing Michel to bring the boat to a halt with the wind on the nose.

Thursday 4th December at 18h15

With these exceptional days comes an exceptional figure: Michel Desjoyeaux aboard FONCIA, shatters the boat's speed record with 30.44 knots. The white monohull was sailing under automatic pilot at the time and Michel even takes a photo! Still in 10th position Michel is 136.4 miles from the head of the Vendée Globe.

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux: "High score of the boat 30.44 knots, GPS speed! Do you think we're gaining miles in the regular customer discount programme?"

Friday 5th December at 16h00

An important date: Michel Desjoyeaux enters the head of the fleet with the firm intention of getting past them. He is 171 miles behind Loïck Peyron (Gitana Eighty) and FONCIA is now within a stone's throw of a number of competitors. He knows he can score a big hit this first weekend of December and he's going to do it... His weapon: to get the boat making the optimum headway, to be on top of things as he likes to say, to control the trim, to hone the trajectories and to take advantage of his daily universe which combines waves, wind, weather and strategy. He doesn't want to doze now that he's back in contact, he wants to continue to pile on the pressure...

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux: "I'll have to stick with the same well-trying methods of sailing: a certain autonomy whilst watching what the others are up to. The fact that I have boats around me shouldn't make me any less inclined to hoist more sail aloft and control the boat's power. We're working on making small gains. You have to make gains everywhere and lose nothing anywhere. We all make errors; the goal is to make fewer errors than those who are ahead"

Monday 8th December at 05h00

But where will it end? Indeed this is the question everybody is asking at the start of this week... After almost a month of racing (29 days) FONCIA and Michel Desjoyeaux are in 6th position. Not 'satisfied' with being back in the Top 10 last week, Michel has got back with four of his playmates in 48 hours. His comeback is incredible and his trailblazing marks the history of this Vendée Globe. This Monday he is less than 100 miles behind leader Jean-Pierre Dick (Papec-Virbac), 94.7 miles to be precise. On carrying out an inspection of the deck, Michel notices that three stanchions haven't withstood the surfing at over 28 knots!

Wednesday 10th December at 05h00

FONCIA goes into overdrive, now just 57 miles astern of the leader Papec-Virbac. The Kerguelen Islands are looming on the horizon, which will be an interesting strategic passage. They're into the Deep South and Michel Desjoyeaux is still 6th with Mike Golding (Ecover) less than 10 miles ahead of him... A place in the top 5 is fast approaching. There's bad news though as Michel notices the day before that his bowsprit is cracked.

Email from Michel Desjoyeaux: *"It's grey from morning to evening and grey from evening to morning; light grey or dark grey, it's all down to nuance. In addition to that it's freezing. The water measures around 5° and the air was between 1 and 6° yesterday; greaaaaat! You can't complain though. It said as much in the tourist brochure but with the Breton rain in Les Sables I didn't manage to open it. You just have to grin and bear the hood, the polo neck and all that stuff, but this kind of garb isn't very sexy. We're not here to look pretty though are we? There are those who dream of the Vendée Globe whilst they're in the sun, well I'm in the Vendée Globe dreaming of a beach of fine sand, palm trees and hot water. Have a good day, I'm going to pull the duvet up 20 centimetres and prepare myself a little toddy!"*

Thursday 11th December at 18h00

Michel Desjoyeaux sends his first photos of the drifting ice...

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux: *"It's the third time I've hung around this area and it's the first time I've seen blocks of ice... That's what happened to me yesterday. I'm in the process of speeding around Antarctica and I've seen ice. It was a long way off but close enough that there wasn't any ambiguity. They were modest blocks of ice, not icebergs. The first was a good twice the length of FONCIA, at around forty metres; at least that's how big the bit above the water was. The blue is quite simply sublime and reminiscent of the colours you see in seracs and other glaciers. It was very beautiful but it was enough for yesterday".*

Friday 12th December at 05h00

Terrific, amazing, incredible... Michel Desjoyeaux is 2nd in the Vendée Globe, 39 miles behind the leader. The speeds are impressive: an average of 19 knots in an hour. Still as greedy as ever over 24 hours, FONCIA has devoured 409.8 miles, which is the second best performance across the fleet. The pace in the south continues to be very elevated.

Sunday 14th December during the course of the day

The bowsprit is laminated and repaired.

Tuesday 16th December at 11h00

FONCIA throws the speedos into turmoil once again... After a peak speed of 30.44 knots GPS, Michel Desjoyeaux has just covered 466.6 miles in 24 hours at an average speed of 19.44 knots. In land terms, this means that Michel has covered 860 km between 0500

hours yesterday and the same time today, at an average speed of 35.7 km/hr! However, the day doesn't end there and the announcement comes as a bombshell: Michel Desjoyeaux on FONCIA takes the lead of the Vendée Globe. Michel learns the news at the 11h00 radio link up, at the same time as he learns about Mike Golding's dismasting: the hot and cold. On what is officially the 37th day of racing, the skipper of FONCIA is 1st ahead of Roland Jourdain (Veolia Environnement) and Sébastien Josse (BT). Michel has made up his 41 hour, 670 mile deficit on the pride of the class of Imoca Open 60 footers. An amazing achievement!

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux: "My position at the head of the fleet today is unexpected. It's fantastic, great. I cannot describe how I feel. Today isn't the day to be at the front though, that's for two months time. First you have to finish".

At 19h25 (UT), Michel crosses the longitude of Cape Leeuwin.

Wednesday 17th December

Goodbye Indian Ocean, hello Pacific... Michel Desjoyeaux on FONCIA yesterday passed the longitude of Cape Leeuwin (Australia) at the head of the Vendée Globe. Michel also notices this Wednesday that the main support of the port rudder case is partially broken and is no longer attached on one side.

Email from Michel Desjoyeaux: "The Indian didn't take up the hatchet, though a lot of skippers left feathers behind in the 15 days I spent with him. He even found us some ice cubes at apéritif time! I can recall tougher regions. Two masts, one keel, rudders, daggerboards, and other undisclosable damage... The question of the day is will the Pacific be the Justice of the Peace, wisdom and serenity?"

Monday 22nd December at 05h00

No respite at the head of the Vendée Globe and Michel Desjoyeaux continues to stamp his rhythm at the front of the fleet. The separation continues to yo-yo between Roland Jourdain (Veolia Environnement), who is holding out on FONCIA. Behind them there is a big gap... Sébastien Josse (BT) is 183 miles astern, Jean Le Cam (VM Matériaux) 221 miles and Armel Le Cléac'h 537 miles. So as to drive the point home, Michel sends a photo of his new speed record aboard his boat: 32.37 knots!

Thursday 25th December late at night

It's status quo at the head of the race. The night of Christmas Day is coloured by close-hauled sailing and the presents have remained in their wrappers. However, Michel Desjoyeaux notices some serious damage aboard FONCIA, which is a spin-off of that observed on 17th December. The damage is such that he fears the worst... The day continues in this vein as the hydro generator, positioned on its support on the boat's aft deck, falls into the water, held on by the safety rope and electric cable. Analysis: electric cable pulled out and oil in the cockpit. Result: "holidays on oil", inside and out and a compulsory degreasing session with washing-up liquid! As Michel would say: "a s**t day".

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux on 26th January 2009, about this damaged rudder, which he had deliberately hidden: "I was sailing close-hauled, full and by, in a good 35 knots of breeze and big seas. I was carefully making headway with 2 or 3 reefs and ORC. I had raised the windward rudder to the horizontal position. I think a wave hit the rudder. The piece which holds it in the raised position had broken and it was impossible to get the rudder back into its original position. It was now only held by the strut on the side and the upper section. I decided to slow the boat down and we ended up with flattened sails which quickly went aback and I began to go backwards. At that point I saw the rudder go under the boat, then it came back towards the stern and, as luck would have it, the casing gradually returned to its original position. It shook me up to see the

rudder splashing about. Miraculously the situation stopped deteriorating at that point. A few days later, I managed to make the system safe. I even made a support which enabled the rudder to kick up in the event of impact with a floating object. It feels like I came close to a catastrophe and even though you're not frightened during the event, it creeps up on you retrospectively once you've sorted the problem out. A boat without a rudder is like a car without steering: no salvation."

Tuesday 30th December at 05h00

It's been two weeks since Michel Desjoyeaux took the lead of the Vendée Globe and he is still being tailed at varying degrees of proximity by Roland Jourdain (Veolia Environnement). Advantage to you, to me... To me, to you! It is pretty much on these terms that the two leaders of the Vendée Globe are making headway in difficult wind and sea conditions. The skipper of FONCIA is holding onto a good lead of 73.6 miles. This isn't much fun for some competitors as the separation from the rest of the fleet increases: Jean Le Cam (VM Matériaux) is relegated to over 300 miles astern, Sébastien Josse (BT) has had to withdraw from the competition following his capsize during a storm and Armel Le Cléac'h (Brit Air) and Vincent Riou (PRB) are over 600 miles astern... It's a fine breakaway! However, FONCIA's bowsprit is cracked again.

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux: *"We've got rather tricky weather with squalls dropping in on us. One of these hit us earlier at 50 knots... You have to be fairly vigilant so as not to end up side onto the course. It's always tricky knowing what sail area to set... Either you hoist enough sail area for 50 knots and don't use it very often, or you hoist enough sail area for 25 knots... And when you have a 50 knot squall, you don't know what to do with all the sail you have! It's a bit frustrating in fact... You're never comfortable"*.

Friday 2nd January at 16h00

The head of the fleet is approaching Cape Horn. The 54th day at sea and the 17th day in the lead for FONCIA. Ultimately, given the position of the Ice Gates, this Vendée Globe will be 1,160 miles longer and will extend the number of miles to cover from 23,680 miles to 24,840 miles. A record! For the time being, the game of cat and mouse continues with Roland Jourdain (Veolia Environnement) who is still less than 100 miles astern of Michel Desjoyeaux.

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux: *"Bilou's a tough nut to crack. He is a lot less sensitive than others to the harshness of the weather phenomena. I know him well so I'm not surprised. He's very consistent. He doesn't stampede along at the front of the low and then crumble at the back of it. He's more linear... For my part, I came from behind at pace and I haven't stopped. Bilou's one of those who have followed suit and that's no surprise to me"*.

Monday 5th January at 04h10

FONCIA rounds Cape Horn at the head of the Vendée Globe with a 120 mile lead over Roland Jourdain (Veolia Environnement), 481 miles over Jean Le Cam (VM Matériaux) and, over 700 miles on Vincent Riou (PRB) and Armel Le Cléac'h (Brit Air). Michel has taken 56 days, 15 hours and 08 minutes to round the Cape of Storms, that is two hours less than Jean Le Cam in 2004/2005 (56d 17hr 13m). An amazing performance when you know that Michel set off 41 hours after the fleet and covered 1,160 extra miles in the Southern Ocean in relation to the 2004 course!

Email from Michel Desjoyeaux: *"That's it, as we say in the Broken Arms (nickname of his shore crew): "That's done"! FONCIA has just returned to the Atlantic. It was 03h10 UT when I passed to the South of the Cape in squally weather with 35-40 knots and 45 in the squalls. It was as black as a Monday so you won't have either photo or video footage of the rock lost all the way down here. The 2 lights are working, that of the Cape and*

that of the Eastern tip. The seas are finally flat and the wind is finally reasonable at 23 knots. Light conditions you might say! We're now bound for new adventures up high."

Tuesday 6th January during the course of the day

FONCIA's bowsprit is operational once again after a successful lamination!

Thursday 8th January during the course of the day

FONCIA's second heavy spinnaker goes overboard during the hoist. Michel Desjoyeaux salvages it: it's out of order. The same day, three battery elements are changed. There's an energy problem which could prove to be a handicap for the next stage in the race.

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux: *"I had to change some elements of one of the battery installations which were weak. I have the advantage that I have them in individual units on board. When there's one faulty one on the four strips of 12 elements, you remove the problem one and you switch it for one that works. When you have batteries cast in one piece, you can't do that. If there's a fragile element, your whole battery is up the spout... For the past two days I've just been using the automatic pilot and the navigation instruments. I'm being careful but it'll hold out till the end of this round the world. It's a system I put in place on FONCIA which I'm very satisfied with... It's just as well I have this solution!"*

Friday 9th January at 16h00

This two-step with Roland Jourdain (Veolia Environnement), which began on 16th December as Michel Desjoyeaux led the way around Cape Leeuwin, is still in full swing. And though the 26 mile lead during their passage around Australia has been transformed into 178 miles, the red monohull is still as dangerous as ever. This is especially true given that a zone of high pressure with a stubborn side will cause FONCIA no end of grief... Violent squalls, sudden wind rotations, manoeuvres on deck, the climb along the Argentinean, Uruguayan and then Brazilian coastline will be far from restful. The SE'ly tradewinds aren't easy to catch onto due to a confounded Saint Helena High, once again...

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux: *"Since the passage of Le Maire Strait, we've done two days in 35 knots of breeze gusting to 40... It's been pretty full on! Right now I have 18 knots of S/SW'ly. The anticyclone has been kind and waited for us. We're going to round to the east of it, then the north-east and north. After that the system will join up with the Saint Helena High and should merge with it... Last night proved to be a bit complicated with a fairly shifty, 'annoying' wind. I woke up at one point with the boat beam onto the track... It wasn't planned. In fact, for several days now, there have been a fair number of squalls with gusts of 40 knots associated with some big rotations in the wind. All of a sudden it's not so easy to relax..."*

Wednesday 14th January at 05h00

It's incredible but the edge of this zone of high pressure is proving stubborn and off Rio de Janeiro FONCIA is yet to hit the SE'ly tradewinds. Once lying over 300 miles astern of Michel Desjoyeaux, Roland Jourdain (Veolia Environnement) comes back to within 241 miles. The deficit continues to yo-yo until FONCIA comes out the other side of the high pressure and can once again devour the miles on her way to the equator and the Doldrums.

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux: *"It's hot in the Southern Atlantic. 28°C inside the boat. I've gained around twenty degrees in 8 days. The weather's difficult but we're making headway. Yesterday (Tuesday 13th January) for example, I had a gentle afternoon in terms of breeze. It's the cool element of the race but it's not very exciting."*

Upwind, upwind, upwind... I'm not complaining though, especially in relation to my playmates still in the Pacific."

Tuesday 20th January at 06h14

The Doldrums have decided to position themselves a long way South for FONCIA's return trip so she'll feel its effects a long way before the equator. The tough ITCZ (Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone) will block Michel Desjoyeaux's progress for several hours... FONCIA crosses the equator at 05h14 UT. Thanks to the concertina effects, Roland Jourdain (Veolia Environnement) snatches back 159 miles on the leader and is now 334 miles astern. Armel Le Cléac'h, 3rd on Brit Air, is over 1,000 miles back.

Email from Michel Desjoyeaux: *"Well, that's done and dusted! It doesn't have to be done again since it's done! 05H14'10" UT this Tuesday 20th January 2009, FONCIA crossed the equator for the second time in this Vendée globe, and at a brisk pace too! I don't think I paid the toll on the way down, which was only natural given that there was nobody in the sentry box! This time they didn't let me slip through, I paid for the 2!"*

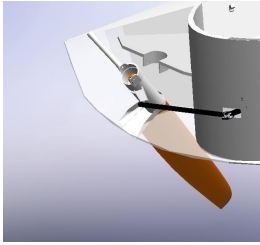
Thursday 22nd January at 05h00

Trapped in the Doldrums, Roland Jourdain (Veolia Environnement) can but watch Michel Desjoyeaux's fine getaway. Positioned within the NE'ly tradewinds, FONCIA greedily devours the miles... a 440 mile lead for the white monohull, which escapes her encounter with the Azores High and the final obstacle to round. It's lumpy, slamming and wet... but this bears fruit since FONCIA has a bonus of over 500 miles the following day!

Statement from Michel Desjoyeaux: *"Yesterday evening, prior to pulling on my pyjamas and going to bed, I furled in the staysail and set the small jib and it blew all night long. During the course of yesterday, there was 18 to 25 knots. Within the weather systems, things went quite smoothly under staysail. During the night though, I had up to 32 knots in the squalls. As such everything went very well! It was perfect! It enabled me to get some sleep..."*

Tuesday 27th January at 05h00

The right-hand turn has begun, the Azores High roundabout has been negotiated... For her 79th day of racing FONCIA is slipping along the Northern edge of the high pressure and is now looking to catch onto the train of lows circulating in the North Atlantic. The idea: to hook onto the prevailing W'ly wind and get pushed along by the stormy winds. During this time, Roland Jourdain (Veolia Environnement) can but follow in Michel Desjoyeaux' tracks. Tactically, there's nothing the red monohull can do, as she's being perfectly controlled by Michel. The 524 mile lead will continue to extend as the hours pass...



(*) Further information about the damaged rudder. Explanation from Marc Liardet, Boat Captain to the 60 foot Imoca FONCIA:

"Open 60 footers are equipped with two rudders. When sailing, a single rudder is enough to steer the boat, the other is raised to reduce the hydrodynamic drag. They are used alternately according to how much the boat is heeling with the aim being that they're as submerged as possible. As such you need a rudder for each tack. The raising or lowering of the rudder is done

by activating ropes and the rudder pivots around an axis, like a gate around its hinges. On 17th December, the port rudder's lifting assembly was partially damaged. On 25th a wave crashed into this rudder whilst it was raised, breaking the rope which was holding it up and thus smashing the rotation assembly. There was nothing left to hold the rudder on the boat except the lateral strut, the tiller bar to position the rudder and the rope to lower it. With the boat going too fast to drop the rudder into its lowered position, this was the only safe option which could be envisaged. Michel eased the sails to empty them and bring the boat to a standstill, and then he made the most of this opportunity to go backwards. As such the rudder partially disappeared beneath the hull, to 'miraculously' (carbon twists very badly!) come back up to the surface. At this point, Michel managed to get it more or less back in its housing and fix it together again with ropes. Later on, with the help of a pump hose and some stanchion pieces, Michel managed to reconstruct a support of the right size so as to give the rudder the capability of kicking up again in the event of a collision."

3D photos showing the way the rudder works and the damage to it are available on Photo CDs.



Press Information

January 2009

List of minor incidents and damage

60 foot Imoca FONCIA

PRESS CONFERENCE

ARRIVAL OF MICHEL DESJOYEUX / FONCIA

DATE	D+	RANK- ING	TIME (UT)	WHAT	Passage time for Michel Desjoyeaux / RMQ	"Minor incidents" / Damage
9- Nov.- 08	D+0	4		Start of the Vendée Globe at 12:02:00 (UT) End PM Stamm, Wavre return to port		Start: Bunk support hooks broken
10- Nov.- 08	D+1			Big storm in the Bay of Biscay: Groupe Bel, Aquarelle dismast. Dejeanty and Hatfield turn back, structural damage aboard Hugo Boss...	Michel forced to turn back following a leak from a ballast tank cover leading among other things to a problem with the engine's electric system	
11- Nov.- 08	D+2			DCNS dismasts	FONCIA heads back out at 05:40:00	
12- Nov.- 08	D+3			419 miles behind the leader		
13- Nov.- 08	D+4	23		527.4 miles behind the leader		
14- Nov.- 08	D+5	22		646.7 behind leader		
15- Nov.- 08	D+6	22		670.3 miles behind leader (Peyron)	The greatest distance separating Michel from the head of the race	
16- Nov.- 08	D+7	22		643.1 miles behind leader		Off the Canaries: Radar and Activ'echo broken (detector which, through a sonar and light signal, warns of the presence of a boat equipped with a radar).
17- Nov.-	D+8	20		652.4 miles behind leader		

08						
18-Nov.-08	D+9	19		527.7 miles behind leader		
19-Nov.-08	D+10	18				
20-Nov.-08	D+11	18		369.3 miles behind leader		
21-Nov.-08	D+12	16		273 miles behind Peyron	53 miles gained/ per day during the week	
22-Nov.-08	D+13					
23-Nov.-08	D+14	15	03:43:20	Les Sables > Equator (1st passage)	13d 15h 41' (deficit on leader Loïck Peyron: 1d 06h 43') Riou in 2004: 10d 12h 13' (deficit by Michel Desjoyeaux: 3d 03h 28')	After the Doldrums: > Teflon plate from gennaker block falls on deck, block unusable, use of the spare halyard as a last resort. > Potentiometer of autopilot sensor out of sync, have adjusted it
24-Nov.-08	D+15	15		404.7 miles behind leader		Off Brazil: > Not enough pressure in keel ram when pushing > Potentiometer of automatic pilot lifted onto cockpit sole. Cordless Makita drill broken, took a bath...
25-Nov.-08	D+16	14				
26-Nov.-08	D+17	14		Beyou retires		
27-Nov.-08	D+18	14				
28-Nov.-08	D+19	14		290.8 miles behind leader		
29-Nov.-08	D+20					After Saint Helena: elastic tricing lines fell, taken up on the other side
30-Nov.-08	D+21					> Change of upwind staysail for a Cuben Fibre staysail > 45 minutes from bag to bag
1-Dec.-08	D+22	11			Finally got past Roxy, Pindar and Temenos	"Pig's nose" broken on the spinnaker attachment but ok,

					devoured at breakfast	same thing for the gennaker (from the section of the bowsprit where the ropes exits and enables the headsail to be brought to the end of the bowsprit)
2-Dec.-08	D+23	11				<p>> First speed on the starboard primary winch stays engaged and gets stuck in second</p> <p>> Heavy spinnaker torn on hoisting, trawls along, goes over the side, forced to bring the boat to a standstill with the wind on the nose</p>
3-Dec.-08	D+24	10		Top 10 for Michel Desjoyeaux!		Removed the screws from the sheave organiser so that the sheave axis returns the gennaker sheet to the port mainsail traveller position
4-Dec.-08	D+25		05:00:00	Gate 1	Boat record: 30.44 knots, GPS speed	Start of repairs to heavy spinnaker, 18 metres of sewing in prospect
5-Dec.-08	D+26	10		171.8 miles behind leader		<p>> Closure of the starboard daggerboard gate broken, condemned to remain open</p> <p>> Pierced keel ram gaiter, put clamp collar on the side, a whale came straight at me and sounds 30 metres away, phew!</p> <p>> Starboard keel barrel ripped out, seemingly the day before. Collateral damage: rear of barrel partially fixed but certainly broken, suddenly the keel box has taken to gurgling</p>

						loudly!
6- Dec.- 08	D+27		12:36:04	Les Sables > Good Hope	27d 00h 34' (deficit on leader Sébastien Josse: 4h 56') That is a gain of 1d01h47' between the equator and Good Hope Riou in 2004: 24d 02h 18' (deficit by Michel Desjoyeaux: 2d 22h 16')	> Pipe going from compartment B to A disconnected due to a water leak in B following a leak from the ORC hydraulic stay tensioner at deck (watertight compartments in bow A, the forwardmost, B the second forwardmost etc.), water leaks everywhere! > Small pump only copes with clean water
7- Dec.- 08	D+28					> Display on outside starboard emergency automatic pilot broken (screen)
8- Dec.- 08	D+29	6		94.7 miles behind leader		> 3 port stanchions flattened, didn't withstand the surfing at over 28 knots!
9- Dec.- 08	D+30					Bowsprit cracked: Bobstay stop pin has slipped, all of a sudden the bobstay has shifted back and has become loose. The large gennaker was roll hoisted.
10- Dec.- 08	D+31		14:00:00	Dismasting of Peyron		
11- Dec.- 08	D+32				> In sight of a 40 metre iceberg > 30 minutes later a second measuring 10 metres	
12- Dec.- 08	D+33	4		66.1 miles behind leader		
13- Dec.-	D+34					

08						
14-Dec.-08	D+35					Bowsprit laminated and repaired
15-Dec.-08	D+36	4		109.3 miles behind leader		
16-Dec.-08	D+37	1		Golding dismasts / 466.6 miles in 24 hours Les Sables - Cape Leeuwin	37d 07h 23' (lead over Roland Jourdain: 50 min) Riou in 2004: 36d 11h 48' (deficit of Michel Desjoyeaux: 19h 35 min)	> Starboard stanchions folded, same cause as those to port > End stops on the hood and loose bolts have worked free, problems with watertightness (the boat buried into a wave, the hood continued going a further 60 cm, breaking the forward end stops)
17-Dec.-08	D+38	1				> Lifting mechanism on the head of the port rudder damaged (the start of the human stupidity!)
18-Dec.-08	D+39	1		Eliès breaks his leg		> Forward section of the boom vang track pulled out > Change of fuel tank, already 80 litres used > Close to magnetic south pole: faulty inertia unit, failure, erroneous heading... switched to gyro-stabilised compass, it's much better!
19-Dec.-08	D+40	1				
20-Dec.-08	D+41	1		75.8 mile lead over Roland Jourdain		
21-Dec.-08	D+42	1				
22-Dec.-08	D+43	1		New boat record: 32.37		

08				kt		
23-Dec.-08	D+44	1	11:31:52	Les Sables > International Date Line	43d 23h 33' (lead over Roland Jourdain: 2hrs 55')	
24-Dec.-08	D+45	1		61.5 mile lead over Roland Jourdain		
25-Dec.-08	D+46	1	20:20 (UT)	NEW ZEALAND GATE		> Oil leak in the hydraulic panel of the ORC jib stay tensioner, oil in the starboard gangway, fortunately empty.> PORT RUDDER deflected, rescued in-extremis (*)> Hydro generator flew off the back, recovered via the electric cable that had been pulled out, ended up emptying its oil into the cockpit, result: "holidays on oil" inside and out, all cleaned off with washing-up liquid: a shitty day!
26-Dec.-08	D+47	1		Jojo knocked down by a breaking wave		> Gyro compass flooded, keel box leak which sprays water onto the ram and the keel pump despite tight cover, 5 cm crack at the top of the keel box
27-Dec.-08	D+48	1		61.1 mile lead over Roland Jourdain		> Mainsail batten No.1 broken (the first one from the top)
28-Dec.-08	D+49	1	08:33 (UT)	WEST PACIFIC GATE		> Batten head repaired together with the Insigna (self-adhesive sail fabric) > Change of mainsail lashing (the rope which links the mainsail head to the headcar)

29-Dec.-08	D+50	1				> Keel release no longer works, the light comes on when you press on blue, but nothing happens, worked again since Cape Horn
30-Dec.-08	D+51	1		59.7 mile lead over Roland Jourdain		> Forward engine mount broken to port, got the vice grips on them but it jumps. > Lifting mechanism on the port rudder raised thanks to a carbon pump hose and some stanchion sections, lifting section changed, rudder operational if impacting with a UFO > Stanchion feet cut-out > Bowsprit cracked again > Retaining bracket on the desalinator in the process of delaminating. Repaired by placing a foam pad on the engine base
31-Dec.-08	D+52	1	11:41 (UT)	EAST PACIFIC GATE		
1-Jan.-09	D+53	1				> Leading edge of starboard daggerboard crushed
2-Jan.-09	D+54	1		63.2 mile lead over Roland Jourdain		> External supply from reaching ballast tanks cut 'gratos' for water pump in the aft section
3-Jan.-09	D+55	1				
4-Jan.-09	D+56	1		86.6 mile lead over Roland Jourdain		> Tricing lines from the starboard runner to be adhered again with Insigna (more sturdy self-

						adhesive sail fabric)
5-Jan.-09	D+57	1	03:10:00	Les Sables > Cape Horn	56d 15h 08' (lead over Roland Jourdain: 8h 50') Riou in 2005: 56d 17h 13' (Michel Desjoyeaux's lead: 2h 05')	> Half the top taken off the port daggerboard gate
6-Jan.-09	D+58	1		At 12h 26' (UT), Le Cam capsizes		> Side of forward ballast tank to starboard buckled to 45° at the Henderson hatch > Bowsprit: successful lamination
7-Jan.-09	D+59	1				
8-Jan.-09	D+60	1		104.5 mile lead over Roland Jourdain		> Checking of the hydrogenerator, > Checking of Activ'écho, > Clément's mouse ended up in the water, rinsed and dried....
9-Jan.-09	D+61	1		176 mile lead over Roland Jourdain		> Problem with the Fleet 77 during initialisation: "Handset COM error" and green light on case doesn't come on, wire checked at each end, tried other port on case, checked 24V supply OK, power connector 3 wires out of 4 correctly connected!> Port daggerboard gate opened from the outside, the hammer fixed to the end of the boat hook. Changed staysail, rehoisted that for upwind, cuben fibre staysail swivel=pile of rust
10-Jan.-09	D+62	1		185 mile lead over Roland Jourdain		> Port keyboard repaired and soldered together again,

						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Crack on side of forward ballast tank to starboard, resealed with Sika, inside and out > Joints on hydraulic pressure gauges reassembled (2), plate too thick, pinched desalinator kit joint > Rope to raise starboard rudder changed > Pipe from mast foot cables ripped out, can't withstand the mast rotation > Clément's mouse works again, phew! > Watertightness of chutes redone with flexible Sika > Lacking loppers and rasp in the toolbox
11-Jan.-09	D+63	1				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Crack at the foot of the cockpit bulkhead along the side of the starboard ballast tank, very little material, no UD (uni-directional carbon fabric) vertical, open crack to starboard upwind. Nothing serious
12-Jan.-09	D+64	1				
13-Jan.-09	D+65	1				
14-Jan.-09	D+66	1				
15-Jan.-09	D+67	1				
16-Jan.-09	D+68	1		At the tail of the fleet, Brian Thompson, Dee Caffari,		

				Arnaud Boissières are expecting winds of around 65 knots established (gusting to 85)		
17-Jan.-09	D+69	1		354 mile lead over Roland Jourdain		
18-Jan.-09	D+70	1				
19-Jan.-09	D+71	1				> Bowsprit bobstay broken at the bow: splicing, DIY and sewing
20-Jan.-09	D+72	1	05:14:10	Les Sables > equator (2nd passage)	71d 17h 12' (20 hour lead over Jourdain) 2001 by MD: 79 days 12 hours 2005: 72d 13h 58' (lead by Michel Desjoyeaux: 20h 46')	> Change 2 elements on the port battery bank
21-Jan.-09	D+73	1				
22-Jan.-09	D+74	1		440 mile lead over Jourdain		
23-Jan.-09	D+75	1				
24-Jan.-09	D+76	1				> Tricing lines from the port runner retaped
25-Jan.-09	D+77	1		492.4 mile lead over Roland Jourdain		> Transfer of jerrycan fuel into the port diesel tank, 20 litres still remaining to starboard > Sheath of the solent furling line restitched
26-Jan.-09	D+78	1				
27-Jan.-09	D+79	1		The Azores High roundabout is passed		

28-Jan.-09	D+80	1		756.9 mile lead over Jourdain	Passage of the Azores	
29-Jan.-09	D+81	1		791 mile lead over Roland Jourdain		
30-Jan.-09	D+82	1				
31-Jan.-09	D+83	1				
1-Feb.-09	D+84	?	?	LES SABLES / LES SABLES	Reference time held by Riou: 87d 10h 47'	Michel Desjoyeaux must finish before 4 th February at 23h 55'

RECORDS (awaiting WSSRC approval):

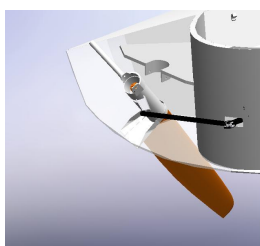
FONCIA / M. Desjoyeaux

Reference

INDIAN

13d 06h 30m

14d 21h 01m (Golding - 2004)



(*) Further information about the damaged rudder. Explanation from Marc Liardet, Boat Captain to the 60 foot Imoca FONCIA:

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*****FONCIA**

Present across over 600 sites throughout Europe (France, Switzerland, Belgium and Germany), the FONCIA Group is the leader in management and property transactions for dwellings in France. FONCIA's expertise operates across the property market and includes 4 complimentary skills areas: the management of joint ownership, rental management, rental and sales.

Since 3rd April 2007, FONCIA has formed part of the Groupe Banque Populaire.

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