

## Damaged foil and flying fish

Team Australia's skipper Sean Langman this morning revealed they have a damaged starboard foil after hitting something on the first afternoon of their Sydney to Auckland world sailing speed record crack.

The damage may extend to the rudder; when they finally gybe and the other hull is out of the water the extent should be revealed.

"I'm not sure what we hit, probably a shark. I don't know what damage has been done to the rudder, but I know we've crushed the foil alignment chocks, which keep the foil in position," said the upbeat owner/skipper.

At high speed the damage has diminished the driver's capacity to keep the bow up and it's heavier on the helm reported Langman.

"Last night we really put the hammer down and tried for 40 knots of boat speed, but because of the issue it changed the ability to keep the bow up. We started to nosedive so we had to back off."

The damage has barely registered on the numbers. The ORMA 60 trimaran averaged an astonishing 22 knots over the first 947 nautical miles with 309nm to go at 6.30am.

They should reach Cape Reinga, where the Tasman and Pacific oceans meet and Maoris believe spirits of the dead enter the underworld, within 48hrs of leaving Sydney. Langman is predicting a late afternoon finish in Auckland tomorrow, Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October.

At 8.20am they were sailing deep to avoid a wind hole carrying a full main and gennaker (combination of spinnaker & genoa) in 10 knots of wind from the east north east and cruising east at 15 knots. "It's perfect at the moment, beautiful flat seas and 22 degrees. It's bikini weather, if we had them we'd be putting them on," joked Langman.

Meteorologist Roger Badham is warning of tricky conditions for the final 24hrs given Team Australia is gliding into the centre of a high pressure cell parked at the top of New Zealand. There's no way around this and the crew can expect fickle winds at the tip of the cape and down the east coast, forecast to be less than 10 knots at times.

Team Australia's aim was to be in NZ by this weekend, ahead of next week's PIC Insurance Brokers Coastal Classic, and this was the best weather window.

Given they have sustained damage they'll need some time to make repairs before lining up against their near sistership, Simon Hull's Team Vodafone, plus 170 boats broken into eight divisions for the 119nm sprint which starts next Friday off Devonport Wharf in Auckland's Waitemata Harbour.

Unlike their furious Hobart run back in February, Team Australia's crew is well rested. Four of the six on board are capable helmsmen with three up and three down below at any one time, and all hands on deck for sail changes.

Langman paid tribute today to the two youngest on the boat, his seasoned 20 year-old son Pete and 21 year-old Andy Woodward, a skilled travel lift operator at Langman's business, Noakes Boat & Shipyards at North Sydney who is enjoying his first real ocean adventure.

"I'm proud of the guys. We hung on the first night and pushed through some pretty tough conditions which set us up to have a fast sail the second night. I'm really impressed with the young blokes; they have worked as hard as some of the best guys I've sailed with."

Food-wise wife Cathy's catering has hit the spot, "It's been perfect and we should have enough to sail back to Sydney, but I reckon the way the young guys eat I'll be breaking out cans of baked beans by the finish. No-one is crook, they are all eating like horses," Langman added.

Loaded onto the trimaran prior to departure was two 1.8L Bolognese and pasta and two 2L beef casseroles, a tuna casserole, 20 potatoes in foil, 24 boiled eggs and cooked sausages to have in bread, plus chocolate muffins and loads of lollies and chocolates.

Navigator Josh Alexander is obviously feeling lonely as he had this to say this morning, "Cathy's beef stew and me, well it all started on Maluka and now after five Sydney Hobarts it's on the tri. We had it for breakfast this morning and once again it was an absolute winner with all. I rate it 11 out of 10."

Alexander did take a knock to the head during the night when a flying fish came out of the dark. "Luckily I had my hard hat on!" he said. The boat was doing 25 knots at the time.

Team Australia's Sydney to Auckland record attempt can be tracked via the website <http://teamaus.net.au/>

Updates posted regularly on the official [Facebook page](#)

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