

Press Release

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INTERVIEW WITH SIR ROBIN KNOX-JOHNSTON

Sir Robin Knox-Johnston is a sailing icon, in 1969 he competed in the first ever round the world yacht race and won the Sunday Times Golden Globe on board his yacht *Suhaili* and in doing so became the first person to sail, solo non-stop around the planet. It was described as a 'voyage for madmen' the competitors were really going into the unknown, but Sir Robin not only completed the circumnavigation, he won it.

Back then, his record-breaking circumnavigation took a monumental 313 days. During this epic voyage, Sir Robin lived off rain water caught in a bucket and The Sunday Times even prepared his obituary, believing he had been lost at sea as once the yachts left land they had no means of communication with the outside world.

The VELUX 5 OCEANS race will start in October this year, it is the oldest solo round the world yacht race and Sir Robin will be competing in his newly acquired Open 60, hoping to complete the 30,000 mile course in around 112 days taking 200 days off his 1969 effort. The former Fila Open 60, previously campaigned by Giovanni Soldini is a Finot-design yacht, which was launched in 1997, Finot has a proud heritage and successful track record, including Soldini taking first place in the 1998-9 Around Alone race (now the VELUX 5 OCEANS).

Yachting journalist Louay Habib braved some stormy Solent conditions to see Sir Robin into Portsmouth, delivering his Open 60 from L'Orient, in north west France.

At 67 years of age aren't you a bit too old to be sailing solo around the world?

I am in the Spring time of the third phase of my life and I intend to be as active as I was when I did my first round the world race nearly forty years ago. Of course I am not as youthful as I was then but now I believe I have certain advantages over the 'youthful me' as I have far more experience.

Just because we pass the age of 65 doesn't mean our brains turn to porridge, we get a heart attack every time we climb the stairs and we have forgotten everything that we have ever learnt, that just is not true, in fact we are a remarkably active and powerful age group. Most of us have now got money put aside and a lot of time on our hands, so we are quite good spenders, I don't just want to just go on holiday, my idea of a holiday is to go sailing and to add spice to it, I have decided to enter a race., to me it's totally irresistible.

The VELUX 5 OCEANS Race starts on October 22nd from Bilbao in Spain. What areas of preparation are you prioritizing?

Apart from refitting the boat, it will be very important to get myself race fit and the best way to do that is to go sailing, so I will cross the Atlantic June and July which will get my qualification out of the way. That will get me fit, give me knowledge of the boat, so I know exactly what I want to do with her. Having sailed her to Portsmouth from L'Orient, I have to say she is nice and simple, I like her; very speedy, boy can she move!

What about the competition for the VELUX 5 OCEANS Race what are your thoughts?

There are some really great sailors; Mike Golding, Alex Thomson, Bernard Stamm and many more, I think it is a great group of people to be racing against and with of course, when you are out racing single-handed your nearest assistance is another competitor, so you race against each other but also with each other that is a facet of solo racing that I really enjoy, I am really looking forward to the challenges that lay ahead and absolutely thrilled to be competing in the VELUX 5 OCEANS.

Interview by Louay Habib, 26-05-06

www.bangthecorner.com

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For more information on VELUX 5 OCEANS please visit www.velux5oceans.com, or contact:

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Notes to Editors

SIR ROBIN KNOX-JOHNSTON BIOGRAPHY

Sir Robin Knox-Johnston is a man of the sea who has been involved in sailing all his life.

This year marks the 37th anniversary of Sir Robin Knox-Johnston's historic solo and non-stop circumnavigation in the 1969 Golden Globe. He holds the record as the first person to sail single-handed round the world non-stop and has also set the record for the fastest circumnavigation in his time. Added to this he has considerable experience in the administration of running round the world races having served on the Whitbread Race Committee from 1990 to 1994 and having organised the BOC Challenge Round the World Race in 1982 and 1986. Now, as Chairman of Clipper Ventures PLC, he is at the forefront of promoting round the world yacht racing.

Born 17th March 1939, in Putney, London, and the eldest of four brothers, Sir Robin spent his childhood 'messing about in boats' before embarking on a career in the Merchant Navy. Going to sea in 1957 as a Deck Officer, his work took him to Africa, the Persian Gulf and India, where he then settled, in Bombay, with his childhood sweetheart Suzanne, whom he married in 1962. A year after their daughter Sara was born, Sir Robin launched his small cruising yacht *Suhaili* from the 'Colaba Workshop', Bombay, on 19th December 1967, and tested her seaworthiness on the journey back to the UK for The Sunday Times Golden Globe. Following the legendary race, Sir Robin launched himself into a successful racing career, in various crewed events. Away from competitive sailing, Sir Robin has also sailed to Greenland to climb the 2,660m Cathedral with mountaineer Chris Bonington, and sailed *Suhaili* across the Atlantic without any modern navigation instruments.

HOST PORTS

RACE PARTNER



www.velux5oceans.com

Today Sir Robin lives in Newton Abbot in Devon and has five grandchildren. His wife Suzanne sadly passed away in November 2003 as a result of ovarian cancer

Career Milestones

1968-69	Only finisher in The Sunday Times Golden Globe on <i>Suhaili</i> ; first man to circumnavigate the world solo non-stop after 313 days at sea
1969	Awarded the CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire)
1970	Winner, Round Britain Race on <i>Ocean Spirit</i>
1970	UK Yachtsman of the Year
1973	Admiral's Cup
1974	Winner, Round Britain Race on <i>British Oxygen</i>
1975	Admiral's Cup
1976	Winner RORC Class I championship
1977	Whitbread Round the World Race on <i>Heath's Condor</i>
1985	World Champion Class II Catamarans
1986	Round Britain Race on <i>British Airways</i>
1990	Silk Cut Nautical award Seamanship Trophy
1994	Jules Verne Trophy (for the fastest ever circumnavigation) on <i>ENZA</i>
1994	IYRU World Sailor of the year
1994	UK Yachtsman of the Year (2nd time)
1995	Knighted by the Queen

About the VELUX 5 OCEANS – The Ultimate Solo Challenge

The VELUX 5 OCEANS is the oldest and most established, single-handed round the world yacht race. With a rich sporting heritage, the race has been contested every four years since 1982, previously under the titles of 'BOC Challenge' and more recently 'Around Alone.' The ultimate in human endeavour, more people have climbed Mount Everest and travelled to the moon, than have completed a solo circumnavigation.

In 2006, the race celebrates its 25th Jubilee year and, with new title sponsors, VELUX, is set to be greater than ever before. The 30,000 mile three-leg race is scheduled to begin in Bilbao on 22nd October and will stop in Australia and the USA before returning to Bilbao approximately 6 months later. The introduction of fewer stopovers and shorter preparation times between legs has been specifically introduced to provide a more cost effective global marketing opportunity for entrants and their sponsors.

Over the years, the race has consistently attracted a wide spread of entries from around the globe, making heroes of many celebrated yachtsmen and women, including Mike Golding, Philippe Jeantot, Giovanni Soldini, Jean-Luc van den Heede, Isabelle Autissier, Bernard Stamm and Emma Richards.

www.velux5oceans.com

About The VELUX Group

VELUX creates better homes by letting daylight and fresh air through the roof. The duct range contains a wide range of roof windows and skylights in many sizes, types and variants as well as a whole family of decoration and sunscreening products, roller shutters, installation products, remote control units and solar panels for installation in the sloping roof. VELUX Technology also supplies original VELUX components to their partners working in the field of roof window suncreening.

VELUX is one the strongest brands in the global building materials sector and is sold around the world. The VELUX Group has production companies in 10 countries and sales companies in nearly 40 countries. The Group is owned by VKR Holding A/S and, for competitive reasons, the financial results are incorporated into the VKR Group's consolidated accounts. In 2004, the VKR Group's total turnover was almost DKK 12.7 billion and the result before tax was DKK 2,097 million.

The core objective of the VELUX Group is described in the Model Company Objective: "It is the Group's purpose to establish a number of Model Companies, which cooperate in an exemplary manner. By Model Company we mean a company working with products useful to society, which treats its customers, suppliers, employees of all categories

and shareholders better than most other companies. A Model Company makes a profit, which can also finance growth and maintain financial independence.”

In the VELUX Group, results are achieved through united effort. Our core values are commitment, mutual respect, improvements, local initiatives and thoroughness. At the beginning of 2005, some 8,500 people were employed in the VELUX Group.

www.VELUX.com

About Clipper Ventures Plc

This year marks the 37th anniversary of Sir Robin Knox-Johnston's historic solo and non-stop circumnavigation in 1970. Now, as Chairman of Clipper Ventures PLC, he is at the forefront of promoting round the world yacht racing. Clipper Ventures, the marine sports company founded in 1995 and listed on AIM stock market in London in 1999, is focussed on developing and promoting major events capable of attracting significant participation, income, media coverage and associated sponsorship revenue. The company owns the rights to the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race, the VELUX 5 OCEANS, and Zapcat Racing, the world's largest one-design powerboat series.

www.clipper-ventures.com

About Bilbao (Basque Country)

Set in the province of Bizkaia, the City of Bilbao, in a joint initiative with the Diputacion Foral de Bizkaia and the Basque Government, has committed to be the official host port for both the start and finish of the 2006/7 VELUX 5 OCEANS. Bilbao is the economic capital of the Basque country in the north of the Iberian Peninsula and has historically strong ties to the oceans. Renowned for its spectacular Guggenheim Museum and having recently undergone significant urban regeneration and development, the city will provide an outstanding backdrop for the race. The race will be based in a new marina and waterfront development at the Port of Getxo, which is linked directly to the city by a new metro system designed by Norman Foster.

www.bilbao.net / www.bizkaia.net

About Fremantle (Australia)

At the mouth of the Swan River, the vibrant port town of Fremantle is located 20 minutes' drive southwest of Perth, Western Australia. Rich in heritage buildings and attractions, maritime history and culture, visitors are guaranteed to enjoy the relaxed outdoor lifestyle, some of the country's best beaches, bustling markets, nightlife, unrivalled sporting facilities and amazing marine adventures. Skippers of the VELUX 5 OCEANS will be welcomed into Fishing Boat Harbour to cannon fire (of a friendly nature) from Fremantle's historic Roundhouse, reminiscent of the heady days of Australia's 1987 America's Cup defence.

www.westernaustralia.com

About Norfolk, Virginia (USA)

Norfolk, which is home to Naval Station Norfolk, the largest military station in the world, can host hundreds of vessels at one time including cruise ships, destroyers and submarines and once made history when it berthed five nuclear aircraft carriers at the same time. The port will provide the skippers and ground crews of the VELUX 5 OCEANS with world class facilities.

The City is bordered by the Chesapeake Bay and the Hampton Roads Harbour, one of the most famous sailing areas in the USA which attracts hundreds of thousands of yachts and sailing fanatics to the area every year and has played host to some of the world's major sailing events including the Volvo Ocean Race and the Mount Gay Rum Sailing Week. The situation of the City also makes it an idea venue for the VELUX 5 OCEANS providing unique opportunities to watch the fleet arrive from vantage points on the coast and on the water.

www.norfolk.gov