



FARR YACHT DESIGN'S "VIRBAC" WINS TRANSAT JACQUES VABRE IN OPEN 60 MONOHULL CLASS

Bahia de Salvador, Brazil (18 November 2003) – VIRBAC, the first Open 60 designed by Farr Yacht Design, skippered by Jean Pierre Dick and Nicolas Abiven, won the Transat Jacques Vabre, Open 60 Class, today in dramatic fashion. Virbac's win is an impressive victory considering the Farr Yacht Design product was competing against second and third generation efforts from other design houses.

After a rough start in stormy conditions Virbac claimed the lead on day 8 of the 16-day race and never looked back. Virbac's win came by the way of better all around performance over a broad range of conditions, allowing Virbac to set up a solid lead that was never threatened as the race progressed. With several days' runs in excess of 300 miles and one day of 364 miles, Virbac showed consistent, superior speed in many of the conditions she is likely to encounter during next year's Vendee Globe. The new yacht built by Cookson Boats in New Zealand met all expectations.

"Jean-Pierre and Nicolas have done an outstanding job. There is no question that they and their support team are a large part of this success and the team at Farr Yacht Design is fortunate to have them as a client", said Vice President - Russell Bowler.

Beyond research and development, the design team played a physical role too. Team members Steve Morris and Mick Price spent several days and nights in the Bay of Biscay, in winds up to 40 knots, sailing with and helping Jean Pierre and his team learn about the boat and gaining valuable first hand experience that will greatly aid in the development of Farr Yacht Design's new Volvo Open 70 design.

Steve Morris, Vice President, commented: "Virbac is fantastic to sail, blasting along at high speed all the time. The 60 foot yacht is extremely responsive and a joy to steer with a lightly loaded tiller, achieving our design aims of a well balanced, easily driven boat".

Virbac is the latest generation in design thinking from Farr Yacht Design and this breakthrough is directly attributable to the expert research and development team, led by Britt Ward, as well as their many years of America's Cup, IMS, and Volvo Ocean Race success. "The Virbac design effort will serve as a model for the upcoming Volvo Ocean Race that will take place with boats built to the new Volvo Open 70 Rule", said Pat Shaughnessy, Design Project Manager. With input from the success of Virbac and feedback over the past few months, Farr Yacht Design has designed and built a specific one-third scale Volvo Open 70 model for tank testing and are now pursuing research of this new concept. They expect to be able to provide a Volvo Open 70 design for construction starts early in 2004 that will dominate the front of the fleet as Virbac has in the Open 60 fleet.

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Farr Yacht Design, Ltd. has earned its reputation over the last 25 years as the world's leading sailing yacht design firm with 40 World Championships and 6 victories in the Whitbread Round the World and Volvo Ocean Race.

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