



## RACE FOUR 1985-86

Winner	L'Esprit d'Equipe
Skipper	Lionel Péan/FRA
Boat	Philippe Briand 58' sloop
Flag	France
Elapsed time	132.00.15.19
Corrected time	111.23.09.49

### Podium positions (on corrected time)

1	L'Esprit d'Equipe (111.23.09.49)
2	Philips Innovator (112:21:31:37)
3	Fazer Finland (115:00:49:10)

### COURSE

Leg 1	Portsmouth - Cape Town
Leg 2	Cape Town - Auckland
Leg 3	Auckland - Punta del Este
Leg 4	Punta del Este – Portsmouth
Distance	26,095 nm
Entries	15 boats

START DATE	LEG DISTANCE	WINNER
28-Sep-05	7,350	L'Esprit d'Equipe
04-Dec-85	7,300	Philip's Innovator
15-Feb-86	6,215	L'Esprit d'Equipe
09-Apr-86	5,875	L'Esprit d'Equipe

### 1985-86 Overview

- Two boats did not complete the course.
- Two boats were dismantled.
- Rock star Simon Le Bon's Drum lost her keel and capsized during the Fastnet Race. The damage was immense.
- It was the first time a boat that had already competed in the race before (33 Export 1981-82) L'Esprit d'Equipe became the overall winner of the Whitbread Trophy.
- It was the first time France had won the race.
- L'Esprit d'Equipe carried the smallest crew with only eight crewmembers.
- Each of the 15 entries was fitted with an Argos tracking beacon, but they were unreliable.
- Peter Blake, skipper of Lion New Zealand, was back for the fourth time.
- Tracy Edwards made her debut as part of the paying crew onboard Bob Salmon's Norsk Data GB and then, from Cape Town onwards, Atlantic Privateer.
- Atlantic Privateer dismantled on Leg 1 and retired from the leg.
- After completing Leg 1, Eric Tabarly and Cote d'Or were penalised one day for every following leg after changing her keel, which was forbidden.
- It was the first race that the crews spent Christmas Day at sea.
- Atlantic Privateer beat NZI Enterprise into Auckland by two minutes. NZI Enterprise was dismantled shortly into the third leg and retired from the race.
- Customs officials with sniffer dogs boarded Drum just minutes after the finish to see whether the rock star had picked up any illegal substances in Uruguay.
- HRH The Princess of Wales presented the Whitbread Trophy.

### Leg 1 Portsmouth to Cape Town

The dense fog on the start line set the tone for a typically challenging leg. Conditions swung from one extreme to the other. Southeasterly gales created by the more southerly position of the South Atlantic High turned what should have been a fast reach to Cape Town into a battle against the breeze and a nasty cross sea. The rigid rigging of the maxis and their composite hulls took a beating and Drum diverted towards Namibia because of severe delamination to the hull. The gale blew out, the wind went light and favourable, and the yacht therefore changed course and finished the leg in Cape Town.

Atlantic Privateer dismasted after days of plunging in big seas. A jury rig was stepped in Namibia but that too came down and the crew retired from the leg and motored to the finish. The smaller boats, being up to 1,000 nm behind, missed the storm completely and were able to carry their spinnakers in moderate weather down the coast.

UBS Switzerland and Lion New Zealand crossed the finish line 16 hours apart after 34 days of racing while L'Esprit d'Equipe won the leg on corrected time.

### Leg 2 Cape Town to Auckland

Eric Tabarly agreed to concede one day per leg as a penalty for replacing his keel on Cote d'Or and the fleet started in light airs much to the crew's disappointment.

Philips Innovator destroyed her navigation antennae. The problem was thrown into sharp focus when the yacht had a near miss with an outlying island off Kerguelen.

As the fleet rounded Cape Reinga on the run into Auckland, NZI Enterprise and Atlantic Privateer were in front with UBS Switzerland and Lion New Zealand not far behind, though soon after Lion New Zealand slowed with damage to her rudder caused by a collision with a whale.

On the approach to Auckland, the leading pair split. Atlantic Privateer stayed close to the shore while NZI Enterprise went further out. NZI Enterprise moved within half a mile of the leader, but it was Atlantic Privateer who finished first, followed two minutes later by the NZI Enterprise. All 15 yachts completed the leg, which was a race record, but it was the Dutch Phillips Innovator, who posted their first win on handicap, followed closely by L'Esprit d'Equipe.

### Leg 3 Auckland to Punta del Este

New Zealand's Prime Minister David Lange fired the start gun for Leg 3 on February 15, 1986. Three days later, the mast on NZI Enterprise came crashing down, putting an end to Taylor's campaign. The problems of getting a replacement mast from England proved too difficult and Taylor retired.

The crew of Drum were far happier than when they left Cape Town, believing that their major incidents to the boat were now over. However, the boat was rolled twice on Leg 4 and was knocked down for around five minutes, leaving the spinnaker shredded and a spinnaker bag wrapped round the propeller. Magnus Olsson dived into the freezing waters to solve the problem but he was unconscious when the crew pulled him back on board. He made a full recovery.

Lion New Zealand sighted an iceberg close to starboard at 54 degrees south, estimated to be 1,500 feet long and 300 feet high. During a spinnaker change in 35 knots of wind, the crew lost control of the new, smaller spinnaker. Ed Danby went aloft to free it at the masthead, but as he was hoisted, his harness unbuckled itself. He saved himself from falling into the sea or crashing to the deck below, by clinging to a spreader. He stayed there in the heavy rolling conditions until another man was hauled up to help him down.

L'Esprit D'Equipe broached and was knocked down, damaging her mast in the process. The crew made elaborate repairs and then watched the repairs in case it broke.

The fleet approached Cape Horn in calm waters, due partially to the start of the race being one month later than previously. UBS Switzerland rounded first.

The UBS Switzerland crew were first over the line, nine hours ahead of Drum and nine hours and 20 minutes before Atlantic Privateer. Behind the maxis, L'Esprit d'Equipe took the leg on corrected time from Equity & Law and regained the overall handicap lead by a margin of nearly five hours.

#### Leg 4 Punta del Este to Portsmouth

As the final leg unfolded, the big maxis were battling for a win on elapsed time and the rest of the fleet was vying for a podium place on corrected time. Blake, lying second on elapsed time, could only win if UBS Switzerland suffered breakages and Drum, who had come second in Uruguay, was within 18 hours of Lion New Zealand.

UBS Switzerland went east of the Azores High and entered a fast frontal system, while Drum opted to pick up the southerly winds around the back of the High, which slowed them down. With just a few days left, they were becalmed and the gap to the leader stretched to 500 miles, which at the finish line in Portsmouth, translated into a 40-hour deficit.

At the finish, Drum was overtaken by Cote d'Or, who crossed the line three and a half hours ahead. On arrival in Portsmouth customs officers, accompanied by sniffer dogs, boarded Drum just minutes after the finish to see whether the rock star had picked up any illegal substances in Uruguay.

Lion New Zealand and Peter Blake arrived soon after to retain second place overall on elapsed time and the little French boat L'Esprit d'Equipe arrived in eighth place, some four days after UBS Switzerland to take the 1985 Whitbread Trophy.