

## Read my blog

News, views and asides – keep up-to-date between issues on Elaine Bunting's blog on [yachtingworld.com](http://yachtingworld.com)

not get the permit and so did not comply with the due diligence of the search and rescue (SAR) that it entailed.

I told him to get out of the Ross Sea no later than 20 February as conditions can get very bad after that," McIntyre reports. "He arrived and, unbelievably, was apparently trying to get to the South Pole when the rest of the world's governments and private companies, government and private, were shutting down for the season." The tragedy may have serious ramifications for cruising yachts intending to sail to Antarctica in the future, believes Skip Novak. "This guy lurches from one port to the next and it ended in tragedy. The ramifications will be enormous."

Antarctica is no longer a wilderness, it's a managed territory with guidelines that have been in place for decades," he says. "You have to apply to one of the Antarctic Treaty countries for a permit and you have to meet stringent environmental concerns, an R plan and you have to have insurance with a very high level of liability. If you don't, you can be prosecuted."

There's a massive investment in equipment to prove your capabilities of self-sufficiency and you create some sort of fiasco you are liable for that."

Novak thinks the fact that the yachts were asked in New Zealand and proves "there are numerous perforations in how this is controlled and managed. People don't have to know that he was sailing without a permit."

Novak agrees that policing yachts in the Antarctic is possible, but thinks that with "many eyes and ears there" yachts without permits could be spotted later. But one safeguard that has been mooted and may be implemented again is 'port safe protocols', whereby authorities in

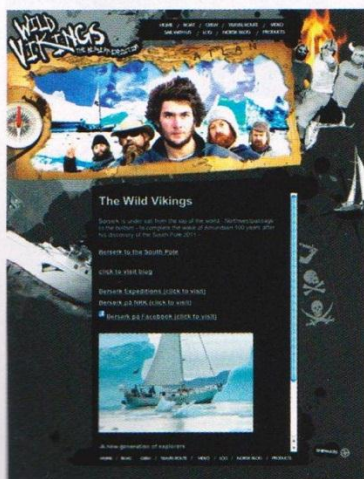


High Latitudes

key ports such as Ushuaia in Argentina, Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands and Puerto Williams in Chile don't issue exit papers to yachts leaving for Antarctica until they have inspected their permits.

"Yachts are seen by the Antarctic Treaty as loose cannons. They lurk around and go everywhere in self-mode. Cruise ships especially are looking out for yachts making mistakes," Novak believes.

Around 30-40 yachts sail to Antarctica every season. In comparison, there are some 25-30,000 visitors a year by cruise ship, but the routes and landing places are all restricted and carefully regulated.

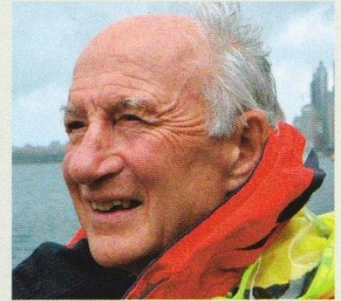


The 'Wild Vikings' website of Jarle Andhøy describes his many escapades



Experienced Antarctic sailor Skip Novak believes the yacht *Berserk* could well have iced up and capsized. "You can get inches of ice on the rigging," he says

“Yachts are seen by the Antarctic Treaty as loose cannon”



## Top award for Berrimilla voyage

Australian sailor Alex Whitworth, 66 (above), has deservedly been awarded the most prestigious accolade in cruising circles, the Cruising Club of America's Blue Water Medal.

Whitworth was cited for his circumnavigation of the world via the North West Passage, west to east last year (see *Yachting World*, July 2010).

This was his second circumnavigation in his 30-year old Joubert-designed Brolga 33 *Berrimilla*. The first, sailed two-handed with fellow Australian Peter Crozier, took them round the world to take part in the Rolex Sydney-Hobart and Rolex Fastnet Races in the same year.

The latest epic took *Berrimilla* via the North West Passage to Falmouth then back to Hobart and Sydney via Lisbon and the remote Kerguelen Islands.

The Blue Water Medal (below) has been given to mark exceptional voyages continuously since 1923.

