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Articles

## From UTC Compiègne to the Atlantic Ocean

Tom Laperche, an undergraduate at UTC, majoring in Mechanical Engineering, with his family background of seasoned sailors, caught the sailing bug himself when he was a teenager. He was admitted to the UTC “Sport Elite” option and has been able to balance his academic studies with his ambitions at the helm.

18 Sep 2017

## From UTC Compiègne to the Atlantic Ocean

The head of this option, Arnaud Vannicate, monitors Tom's progress and advises him so he can devote himself to his « passion », sailing. When you are enrolled to study at Compiègne, it's somewhat difficult to train at sea during the week days.

The option allows Sports Elite students to adapt the academic course schedule without changing the total number of semester for the engineering diploma to comply with the needs of a high-level sport. So, for several days a month Tom goes family to his family setting in Brittany to practice. He has no regrets at all because this optional choice combines a secure professional future and gaining some insights for my sport.

*"It was logical for me to follow engineering courses, insamuch as sailing is now highly technical and increasingly so. You have to understand scientifically how structures and materials behave and this helps in the competitions, over and above the sensations of sailing."* Tom insists on the fact that today's seagoing "F1s" are becoming technology-intensive concentrates. The general use now made of foils that enable boats to "fly" over the waters, our understanding of lift, pressure and speed has become vital to sailors. The example of ocean-going skipper François Gabart, who also holds a Mechanical engineering diploma is typical of this increasing orientation trend.

Tom envisages himself as a future sailor-engineer working in design office to prepare tomorrows Formula Ones. Since the month of May, Tom is seeing one of his childhood dreams come alive. He has been selected for the famous Transat Jacques Vabre between France and Brazil. *"It's terrific to be in the same race as the famous sailors"*, insists Tom. For this challenge, our 19 year old Breton will make best use of his sailing talents and also his engineering skills.

His single hull 12 boat will race in Class 40 and is almost ready. *"As of July, I shall supervise the interior fittings and try to lighten all the equipment as much as is possible. After that I'll do the fine tuning of the boat and get ready for the race start in November"*. We wish Tom "Fair winds" for him and for his boat-mate too!

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Avec ses 9 laboratoires de recherche et son ouverture internationale, l'UTC se positionne parmi les meilleures écoles d'ingénieurs dans le monde.

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