

Ouest France, December 2-3, 2006

The *Clipper Paris* was put to sea today

The SMCN launched the clipper *Paris*. A 54m vessel designed to navigate the surrounding waters of the Eiffel Tower.

(photo caption) SMCN's entire crew attended the afternoon benediction of the clipper *Paris*.

A vessel that is destined to navigate along the Seine, next to the Eiffel Tower, will be launched at sea this morning at the quay des Charbonniers.

Built in Société de Métallurgie et de Construction Navale's (SMCN) ship yard, the clipper *Paris* will set sail in 2007 along the Seine, at the foot of the Eiffel Tower. Completing the 'Compagnie des Bateaux à Roue's' fleet, this 54m vessel will host guests for cocktail-dinners. Synonym to a certain luxury clientele, the finishing touches follow suit. Friday, the atmosphere was cheerful in SMCN's hangar, at the Penhoët round-about, for the ship's benediction, freshly painted white, for father Jean-Luc Tessier and employees.

Designed after the great yachts in the beginning of the 20th century, the sharpened hull resembles a clipper, such as those that cruise along the Mississippi. But, allowing for new technologies : "the wheelhouse, chimney stack and the masts, mounted on jacks, may all be lowered to pass under bridges", explains Jean-Claude Pelleteur with enthusiasm. Director of the SMCN, he was honoured this contract which provided 10 000 work hours "for a sum of 3 to 4 million euros", confirms Didier Spade, ship owner from the 'Compagnie des Bateaux à Roue' who would love to "add four or five identical clippers to his fleet".

From river to river via the sea

Enough to make Jean-Claude Pelleteur's team dream, but the negotiations are not there. Despite, the ship owner does not regret changing his habit of building vessels near their ports of harbour. "I appreciate even more the choice to build in Saint-Nazaire where my father, present today, worked to decorate many vessels from the 'Compagnie Générale Trasatlantique'.

Transported by an Aker train, the clipper *Paris* will launch tomorrow morning, quay des Charbonniers. After further tests and finishing work, the ship may arrive in the capital. Propelled by two 190hp engines, the clipper may leave Saint Nazaire in January and descend down the estuary, towards the Atlantic and the Channel before entering the Seine. "This trip will be taken in daily stages and according to the weather forecast, as this vessel is not severe-weather proofed. Its main purpose is for calm, river cruising."