



NEWSLETTER #3

FIRST LONG DISTANCE NAVIGATION

Dominique Wavre and Michèle Paret have just concluded a 2'000 miles trip between La Rochelle and Gibraltar and back. This was their first long distance navigation since the Mirabaud Open 60' came out of the yard following the refit and fine tuning it went through over the spring. "All went well", commented Magali Paret, who is the project's onshore manager when the boat is at sea. "They have been reaching through the Bay of Biscay, with winds blowing up to 30-35 knots. It sounds like it was a great trip."



The way back from Gibraltar, against the prevailing winds, was less comfortable yet also very successful for the Swiss skipper: "The boat is just fantastic", he said. "The changes we made over the winter are very positive and I am extremely happy. We could validate some new features, and also find back our bearings on board the boat. The start of the Barcelona World Race approaches rapidly. We are far from being ready but we are on track and so far everything goes the way we want."

At the end of the trip, the only unhappy one was a 3-4 meters shark who made an unfortunate and fatal encounter with Mirabaud's keel... "We were sailing at fifteen knots when we hit it", commented Dominique. "The shock was quite violent and we had to stop and reverse to take the remnants of the unfortunate shark away from the keel..."



AT LAST...

Before heading to Gibraltar, Dominique and Michèle had the great pleasure to launch their boat for the first time since its refit. They then organised several training sessions off La Rochelle. The cameraman Roman Brunisholz was on board; discover his report by clicking on this link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iUag2eGVByg>



FIRST AERIAL SHOOT

Thierry Martinez, the team's official photographer, took the first aerial photos of the boat sailing in the Bay of Biscay. "The conditions were not optimal", he explained. "The sky was a bit grey and the wind was soft. We postponed the shooting day after day during more than a week in order to have the best possible conditions. It was quite complicated because we had to take the tides into account: the boat can't just leave La Rochelle at any time. There are also places where the sea is more beautiful than others and you need to know this. Finally, many teams are getting ready for the Route du Rhum and they all want to take aerial photos of their boat. As there is only one good pilot for sailing photos in the area, there is often a long waiting list... But at the end of the day I am quite happy with the photos. And I look forward to our next photo shoot: the boat is superb and it is always a pleasure for me to work with Dominique."

Here are some of Thierry's photos:



THE PROGRAMME

Mirabaud is back in La Rochelle and will stay there until the end of November. The next milestone is the boat's measurement, scheduled for mid-September. Dominique will then head to the south of France, for les Voiles de St-Tropez, before getting back to his boat. The Mirabaud will then be dismasted and all the running rigging replaced, in October. The trip to Barcelona will take place by the end of November. There will be one month left to fine-tune the last details before the start of the race, scheduled on December 31.



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