



NEWSLETTER #5

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TWO MONTHS TO THE START...

Dominique Wavre, Michèle Paret and their yacht 'Mirabaud' are in the final phase of preparations for the start of the Barcelona World Race, planned for the 31st December 2010. "Last week the mast was removed for a final check of the rigging," explains Dominique. "We've changed the runners as well as some of the sidestay elements (the cables that support the mast). Getting a good crane driver is always one of our main worries but luckily this time he was great and everything went without a hitch!" Once lifted out, the spar was moved to the hangar where stringent tests, including an ultrasound, were carried out. "The keel has also undergone tests," says Dom. "Basically we test the flex and twist of the keel by giving it a shock and then measuring the vibrations using a special device. This gives us a sinusoidal curve we can then analyse."

The hull has been race-prepared and the yacht is now being configured specifically for the Barcelona World Race before her final delivery to Spain, planned for the end of November.



The Mirabaud yacht has been dismasted and its hull repainted

DENTISTS, DOCTORS AND...LAWYERS

Over the coming weeks, Dominique and Michèle will be subjected to a battery of tests in order to qualify for the race. "Clearly, you have to be in top condition to take part in this kind of race," explains Dominique, "and the training is part of our normal race preparation. The difference nowadays is that we have to undergo a whole series of tests and provide the organisers with certificates for everything. It's a precaution against a precaution!" laughs the skipper, "Everyone is protecting themselves; race organisers, insurers, in case an accident occurs that could be deemed avoidable. Seriously though, we work closely with doctors and dentists who we can contact in case a situation arises during the race. If we need to, they can advise us before we go to the official doctor, Jean-Yves Chauve, who has considerable experience in this kind of event."

A QUESTION OF PRESSURE

The Mirabaud sailors will be undergoing training at the beginning of November with Jean-Yves Bernot, one of off-shore sailing's leading meteorologists. The intensive preparation will enable the pair to brush up on their weather knowledge and to get the most from the many forecasting tools available.

Routing is not allowed under the rules of the Barcelona World Race; however the sailors have access to an extensive range of information, in particular via the web. "The key is to be able to use the right tools in the right way," says Dominique. "During our training, Jean-Yves will be updating our general knowledge and reviewing the different sources of weather information available. His input is vital as he really has his finger on the pulse."

When racing, Dominique and Michèle compare the weather information they receive from the 2, 3, 5 or 10 day forecasts with the 'polar curve' for the boat (the predicted performance based on the direction and strength of the wind). Jointly analysing these two sources of data gives a multitude of theoretical routes, the fastest of which can then be chosen. Of course, it's not always an exact science and a certain amount of 'gut feeling' and experience is always essential!



Dominique and Michèle will spend a lot of time at their chart table, looking at the weather files

COME AND SUPPORT DOMINIQUE AND MICHÈLE FOR THE START OF THE BARCELONA WORLD RACE!

The start of the Barcelona World Race is planned for the 31st of December at midday, just off the city of Barcelona. The purpose-built race village is open to the public from the 18th of December and all the teams will be present from this date. Be one of the tens of thousands of supporters expected in the village; follow the final preparations directly from the pontoons and take part in the many events planned in the build up to the start.

All the teams, including Mirabaud, have their own official stand in the village. Supporters of Dominique and his team will be able to find posters, postcards and stickers here, as well as autograph signing sessions (details will be posted soon).



Surprise encounter with Alex Thomson's Hugo Boss during a training session

On the 31st December, the yachts will leave the port at 9.30am; an emotional time for any round the world race and the occasion for a big send-off for the teams. Spectator boats will be available to follow the yachts out for the midday start – places are limited, so sign up as soon as possible with the race organisers. For those onshore, the yachts will sail close inshore along the beach before heading out to deeper waters.



Dominique and his technical team have been overlooking the craning operations

A FAMILY CHRISTENING

'Mirabaud' will be officially christened on the 18th December at 4.30pm in Barcelona. The ceremony will be fun and informal and open to all friends and supporters of Dominique, Michèle and the Mirabaud team. Anyone interested in joining us should sign up by sending an email to media@maxcomm.ch



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