



NEWSLETTER #6

Thursday 18th November 2010

SETTING COURSE FOR BARCELONA

Dominique Wavre and Michèle Paret will be leaving La Rochelle for a few months, heading for Barcelona, from the 18th November. "We've decided to bring the delivery forward as early as possible to give us the widest weather window," explains Dominique, "as this time of the year the Bay of Biscay is stormbound for one day out of every three. This also gives us more time once we get to Barcelona to iron out any last-minute details on board Mirabaud. From experience we know that we won't have much time available during the last ten days, so getting to Barcelona a little bit earlier will mean we don't have to rush the final preparations and can approach the start-line as calmly as possible."

If everything goes according to plan, the delivery should take around ten days. "The forecast allows us to plan as far as Gibraltar, but once into the Mediterranean anything can happen. The worst thing for us would be to have to motor if there's no wind, as our engines lack a certain amount of power! After our arrival in Barcelona, we'll have a few jobs to do such as checking the boats systems and measurement with the Race Organisation, stocking up on food and stowing the material required for the race. Despite all of that, we're pretty relaxed; the boat is going well, her speed is good and it's a good sign to be almost ready with a month and a half still to go."



Dominique and Michèle in the first hours of the day during a test session on the Bay of Biscay

DOMINIQUE WAVRE'S ANALYSIS OF THE ROUTE DU RHUM

Some of the competitors, including Michel Desjoyeaux (sailing on a brand-new boat) and Jean-Pierre Dick, will barely have time to down a glass of punch in Pointe à Pitre before they have to pack their boats up and load them onto a container ship bound for Barcelona. Once back in Europe, they will join Dominique Wavre and Michèle Paret for the start of the Barcelona World Race on the 31st of December.

"I've been closely following the Route du Rhum; it's a fascinating race", enthuses the Mirabaud skipper. "Usually I check the weather forecast and nav options every six hours so I can calculate my own theoretical routes."



A well lit and cosy cockpit, companion of long watches during the next round the world regatta

Despite his passion for the race, Dominique admits to a certain feeling of relief that he's not taking part in this edition of the Route du Rhum (this year the turnaround time before the Barcelona World Race is the shortest ever). "I would have been extremely stressed to be honest. The timing is so tight, there's no room for the slightest slip-up or unforeseen incident."

Impressed by the form shown by Roland Jourdain, Dominique considers that the biggest feature of this edition of the Route du Rhum is the similar performance of the fleet. "Although at the start of the race, the new generation boats took an early lead, this hasn't stopped the older boats rapidly catching up to take some of the higher positions. The fleet has stayed close together and it looks like it's the skippers and not the boats that are going to be the deciding factor in this Route du Rhum."

Commenting on the southerly route taken by Michel Desjoyeaux and his subsequent relatively poor position, Dominique admits that "from the comfort of my armchair, it's always a delicate subject analysing the tactical decisions taken by a skipper during a race. It's possible that with his boat still in the final preparation phase just before the start, he preferred to take the southerly route since statistically it offers a smoother ride and is therefore less risky for the boat. In general, it would have been the conservative option. But this is pure supposition on my part – only Michel would be able to explain his choice of route."

"To sum it up," continues Dominique, "I would say that the winning formula for this Route de Rhum is a well-tested boat that has already a reasonable mileage under her keel."

TOMORROW'S STARS

Some of sailing's new generation, competing in the 420 Autumn Nationals from the 28th to the 31st October in La Rochelle, took the opportunity to visit Mirabaud and spend some time with Dominique and Michèle.



The young talents from Lake Geneva had the opportunity to visit the Mirabaud during their trip in La Rochelle

"I was working on deck when I spotted a group of young sailors looking intently at the boat," smiles Dom. "I called them over; we introduced ourselves, and a couple of minutes later they were on board with us. It was great fun...I put them to work on the grinders and they were a great help. It's a shame we weren't sailing that day, otherwise I would have gladly taken them on as crew!"

The six crews from the Lake Geneva region, coached by Olympian Anne-Sophie Thilo, took on the best that France had to offer. The final result was a very positive one for the Swiss with all the teams (aside from the crew from Rolle who unfortunately suffered an injury) qualifying for the Gold Fleet.

The girls from Morges, Léa Rouiller and Zoé Pfeiffer, finished in 22nd place and were the 5th placed female crew out of a total of 105 boats. Closely following them was the second Morges team, Benoît Truc and Benoît Amsler, in 39th place; Jérémy Bachelin / Marion Amsler (42nd); Jocelyn Keller / Adrien Jayet (45th) and the Rigot brothers, Fabrice and Guillaume (49th).

THE PATH INTO BATTLE

After several weeks of delays, the long-awaited shots of Mirabaud with the wind in her sails were finally taken...definitely worth the wait!

The photoshoot had to be postponed due to several factors as the perfect formula is a pretty tricky one to get right. Firstly, the boat and crew have to be available, which is no mean feat given the tight schedule of safety tests, measurement and the busy life of the sailors. Then you need wind; not too much and not too little; something in the region of 18 to 30 knots. And some sunshine, of course! Finally you need a helicopter with an experienced pilot available at short notice in the region – not an easy task when the Route de Rhum is about to start. Not forgetting the photographer and film crew, also highly sought after in Saint-Malo and Pointe-à-Pitre.

Photographer Benoît Stichelbaut and cameraman Jean-René Keruzoré are two of the best in the business. Having studied the forecast in depth and after extensive discussion with Dominique and Michèle, they finally got the shots they needed on Wednesday 10th of November. Judge the results for yourself...



SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR DOMINIQUE AND MICHÈLE!

Des posters, des cartes postales et des autocollants aux couleurs de notre équipage préféré ont été produits en vue de la Barcelona World Race. Ils seront disponibles gratuitement dès le 10 décembre dans certains clubs de voile romands, ainsi qu'au bureau de l'agence MaxComm, 42 Quai Gustave Ador. N'hésitez pas à venir chercher votre exemplaire.



Dominique and Michèle will take the Mirabaud from La Rochelle to Barcelona as soon as the weather allows. More information on the team's website: www.dominiquewavre.com



DOMINIQUEWAVRE

www.dominiquewavre.com

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