



LOGBOOK

Tuesday 15th March 2011

STRANGE ROUTING

“NO ROOM FOR EMOTIONS”

WEATHER: Dying low pressure system.

WIND: southerly, 15 knots

BOAT SPEED: 5 knots

BREAKFAST: Cereals

MEAL N°1: Beef stew + blueberry yogurt

MEAL N°2: Pork

STRANGE ROUTING

Meteorologist Marcel Van Triest is now in charge of Mirabaud's destiny. From his office in Barcelona, he gives Dominique constant updates on the course he must steer and even tells the sailors when to switch on their engine.

"Yesterday, Mirabaud passed through a very deep low pressure system, with winds of over 40 knots and huge breakers," Marcel explained. "Shortly after losing the mast, I advised them to use engine power and head north-west in order to get out of the centre of the depression. Now that they are out of the worst of the conditions, the priority is to switch off the engine and preserve fuel as much as possible. They're in a tricky situation: they have enough fuel on board to cover around 80 nautical miles but have at least 500 nautical miles to reach land. They also need the motor to desalinate water and run the onboard instruments, including the communications systems."

"My priority has to be guaranteeing their security. We have to try and route them round the biggest low pressure systems but keep them moving in the right direction. The aim is not maximum speed but to head the right way bearing in mind the conditions. For the moment, I've advised them to get as far north as possible as they will have to get through a depression sometime on Thursday and we're trying to get them into the best position to deal with it. Once through that they should be able to head for land, although their final destination hasn't been decided on yet. At this stage Bahia Blanca or Mar de Plata could be good options.

"The most important thing at the moment is to preserve fuel. As they get closer to the coast, they might be able to find a fisherman who can sell them some diesel, but then again they would need some cash and I'm not sure they have any aboard!"



"At the end of the day, it all depends how effective their jury rig is. Whether they're sailing at three or six knots can make a huge difference to the routing but, as I mentioned before, the most important thing is where they get to, not how quickly they get there. Depending on how the weather pans out, I hope they will reach dry-land at the beginning of next week at the earliest.

“NO ROOM FOR EMOTIONS”

When contacted yesterday afternoon, Dominique admitted that he and Michèle are still running on adrenalin.



“We haven’t had time to really reflect on our situation and to let our emotions go. Since we were forced to abandon the Barcelona World Race, we’ve been working hard to get the boat into some kind of sea-worthy state. We’ve been planning how best to set up a jury rig and trying to get as much cleared up after the hammering we got yesterday.”

“Sailing through the storm without the mast to balance out the movement of the boat meant that we were knocked about all over the place and

were at serious risk of a knockdown by the waves. Thankfully we got through it and actually we were pretty pleasantly surprised by how the boat dealt with the conditions.”

Mirabaud’s co-skippers have been applauded for their rapid response, their bravery and for making the right decisions in a crisis. “It’s true that our reactions seem very emotionless and pragmatic,” comments Dominique. “But in a situation like this you just don’t have time to ask yourself 36 different

questions; you just have to react, quickly and effectively.”

The priority on board Mirabaud is now to preserve as much energy as possible. “We use dynamo lights, most of our routing instruments are switched off and we are being very careful about our water consumption.”

Based on current predictions, Mirabaud should reach land in anything between eight and fifteen days, which is well within the capacity of their food

rations. “Michèle is also doing much better than she was this time last week. She helped me enormously during the dismasting; she has been 100% by my side and is, like me, totally focused on the job of getting Mirabaud into port.”



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