



Communiqué de presse - Giancarlo Pedote: “Establishing a pre-race routine to get into the right frame of mind”

05 novembre 2024 - 17h53



As is the case before every race start, especially before the Vendée Globe, Giancarlo Pedote, skipper of the IMOCA Prysmian, follows some well-established rituals. Indeed, these familiar actions instil a sense of control and security, helping him to reduce stress and anxiety whilst also boosting his confidence. With less than ten days until he departs on his second round the world race, he shares how he organises his final moments ashore so he can handle the pressure better and fully focus on his performance.

“It’s always the same actions. It’s always the left leg first. Always a sock and a shoe. Then the right leg...” Nobody could forget the sports ritual of Zinedine Zidane.* The French footballing legend explained at the time that this little pre-match routine benefited his performance, his well-being and his overall success out on the pitch. In fact, it has long been proven that introducing such ‘habits’ enables athletes to improve their concentration, boost their confidence and their motivation, as well as cope with the pressure. *“Rituals provide a sense of structure and routine. They enable you to deal with high-pressure situations because they serve as an abiding feature in a period of uncertainty, thus providing a sense of stability”*, notes Giancarlo Pedote, who has organised his days with clockwork regularity during this three-week-long pre-start phase in Les Sables d’Olonne. *“Every morning when I wake, I turn on my computer and check out the grib files. At 8:30 am, I review the situation with the guys who make up the team. After that, I spend most of the day at the boat honing the final details. At the end of the day, I have a swim session with my pull buoy, paddles and bungee cord, then I walk along the embankment no longer thinking about anything before heading home and completely cutting myself off from everything. Ultimately, I live a kind of secret life, in my own world. That enables me to be present in the race village without really realising, which is a positive step forward because experience has taught me that you can’t afford to get swept up in the excitement of the pontoons if you are to hold onto all your energy and stay focused on your goal.”*

The exact same recipe albeit with a few little tweaks

Is he handling this stage of the competition any differently to the way he did four years ago on his first participation? *“Frankly no. Back then I was super focused and I’m just as focused this year. What has changed is having the public here, which differs to last time due to the Covid-19 epidemic. What has not changed is that I’m essentially here to do a race!”* continues the Florentine, who is pretty much sticking to the recipe he used in 2020. And for good reason, after all, why change a system that works? *“The basis of my preparation remains the same. If I’ve made any changes, it amounts to 10% at most,”* explains the skipper of the 60’ IMOCA in the colours of Prysmian. Examples of this include his victualling where he has reduced the quantity of food slightly, whilst counting on a little more variety. He’s taken a similar route with his ‘spare’ equipment, which has been carefully selected to resolve as much damage as possible. Equally, his clothing has been reduced by nearly a quarter in relation to last time and he plans to wash it with a little eco-friendly liquid detergent if need be. *“It’ll soon be time to take the big plunge. It’s important to ask yourself the final questions now because once the starting gun fires, the time for questions will be over and you’ll just be dealing with the consequences,”* says the Italian sailor. The latter has nevertheless introduced a new source of energy aboard his boat for this race with the installation of several solar panels aimed at improving output, whilst minimising his carbon footprint.

* Nobody could forget Zinedine Zidane’s sports ritual, which came to light over twenty years ago in the famous documentary *“Les yeux dans les Bleus”*, that used behind the scenes footage of the French Team during the 1998 World Cup.

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