



Communiqué de presse - Giancarlo Pedote: "It's like being in the doldrums from 25° south!"

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Currently approaching the equator, Giancarlo Pedote, the skipper of Prysmian competing in the Vendée Globe, is preparing to bid farewell to the southern hemisphere and start tackling the final phase of his singlehanded round the world. Traversing the doldrums, a zone that is notorious for its unpredictable winds and its oppressive conditions, is a crucial step in his journey. However, the hope of latching onto the NE'ly trade winds again and closing on Les Sables-d'Olonne are proving to be a valuable source of motivation. Amidst stifling heat and strategic adjustments to respond to the fluky winds, his progress towards the North Atlantic is a decisive moment in this demanding competition.

"I'm doing well and so is the boat. In the light conditions, it's possible to recuperate physically and return to a semblance of normality but the main objective remains to make it back to Les Sables-d'Olonne. It's somewhat illogical because even though you're getting some rest, the remaining miles are ticking off slower than you'd like so it's a bit tiresome at times." Indeed, the inter-tropical convergence zone is extending its grip particularly wide at the moment making navigation even more complex. As a result, the skipper of Prysmian is having to juggle with the light and unpredictable winds, a challenge that is as much mental as strategic. *"The doldrums are a long way south right now, which is rather unusual. In fact, it feels like we've been in it since the 25th parallel south with more and more light winds. I no longer have any clue how long it's been going on."* In these conditions, there is limited room for manoeuvre and each solo sailor is having to adapt to its position. For the Italian sailor, the most important thing is to hold his course whilst making the most of every sniff of breeze. *"With regards strategy, there's not a lot that can be done. Personally, I'm trying to make as much headway towards the equator as possible with the wind I have at my disposal. The Grib files aren't very reliable at the moment, so the idea is to maximise every opportunity to get in a bit of northing. I'm not casting my mind forward too much yet."*



The return to the northern hemisphere: a symbolic milestone

Crossing the equator represents so much more than a geographical point on a map. It is an important psychological milestone that brings the skipper another step closer to the finish. The NE'ly trade winds should also serve up some more consistent conditions and enable faster headway towards France's Vendée region. *"Rediscovering the northern hemisphere is mentally motivating. You feel as if you're closing on the end goal and the trade wind will give you the sense that you're heading in the right direction."* One of the paradoxes of the Vendée Globe lies in the fact that there

are brutal transitions between diametrically opposed environments. Having braved the icy conditions of the Southern Ocean, the sailor now has to contend with an oppressive heat. *"We're constantly switching from one extreme to the next. The temperate climates don't even last a week for the whole of the round the world. Yesterday, it was 34°C inside the boat and it wasn't easy but you end up getting used to it. Returning to the warmth after the Southern Ocean feels great."* Despite these constraints, the sailor is managing to keep things in perspective by recalling the challenges he overcame in the Deep South. *"When the heat gets wearing, I think back to the time I spent in the Indian and the Pacific, where I was closed in with the door shut. It's hot now but I can sail with the door open and let the light in. It's a completely different life!"* With the Florentine continuing to make headway towards Les Sables-d'Olonne, round two in the northern hemisphere will mark a giant leap forward in his journey tonight. As ever, Giancarlo Pedote will focus on giving his all with both patience and resilience as he takes on the final challenge of this singlehanded circumnavigation of the globe.

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