



Communiqué - Giancarlo Pedote: “The Vendée Globe is a restaurant where you don’t get to choose the menu!”

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This Tuesday at 08:34 UTC, after 85 days, 20 hours and 32 minutes at sea, Giancarlo Pedote crossed the Vendée Globe finish line offshore of Les Sables d’Olonne. The skipper of Prysmian, who completed the race with a stellar 8th place four years ago, finished his circumnavigation of the globe in 22nd place this time around. A result that is below his initial expectations, it in no way dulls the intensity and richness of this experience. Remaining true to his methodical and enthusiastic approach, the Italian has once again proven that he can deal with the vagaries of offshore racing with resilience and bring his A’ game whatever the circumstances.



From the first few weeks out on the racetrack, Giancarlo Pedote demonstrated his taste for a challenge and his boldness. Offshore of the Canaries, he didn’t think twice about taking a risky tactical option with a brief stint traversing a light patch and moving up to the top of the leader board. However, risks at sea rarely come without repercussions and ultimately this decision caused him to slide back down the ranking. A frustrating situation, it also gave an insight into his mindset: always poised to seize on an opportunity in order to make a difference. The next section of the racetrack was punctuated by several close-contact battles, particularly in the South Atlantic. During these times, the Florentine, who is well-versed in fierce competition, fought tooth and nail to stay in the race. However, things took a rather different turn on the approach to the Southern Ocean.

The Southern Ocean a tough test

Upon rounding the Cape of Good Hope, the skipper of Prysmian was still very much in the match but the Indian Ocean was about to pack a violent punch. Indeed, a series of low-pressure systems rolled through with no respite leading to some testing times. *“It was as if I was caught in a giant washing machine,”* he admitted at the time as he described the rough ride created by the howling wind and the raging seas. The damage suffered at this point in the race marked a turning point in his race: his port rudder, which is essential to the boat’s smooth handling had dislodged from its housing. It was a major issue during some tricky conditions. *“At one point, I really had to question whether I would be able to go all the way in this race,”* he conceded. Each time the boat accelerated and reached 30 knots, the appendage would come loose, forcing him to slow up so as to limit the damage. *“I quickly grasped the fact that I couldn’t fight it as I’d already had a similar experience in the Mini 6.50.”* Despite the many hours spent trying to repair it, he finally had to accept that he would need to sail at a ‘reduced’ speed, which prevented him from keeping pace with his rivals in front.

A return leg coloured by perseverance

In the South Atlantic, Giancarlo once again became hopeful that he'd be able to make up ground on his rivals. However, his rudder issue and the variable conditions continued to keep him in check. *"The climb up the Atlantic was trying with either loads of breeze or complete calm. The moments where the sea was fairly calm so I could really pick up the pace were few and far between,"* he explained on his arrival dockside. Despite these difficulties, Giancarlo managed to hold his head high. *"You have to be able to accept certain things in offshore racing. My goal was to get the boat safely back to port and learn the necessary lessons along the way."* The last few days of racing treated him to one last battle with Isabelle Joschke and Damien Seguin, but caution guided his choices, prompting him to avoid taking needless risks a few miles from the finish.

An adventure punctuated by resilience and the desire to raise his game

Crossing the finishing line this 4 February, he made no secret of his satisfaction, despite the disappointment of the ranking. *"I was eager to make the finish. The final stretch dragged on a bit this time."* *It has to be said that four years ago, the Italian skipper circumnavigated the globe in 80 days compared with 85 this year, a difference which weighed heavily on the sailor in the final weeks of the race. More complicated than the last, this second Vendée Globe gave him the chance to discover even more about how to deal with the unknowns and dig deeper. "The Vendée Globe is a restaurant where you don't get to choose the menu: you have whatever the chef, Neptune, decides to serve up."* Posting an impressive performance four years ago with his 8th place, the sailor has proven that he is as determined as ever, with a taste for a challenge and on a permanent quest to raise his game. And though this edition has left him a little frustrated, it will also spur him on to come back stronger. *"Every Vendée Globe is unique and has to be approached with humility. This race is unpredictable. I'm proud to have completed this edition, despite the difficulties."* For Giancarlo Pedote, pushing back his limits is an endless quest and this latest experience has only fuelled his ambition to progress ever further.

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