



Communiqué - Giancarlo Pedote: “Trust in your strategy in the hope that it pays off!”

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This Saturday, as he prepares to tackle his sixth day at sea in the Vendée Globe, some 500 miles offshore of the Western Sahara, Giancarlo Pedote is currently at front of the pack after a spectacular comeback late yesterday. Indeed, the skipper of Prysmian, who erred on the side of caution at the start of the race, especially in the powerful gale that scooped up the fleet off Cape Finisterre, managed to weave his way along in a favourable vein of breeze in a vast area of calm, which is currently blocking the way forward for the fleet. A welcome boost, the Florentine sailor remains very modest about this rather atypical and uncertain situation, whilst keeping in mind that anything is possible!



“For the past 24 hours, the focus out on the racetrack has been all about getting the boat making headway, which isn’t easy given the randomness of the situation,” explains Giancarlo Pedote, who has really played his hand well since passing the Canaries. *“The general outlook is complex. A hefty depression of 998 hectopascals is located to the north of the Madeira archipelago, completely crushing the Azores High and the associated trade wind system. Today it is the main actor in this Atlantic zone and it’s completely muddling up the mix,”* says the skippers of Prysmian. Within this context, it’s not easy to carve out a path, which is dictated by the clouds at times and hence lacks directional stability. *“The guys in the leading pack have been forced to make westing. Luck hasn’t been on their side since they’d hoped to be scooped up by some breeze but were instead forced to climb up to the north-west when their trajectory up to that point had been almost perfect,”* says the Italian skipper. Meantime, he has managed to take advantage of the opportunities coming his way to benefit from a narrow corridor of breeze a little further to the east.

Gaining ground to both the south and west

“After a race start that saw me place the emphasis on good seamanship so as not to get to Cape Finisterre with a boat bent in half, I’ve spent precious little time in my bunk, instead racing with the pedal to the metal. Yesterday, I snapped up an opportunity to maximise my gains to the south but I’m keeping a cool head because things will likely snarl up pretty much right across the board at some point and I’m well aware that those to the west are due to be the first to see the fresh breeze,” notes the sailor. As a result, he is logically seeking to gain ground to the west too in order to latch onto more pressure as quickly as possible, whilst also keeping an eye on the daring option by Jean Le Cam, who has clearly decided to try to confound the statistics and the forecasts. *“It’s an interesting choice. After passing Madeira, I*

too considered adopting the same course. However, there is a problem with it: the gateway into the doldrums," explains Giancarlo, who believes that salvation lies further to the west, even if there are still a number of questions that remain unanswered at this stage.



A giant slalom amidst the wind holes

"There are a lot of wind holes and there's a risk that we'll get caught out. When the situation is as complicated as this, it's hard to second guess anything. However, it's important to trust in your strategy in the hope that it pays off!" stresses the skipper, who is currently lying in second place and has been polled struggling to make an average speed of 5.8 knots. *"The NW'y wind we're contending with right now is a little mixed, which isn't making life any easier. Over the coming hours, it's still not going to be very windy, with some real light patches at times. To avoid these, it'll be important to maintain some speed, but nobody has any just now! In reality, there's not a lot we can do as we wait for the trade wind, which would normally be accompanying us at these latitudes, to pick back up. As such, I'm continuing to do my job as best I can and make the most of any opportunities that come my way as a result of this interesting little corridor of breeze I'm in,"* concludes Giancarlo Pedote.

