



IDEC SPORT: Boat – 1, Shark – 0

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(November 25, 2015; Day 4) – Skipped by Francis Joyon, the six sailors on IDEC SPORT are in great shape as they aim south in the Atlantic to capture the Jules Verne Trophy. Another hundred miles gained in 24 hours.

“On a 6.50 Mini, it takes me thirteen or fourteen days to get to the Cape Verde islands. We’ve done it in three and a half.” In this one sentence, Gwéno­lé Gahinet sums up very well the extraordinary performance currently being achieved by the crew of IDEC SPORT. On Wednesday afternoon, Francis Joyon’s gang pocketed another hundred miles. After being 170 miles ahead of the record pace yesterday, it is now up to 270 miles at the same time today. This incredible pace, which has given them a lead of around ten hours over the reference time, was nevertheless disturbed by a rather unusual incident out at sea this morning.

A shark caught on the rudder

“I was at the helm and suddenly I noticed that it wasn’t responding well,” explained the German, Boris Herrmann. “Bernard went to take a look and we discovered a shark caught in the central rudder.” The incident may lead you to smile, but it nevertheless slowed down IDEC SPORT for several minutes, as they had to stop facing the wind, furl the sails, remove the shark, before hoisting the sails again and getting underway. “We then gave the appendages a check,” said a reassured Francis Joyon, “but everything is fine. I hope we didn’t hurt the shark, but in any case, he hasn’t harmed the boat. We checked everything and there are no problems. It’s all going well.” Any other technical problems? “Well, we did break a gas ring,” added Clément Surtel, who took part in the first live video link-up this morning (they take place every Wednesday at 1000hrs on the website)... He like all the other sailors on board was clearly pleased and was able to share his pleasure with us.

Joyon: “Everyone is feeling good”

Apart from that? “Well, we are doing 30-32 knots on the direct route and hope that will last for as long as possible,” said Francis Joyon, who was extremely pleased to be able to follow such a straight path, which offered speed and efficiency in terms of clocking up the miles. “During my 2007 round the world voyage, my route was fairly neat too, but this time it’s even faster. We are well within the record time and even have a lead, which is nice, as everyone is feeling good about that. In spite of feeling tired, we’re all happy to be here. Everything is going well with the lads and there is a very good atmosphere. You’ll have to ask them, but so far, they haven’t thrown me overboard....”

We couldn’t find anyone who disagreed with Francis. “We’ve come this far in an incredible time, are in tropical temperatures, and all’s well,” stressed Boris Herrmann before telling us about how things are organised on board. Francis is outside of the watch system and the five others take it in turns every 90 minutes, which allows them to get 3 hours rest. “I’m finding it hard to come to terms with the fact that we’re sailing for 45 days. The first two were very impressive. There was a lot of slamming and everything was vibrating. It’s amazing on a boat of this size. It’s great fun steering the boat. We’re also taking advantage of the sights and some magnificent nights,” Guéno Gahinet told us.

They all expressed their pleasure of being there, trying to get the most out of the big red trimaran, while understanding how big the Atlantic is. Laughing, the Catalan sailor, Alex Pella asked for the Barcelona football results, but also added, “Everything is going well. We’ve had a great trip down with very fine conditions. It’s really enjoyable.” That says it all, or almost. We almost forgot the first intermediate time to the Equator. The current reference time is 5 days and 15 hours. It is going to be shattered. At 1330hrs, IDEC SPORT was only 800 miles from the Southern Hemisphere. In three and a half days they have clocked up an average speed allowing them to sail 725 miles in 24 hours. You can work the rest out yourself.

The crew of IDEC SPORT:

Francis Joyon (FRA)
Bernard Stamm (SUI)
Gwéno­lé Gahinet (FRA)
Alex Pella (ESP)
Clément Surtel (FRA)
Boris Herrmann (GER)

[Team website](#) – [Tracker](#) – [Facebook](#)

Background: The Jules Verne Trophy is a prize for the fastest circumnavigation of the world by any type of yacht with no restrictions on the size of the crew, starting and finishing between the Le Créac’h Lighthouse off the tip of Brittany and the Lizard Point in Cornwall. Francis Joyon (FRA), skippering the 31.5m VPLP-designed trimaran IDEC SPORT, crossed the start line on November 22 for his assault on the Jules Verne Trophy. The 6-man team must return by 15:44:15 UTC on January 6, 2016 to beat the current record set January 2012 by Loïck Peyron and his crew on Banque Populaire V of 45 days, 13 hours, 42 minutes and 53 seconds.

MORE: Also starting on November 22 (at 4:01:58 GMT) for an attempt at the Jules Verne Trophy was the 40m VPLP-designed Spindrift 2, led by Yann Guichard. The 14-person team must return before 17:43:51 GMT on January 6, 2016 to beat the record. Here’s a tracker showing both teams:
<http://volodiaja.net/Tracking/>

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