



PRESS RELEASE

THE TRANSAT CIC STARTED YESTERDAY: ALBERTO BONA AND THE CLASS40 IBSA IN FOURTH POSITION AFTER 24 HOURS OF NAVIGATION

Lorient (France), April 29, 2024 – A **spectacular start, on Sunday, April 28 at 1:30 pm** for the transoceanic regatta *Transat CIC*, one of the most demanding tests for solo sailors, who are called to face very tough conditions on their way to New York after over 3,000 miles of navigation, starting from Lorient, Brittany (France).

The 48 registered skippers – divided into the IMOCA (33, some equipped with foil), Class40 (13) and Vintage (2) categories – positioned themselves along the **starting line, in the channel between the Breton coast, before the small town of Lomener, and the island of Groix**. After heading South East, on a course designed by the regatta director with the aim of making the start of the transoceanic race spectacular and safe, the skippers began their ascent of the Breton coast.

A **conservative start for Alberto Bona on the Class40 IBSA**, at his eighth regatta with the Swiss multinational pharmaceutical company. Starting with a lot of sail area, after rigging the gennaker and the solent at the bow, Alberto found himself unable to luff much, remaining for the first stretch in the middle of the fleet, led first by Ambrogio Beccaria (*Alla Grande Pirelli*), who then left his leading position first to a wild Amélie Grassi (*La Boulangère Bio*) and then, at the end of the first hour, to Nicolas D'Estais (*Café Joyeux*), who at the start also had fewer square meters of sail surface at the bow and was very determined to stay ahead of the group.

After about ten miles of navigation, **the first tack took the skippers towards the North West**, en route to the bay in front of Concarneau; in this phase Alberto gained a good position within the fleet, positioning himself to windward and increasing speed. After leaving the Glénan archipelago – an area very complicated to navigate due to the currents – on the left, the teams manoeuvred again opposite Concarneau, before leaving the influence of the mainland South of Brest and heading for the open sea. After about eight hours of navigation, it was therefore time to **say goodbye to the Breton coast and turn the bow in the direction of the South of Ireland, in search of the first low to address**, and from which to gain sustained winds – even up to 35 knots – and therefore greater speed.

The wind was found **just before dawn today, when the first disturbance brushed the Class40s**: finally the boats started running. Bona reached fourth position, less than five miles from the first, a minimum distance that shows how the best navigators in the class have signed up for this regatta, and how the entire race will be played on very small gaps, despite the great distance to cover.

“It will be a balanced and very tough regatta”, had declared Alberto shortly before the start. “The difficulty of sailing at high latitudes has in fact selected the skippers: those taking part in this regatta are very expert, have a perfectly prepared Class40 and are aiming for victory. There are thirteen of us, and at least nine have an equal chance of climbing to the top step of



the podium, which makes this regatta both challenging due to the weather conditions and exciting from a sporting perspective. The best a solitary navigator could wish for”.

Giorgio Pisani, Vice President IBSA Group and leader of the project *Sailing into the Future. Together*, also attended the start of the regatta, on Sunday, April 28: *“It’s always a great emotion to see the Class40 IBSA setting sail”, he stated. “Our skipper Alberto Bona has included in the third year of our project the most complex and demanding regatta, as can also be seen from the small number of participants in Class40: the best thirteen. I believe that there are all the conditions for experiencing another wonderful adventure together, one that will require courage and commitment. Arriving in New York is certainly symbolic, the right finish line for the most difficult regatta”.*

With a **travel time expected between 13 and 15 days from the start**, the 13 Class40s will face **several lows** in the coming days. They will have to navigate in extremely complex conditions, due both to very high waves – which can reach up to six metres – and to very low temperatures. The organisers established no navigation areas, in particular around the Azores islands – to protect cetaceans – and along the Canadian coast, to avoid entering zones with icebergs and where fishing vessels are more numerous. The skippers will therefore have to find the best route to reach the **finish line – 130 miles off the coast of New York** – as quickly as possible, thus bringing the European ocean sailing under the Statue of Liberty.

THE PROJECT: The three-year project *Sailing into the Future. Together* was launched in January 2022. The partnership between IBSA and skipper Alberto Bona was born on common bases and values, and aims to use sailing as a corporate communication vehicle towards the market and the nautical world. Ingenuity, courage, innovation, responsibility are elements that unites IBSA and Alberto, and the oceanic challenge, in addition to the sporting competition, also metaphorically represents the company’s history, philosophy and vision, which are always oriented towards and are part of a path that brings IBSA increasingly closer to the topic of environmental and social sustainability, with a particular focus on inclusive sailing projects for people with disabilities. In November 2022, the *Route du Rhum* was the first sporting stage of the project *Sailing into the Future. Together*. In 2023, Bona and the Class40 *IBSA* participated in six regattas, including the *Rolex Fastnet Race* and the *Transat Jacques Vabre*. With two victories and three podiums, the record for the highest number of miles covered in 24 hours and over 15,000 miles sailed, Bona won first place overall in the Class40 International Championship. In 2024, between April and July, he will face two of the toughest transatlantic races on the international scene: the *Transat CIC* from Lorient (France) to New York and the *Quebec Saint-Malo* (from Canada to France).

THE SKIPPER: Alberto Bona is from Turin, and has a degree in philosophy. As a university student, he won the *Panerai* trophy aboard *Stormvogel*, fast ULDB and historic boat with which he crossed the Atlantic Ocean for the first time, winning the *ARC* with a New Zealand crew. In 2012 he took part in the *Minitransat*, finishing 5th, one of the best Italian results ever in this category. In 2015, he switched to the prototype category Mini 6.50 with *Promostudi La Spezia*: he won the Italian championship and finished second in the ocean crossing *Les Sables-Azores*. In 2017 he discovered the Class40: on Giovanni Soldini’s former *Telecom Italia*, he participated in the *Transat Jacques Vabre*, where he was forced to withdraw when he was in sixth place. In 2019 he was aboard the Maserati Multi 70 trimaran, one of the world’s fastest boats, where he practiced on the foils before moving on to the Figaro Beneteau 3, aboard which he participated in the *Solitaire*; the only Italian registered, in 2020 he finished 7th among the rookies in the first year and 16th overall. In 2021 he won the Italian offshore team title and the Europeans in mixed doubles aboard the Figaro 3. In 2022 he started the new project in partnership with IBSA: after an eighth place in the *Route du Rhum 2022*, in 2023 Alberto won the Class40 International Championship, closing a season with three podiums and over 15,000 miles covered.

THE BOAT: Designed by French naval architect Sam Manuard and built by the JPS Production shipyard, Alberto Bona’s boat is a Class40 Mach 5 model. Its main characteristics are: scow bow – rounded and with a wider and flatter shape than standard bows – designed to stay high above the water and avoid being submerged; *all-round* hull, particularly performing in conditions of strong tailwinds; and a large, shielded cockpit, to face extreme conditions of navigation in as comfortable and safe as possible positions.

IBSA: IBSA (Institut Biochimique SA) is a Swiss multinational pharmaceutical Company, founded in 1945 in Lugano. Today, its products are present in over 90 countries on 5 continents, through the Company’s 18 subsidiaries located in Europe, China, and the United States. The company has a consolidated turnover of 900 million CHF, and employs over 2,200 people between headquarters, subsidiaries and production sites. IBSA holds 90 families of approved patents, plus others under development, as well as a vast portfolio of products, covering 10 therapeutic areas: reproductive medicine, endocrinology, pain and inflammation, osteoarticular, aesthetic medicine, dermatology, uro-gynaecology, cardiometabolic, respiratory, consumer health. It is also one of the largest operators worldwide in the area of reproductive medicine, and one of the world’s leaders in hyaluronic acid-based products. IBSA has based its philosophy on four pillars: Person, Innovation, Quality and Responsibility.

For more information, visit www.ibsasailing.com



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