



## THE ROLEX FASTNET RACE ABOUT TO START ALBERTO BONA AND HIS TEAM ARE READY TO FACE A LEGENDARY REGATTA ON BOARD THE CLASS40 IBSA

Cowes (Isle of Wight, UK), July 22, 2023 – *“It will be a tough, very tough Fastnet, with gusts of wind up to 40 knots, an upwind start complicated by the current: in short, there will be all the ingredients that make this regatta legendary, an event that one cannot fail to honour”.*

**Albert Bona**, skipper of the Class40 *IBSA*, thus commented, before his departure, the first participation of the Class40 *IBSA* in the **Rolex Fastnet Race**, now in its 50<sup>th</sup> edition, with over 460 boats at the start – Ultim, Imoca, Class40, Ocean Fifty, Multihull, open hulls – that compete based on the compensation system of IRC (*International Rule Club*, an international regatta indicator created to allow several sailboats to race together). From professionals to passionate “sea dogs” from all over the world, with an eloquent Italian delegation, especially in the Class40, the regatta celebrates its half century with two fronts that will bring wind, waves and rain in the first 30 hours, close-hauled sailing up to the legendary Irish lighthouse, a bit of calm and then – if everything is confirmed – finally downwind to reach the **arrival in Cherbourg** (Normandy, France).

As expected, the start was very demanding: a strong current, fierce winds and a big battle on the start line, so much so that 7 out of the 22 Class40s, including *IBSA* and Ambrogio Beccaria's hull, made an early start (still waiting for confirmation from the jury). Alberto Bona may have been surprised in the pre-start by a very strong gust combined with the current, which speeded up the boat and brought it to the start line faster than expected, but he attempted a last minute – and unsuccessful - return to the line: two out of the three Italian teams thus begins their Fastnet with an uphill start and a penalty that will add two hours to the total time. In the water, the Class40 *IBSA* held up very well the first three hours of the race, arriving in front of the Needles in the first positions: afterwards, the fleet split in half, based on the tactical choice: some crews chose to sail near the English coast, others – like the one led by Bona – more in the centre of the English Channel, choosing the left side closest to the Needles, potentially windier and with more waves, but also with a more favourable current.

For the Class40 *IBSA*, this is the fifth regatta of the season, after the superb victory, just over a week ago, of the Les Sables-Horta-Les Sables, which brought Bona's boat back to the top of the circuit ranking and set the Class40's 24 hour course record, with 430 miles covered in one day. **For Alberto, this is the second Fastnet of his career**, after the 2021 edition, but this time, aboard the Class40 *IBSA*, he will leads an exceptional team: Olympic sailor and recent winner of the *Ocean Race Francesca Clapcich*; navigator **Andrea Caracci** and team leader **Luca Bertacchi**. *“I am very happy to be racing together with Francesca Clapcich, Andrea Caracci and Luca Bertacchi”*, stated Bona. *“We will split the tasks: I will concentrate on strategy, Francesca on tactics and Andrea on navigation (even if, as usual, on a Class40 everyone is called to do everything), with Luca who – as the great enthusiast he is – knows how to make himself indispensable”.*

A race with many strategic way points, such as the difficult passage in front of Land's End, with areas closed to navigation, others full of spectators ready to celebrate the exploit and still harsh weather conditions up to the Fastnet rock, where the leaders should find less wind, and then finally a speedy descent downwind.

*“We are all very excited about this new competition, a race we know is difficult, a legend for every sailor, an actual adventure. We can count on a truly exceptional team and a very special boat; preparation has been very accurate, a lot of training and strategy for one of the most important regattas of this season”*, commented **Giorgio Pisani, IBSA Group Vice President and leader of the**



**project *Sailing into the Future. Together.*** “Everyone will race with the utmost commitment, making the best use of their abilities and determined to do well. All of us at IBSA will be rooting for them”.

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**THE PROJECT:** *Sailing into the Future. Together* started in January 2022; the partnership between IBSA and Alberto Bona was born on common bases and values, and aims to use sailing as a vehicle for corporate communication, towards the market and the nautical world. Ingenuity, courage, innovation, responsibility are elements that unite IBSA and Alberto, and the oceanic challenge, in addition to the sporting race, also metaphorically represents the company's history, philosophy and vision, which are always oriented towards the future and are part of a path that brings IBSA increasingly closer to the topics of environmental and social sustainability, inclusion and integration. The *Route du Rhum* was the first stage of the three-year programme *Sailing Into The Future. Together*, which the Swiss pharmaceutical company started with Bona and which continues in 2023 with a busy calendar of regattas, including the *Rolex Fastnet Race* and the *Transat Jacques Vabre*.

**THE BOAT:** The boat with which Alberto Bona participated in the *Route du Rhum* in November is a latest generation Class40, with a scow bow. Designed by French naval architect Sam Manuard and built by the JPS Production shipyard, the boat is a Mach 5 model, the latest evolution of Manuard's Class40.

The characteristics: rounded bow, created with the aim of increasing performance while running; water lines and appendages designed to make the hull an all-round fast even upwind; large and protected cockpit to face navigation in the most comfortable and safe positions possible.

**THE SKIPPER:** Alberto Bona is from Turin, and has a degree in philosophy. As a university student, he won the **Panerai trophy** with *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 5<sup>th</sup>, 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 Vabres*, 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 fastest boats in the world, 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, he finished 7<sup>th</sup> among the rookies in the first year and 16<sup>th</sup> overall in 2020. 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, with the support of the IBSA Group: with the new Class40 *IBSA*, he participated in the *Route du Rhum 2022*, finishing in eighth position.

**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.

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