



PRESS RELEASE

**THE CLASS40 IBSA READY FOR THE *TRANSAT JACQUES VABRE***

**ALBERTO BONA: IT WILL BE A VERY GRIPPING CHALLENGE, AND WE ARE READY AND FOCUSED**

*Le Havre (France), October 24, 2023 – Everything is ready in Le Havre (Northern France) for the start of the *Transat Jacques Vabre*, a double-handed regatta across the Atlantic, which the Class40 IBSA will face as the sixth and final event of the 2023 season, as well as the most challenging in terms of duration and distance covered since the start of the project *Sailing into the Future. Together*. Skipper Alberto Bona has chosen as his partner sailor Pablo Santurde del Arco who, in the course of the season, has already participated in all the races of the Class40 championship, winning – together with Bona – the RORC Caribbean 600 and the Les Sables-Horta-Les Sables.*

THE REGATTA – The 16<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Transat Jacques Vabres* will start on Sunday, October 29: **95 boats**, divided into four classes, have registered for the race. Indeed, in addition to the 44 Class40s (Alberto Bona's class), there are 5 Ultim trimarans, 6 Ocean Fiftys and 40 Imoca60s. Among the skippers on the starting line, 77 are rookies and 18 are women. For the Class40s – the largest category – the route consists of 4,600 miles of navigation along the great circle, with an obligatory passage in the Cape Verde archipelago, keeping the island of Sal on the starboard side. Each class has a diversified southbound route: the Ultims will sail for 7,500 miles, the Ocean Fiftys for 5,800, the Imocas for 5,400. The goal is to coordinate the arrival between the different classes, scheduled from November 12 in Martinique. There are 14 nationalities represented, and Italy accounts for the lion's share, with as many as six sailors, including five in Class40 and one in the Imoca class.

THE STATEMENTS – *“Here we are”, stated Alberto Bona, “the most important event of the second season for the Class40 IBSA is finally here. Pablo and I are ready and focused, and we know we can perform very well. The level is very high, and in our opinion there are at least a dozen hulls that can compete for victory, more than a quarter of the entire Class40 fleet. I’m happy, because it will be a very exciting challenge”.*

**The Class40 IBSA is currently leading the category seasonal circuit rankings**, and the *Transat Jacques Vabre* is therefore offering a double prize for Alberto and Pablo: one related to the single race, but also one representing the crowning achievement of the entire season. *“It will be a great challenge: the best will be sailing excellent but very dissimilar boats, from a design point of view, and therefore characterised by different strengths and weaknesses. Even before leaving, we already know that we will always be very close to each other, almost in a match race mode within an ocean regatta, and this is truly the beauty of this class”.*

*“We have reached the highest point of the programme *Sailing into the Future. Together*”, commented **Giorgio Pisani, Vice President IBSA Group and Project leader of *Sailing into the Future. Together***. “Over a year after its launch, the Class40 IBSA and its crew will face a regatta where there a lot is at stake, from a sporting perspective as well as from the point of view of the values that IBSA and Alberto Bona share. We are ready to live this*



*adventure with Alberto in this great sporting challenge, which proudly takes us across the oceans”.*

THE REGATTA ACCORDING TO BONA – One week before the departure for such a long crossing, the strategy is still in progress: “A 4,600 mile trial”, **specified Alberto Bona**, “requires adaptability and the ability to make choices based on variables that are bound to change on a daily basis”. Beginning from the start of the regatta, because if there is one thing that the Class40 sailors have learned it’s that there are no “sprints” at the finish line; rather, success is built mile after mile: “As in any ocean race, the miles sailed in the Channel and the exit from the Channel will immediately be critical. November is a month that brings waves, strong winds and, above all, sturdy currents, conditions to which we are accustomed, but which require maximum concentration in every regatta”, explained **Bona**.

The second “frame” of the ordeal concerns the Bay of Biscay, much loved by Bona and Santurde, but capable of offering harsh conditions this season: “The cold part of the navigation will be challenging as always. What we need to do is arrive as soon as possible along the coast of Portugal, where various possibilities will open up, depending on where the high pressure will position itself, which will define the modalities of the descent towards the South”.

If the traditional conditions for this time of year do materialise, a quick descent towards the Canary Islands is expected: “We hope to have the right pressure, to go down running quickly and to hook up with the trade winds as soon as possible: at that point, we will arrive at the Canary Islands, and then to the mandatory passage near Cape Verde”. In this leg, the transition from cold to hot weather – always eagerly awaited by sailors – will take place: “We hope for a traditional trade wind: from here on, we will have to control our opponents, manage every mile and look to the finish line, always focused”.

THE BOATS – Alberto Bona’s Mach 5 is undoubtedly one of the best performing boats in the Class 40: “I am very satisfied with every choice we have made so far”, **summed up Alberto**. “Our boat is an “all-round”, and the improvements made over the summer, after the first 15 thousand miles of navigation, allowed us to achieve further progress in the main points of sail. Last week, on the transfer to Le Havre, we sailed for two days, checking all the elements and preparing for the regatta. The team is running well, we covered a lot of miles in the most common points of sail that we will encounter in this race”.

The actual start is scheduled for **1:41 pm on October 29** (GMT+1); the Class 40 – the smallest boat and the largest class in the race – will be the last to cross the starting line and point the bow towards the exit of the Channel, to begin one of the most beautiful and long regattas, following the history and aroma of coffee.

A YEAR AND A HALF AND 15 THOUSAND MILES: THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CLASS40 IBSA – Launched in La Trinité-sur-Mer in August 2022, then protagonist of the official launch a month later, the Class40 IBSA participated, with her skipper Alberto Bona, at the *Route du Rhum*, the 3,500 mile solo transatlantic race, finishing eighth. In 2023, IBSA and Alberto participated in five crewed regattas, winning – last February – the **RORC Caribbean 600**, with Pablo Santurde del Arco on board, with whom they did the return regatta to Europe, the **Atlantic Challenge**, finishing in third place. Then, the participation in



the challenging **Normandy Channel Race**: over a thousand miles of navigation between France, England and Ireland, which they closed in sixth position. At the end of June, the ocean once again: the Class40 **IBSA** participated in the **Les Sables-Horta-Les Sables**, a “half oceanic” race to the Azores Islands, travelled in very harsh weather conditions, and ended with a wonderful victory for the team. Finally, in July, the participation in the iconic **Rolex Fastnet Race**, a fiftieth edition of the regatta which will be remembered for the toughest 24 hours of upwind ever in the Solent: with Francesca Clapcich aboard, who just a few weeks earlier had been crowned winner of the Round the World in a crew, **IBSA** finished in eighth place. In August, the Class40 **IBSA** travelled the Southern route and for the first time entered the Mediterranean via Gibraltar, a journey made together with her sponsor **IBSA**; then, in September, the return to Brittany for some works and finally the transfer to Normandy for this new adventure, which sees her on top of the Class40 circuit ranking, in pursuit of a prestigious season title.

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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 2022 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 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 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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