



PRESS RELEASE

**ALBERTO BONA AND THE CLASS40 IBSA CROSS THE FINISH LINE
OF THE *TRANSAT QUÉBEC SAINT-MALO* IN SIXTH POSITION**

**THE TEAM WAS THE PROTAGONIST OF A GREAT COMEBACK:
“A VERY DIFFICULT AND UNIQUE TEST”**

Saint-Malo (Brittany, France), July 16, 2024 – Alberto Bona and Class40 IBSA, with Luca Rosetti and Pablo Santurde del Arco on board, crossed the finish line of **the *Transat Québec Saint-Malo* at 4:34:42 CEST on July 15, in sixth position**, after covering 2,800 miles in **14 days, 20 hours, 19 minutes and 42 seconds**. However, they ended up in seventh place in the official ranking due to a compensation granted to Antoine Magré’s *E. Leclerc – Ville La Grand* for diverting her course to rescue *Acrobatica* and Alberto Riva’s crew.

At dawn on the last day of navigation, the Class40 IBSA – the protagonist of a **sensational comeback of over 230 miles** over the last week – managed to grab the sixth position in a fleet reduced to 19 boats, after Riva’s wreck and the withdrawal of 5 other boats, including Ambrogio Beccaria’s. **The last hours were very challenging**: a disturbance with a Southerly wind favoured a wonderful upwind finish in front of the Môle des Noires, the outer breakwater that marks the entrance to the port of Saint-Malo.

“It was an exciting regatta and I enjoyed it a lot”, stated Bona, “because we experienced all possible conditions and different ways of sailing. We spent two days on the river, which for me was an entirely new experience, then we went through the banks of Newfoundland, in search of the lows up to the far North, so much so that we found ourselves 350 miles from Greenland. I had never sailed so far North, where the sea is a blue I had never seen. It’s been a difficult race, because the weather was never constant. When we found ourselves at the back of the fleet – and the models indicated up to 400 miles of delay – we were not discouraged. This changed everything: we started to recover, without ever giving up. Closing less than ten miles from the leader, given the preconditions, is a good result”.

“The entire IBSA”, announced Antonio Melli, Vice President of IBSA Group, “followed this regatta with great interest, the difficulties experienced by the crews, the withdrawals and the wreck. Seeing that our Class40 – with Alberto Bona, Pablo Santurde del Arco and Luca Rosetti – finished in seventh position is a great satisfaction. We saw the commitment and determination, and we are honoured to have been protagonists of this regatta, which inspired all of us deeply: a great sporting and human undertaking”.

THE FIRST TIME ON THE RIVER – The *Transat Québec Saint-Malo* started at 2:00 pm Canadian time on June 30 from Quebec City. The impact with the St. Lawrence River, its currents and the “four seasons in one hour” weather was immediately evident: indeed, a few minutes from the start a gust of wind hit the fleet, a harbinger of the many difficulties that would have characterised this regatta. The difficult part of the river, represented by the first 140 miles, was covered in about 20 hours by the Class40 IBSA, which found herself in fourth position: *“It was a really intense regatta”, reported Luca Rosetti. “The exit from the river was particularly complicated, with much less wind than expected. Throughout the trial the weather was unstable and made it very difficult to make decisions. Especially on the river, we fought like in a race between buoys; these were agitated phases in a hyper-competitive fleet, everyone always looking for maximum speed”.*

THE BANKS OF TERRANOVA – After 2 days and 6 hours of navigation, the Class40 IBSA entered the Gulf of St. Lawrence in sixth position, just 3 miles from the head of the group. The first 500 miles



of the race were sailed in this configuration, with about half of the fleet fighting for the top positions. The next part of the race saw the passage south of the island of Newfoundland, the gateway to the Atlantic, and it was not a simple one: around 300 miles with little wind, where the first accident of the regatta occurred, forcing Italian sailor Claudia Conti to abandon *La Boulangère Bio* due to an injury. *IBSA* left Newfoundland in fifth place, 5 miles behind the leader, having covered around 800 miles in five days, with a lighter wind than expected.

THE DANGERS OF THE ATLANTIC – On the sixth day, after leaving the Newfoundland banks, there was the first turning point of the regatta: the Class40 *IBSA*, together with the leading group of four boats, chose a firm Northern route, with the aim of going around a low and thus finding themselves in the best conditions to run fast. However, the chosen strategy turned out to be less promising than expected: on the morning of July 8, the entire group found itself in the back. Alberto therefore decided to return to the great circle, accumulating a 180-mile gap which in the darkest moment, the afternoon of July 8, would even become 242. *“It was difficult to choose the right route”*, explained **Bona**; *“we were seduced by the North option, and then managing it became very complicated, especially when the simulations had us 400 miles behind the leader. We rolled up our sleeves, and we were so far North that we were caught in a newly formed disturbance, which allowed us to descend very quickly and recover”*.

THE STORM – But it's when the going gets tough that the tough really start to play, and Alberto's team showed great ability to react. Two long days going upwind, with very strong winds, put everything and everyone to the test. The Class40 *IBSA* found herself in the right position and did not suffer the storm; on the contrary, she rode it out. She then began to regain mile after mile, with a high relative speed compared to the leaders, recovering up to the seventh position and a full 170-mile gap. *“Going this far North was a big risk”*, commented **Pablo Santurde del Arco**, *“but we've been very good at putting everything back into play, managing to react and handle a long and tiring upwind beat, always leaning and bumping the waves”*.

THE ACCIDENTS – Between 9 and 10 July, in an increasingly complicated regatta, there were two accidents involving Italian skippers Alberto Riva and Ambrogio Beccaria. Alberto Riva was the protagonist of a shipwreck caused by a collision with an oil tanker, while a few hours later Ambrogio Beccaria detected structural damage to the hull, which was taking on water, thus forcing him to retire. Both crews repaired to the Azores islands, welcomed by the local community. *“We had very little information in relation to what happened to Alberto Riva; we were very worried. When these things happen you realise what the risk is. Knowing they were okay was a huge relief”*, said **Bona**.

AIR OF HOME – July 11 saw more clement weather; finally liveable conditions on the boat; the possibility of checking the hull after the long and wild upwind run; a well-established seventh position; and 2,000 miles covered. On the night between 14 and 15 July, the Class40 *IBSA* passed the island of Ouessant and entered the English Channel, gaining another position: sixth place, ten miles from the leader, a feat then nullified in the ranking due to the compensation granted to *E. Leclerc* for diverting her course to rescue *Acrobatica*; thus, the Class40 *IBSA* was back in seventh place in the official ranking, released on July 16.

At sea, at 2:00 pm on July 15 the Southerly wind set up an extraordinary upwind finish in front of the mouth of the port of Saint-Malo, with many people lined up along the breakwater to celebrate the arrivals. At the finish line, Alberto Bona, Pablo Santurde del Arco and Luca Rosetti entered – with a solid three-way embrace – the history of this difficult regatta.



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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/en/

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