



Friday, 18 September

D+4

To each their own in the pressure stakes



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With the last competitor rounding the BXA buoy at 05:33 am this morning, the whole fleet has been heading WNW towards the second mark, MACIF Santé Prevoyance still leading the way. Each of the skippers is having to contend with the ridge of high pressure as it extends its grip along the course.

It is well known in sailing circles that the rich often get richer and the drop down towards the BXA buoy yesterday once again demonstrated that it is better to be in front to reap the latest spoils served up by the wind gods. Indeed, whilst the group comprising the first 7 foilers was hurtling along at a very favourable angle and posting speeds in excess of 20 knots, those further back were caught in the clutches of the front, which shifted the breeze round to the north-west, forcing the skippers to juggle between their downwind sails and put in a series of zigzagging gybes.

The upshot of this was a greater distance to sail, greater effort and some big gaps in the rankings. This latter group inevitably includes the 4 IMOCAs with daggerboards, as well as Coup de Pouce (Manuel Cousin) and Les P'tits Doudous (Armel Tripon), which dropped back a little at the start due to sail issues and was not able to keep pace during the descent. The same is true for Bureau Vallée, which is slugging it out between the two groups.

Ahead of the front, the leaders have been putting up a creditable performance, slipping along very nicely towards the coast to escape the influence of the wind shift for as long as possible, even skirting the islands off France's Charente department.

A big squeeze at BXA

At BXA, the tightly bunched leaders made the turn slightly ahead of the original routing, Macif Santé Prévoyance and Allagrande Mapei embroiled in a frenzied mano a mano. Sam Goodchild rounded the mark at 10:42 pm, followed less than a minute later by Ambrogio Beccaria. Jérémie Beyou was not far behind with Violette Dorange hot on his heels. In actual fact, the top eight all made the rounding in under two hours of one another, followed by a great void...

Maintaining a very quick pace upwind throughout the night, the leaders only felt the wind ease in the early hours of today. Macif Santé Prévoyance is clearly faster than her rivals on a beat. Demonstrating real control with his trajectory, Sam Goodchild had managed to amass a lead of over 12 miles in relation to his closest rivals earlier today. Speeds have plummeted to less than 10 knots now and the fleet has come up against the expected header under the ridge line.

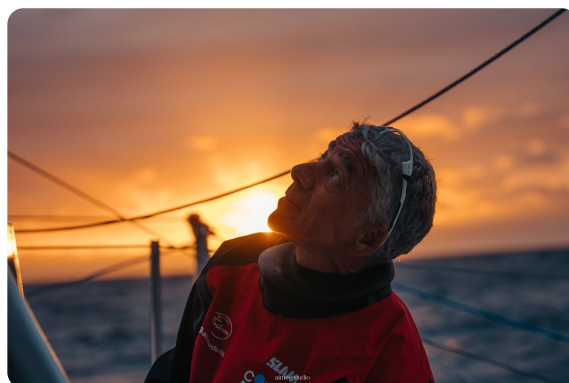
After pulling their first all-nighter, the skippers will have to keep an eye on the barometer and the clouds to decide when to make their tack across the weather phenomenon to gain nothing.

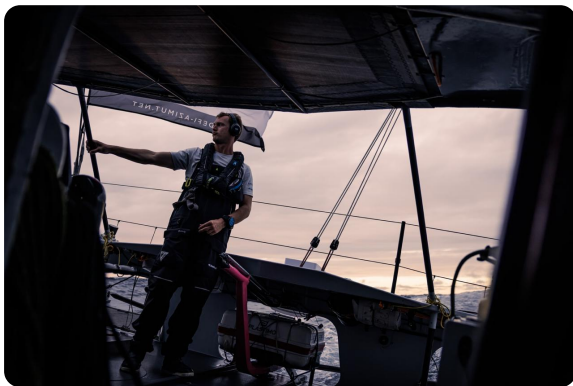
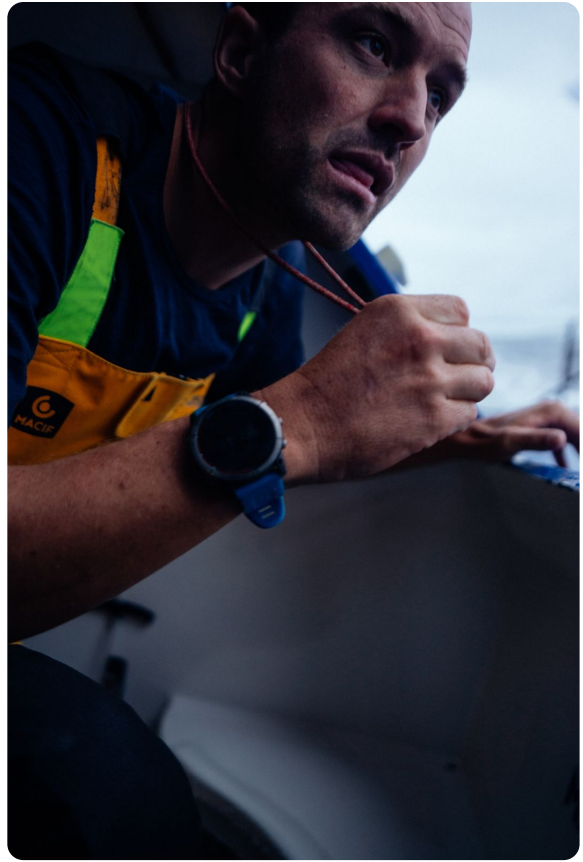
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ALLAGRANDE MAPEI - Lorenzo SIRONI

COUP DE POUCE - Florian BURET

CHARAL - Adrien NIVET

INITIATIVES CŒUR - Josselin DIDOU

CAFE JOYEUX - Coline BEAL

MACSF - Ronan GLADU

FOUSSIER - Gregory MAGNE

LES P'TITS DOUDOUS - Marin DRIGUEZ

RESILIENT - Anne BEAUGÉ

ASSOCIATION PETITS PRINCES-GROUPE QUEGUINER - Romain MARIE
BUREAU VALLÉE - Thomas DEREGNIEAUX
MACIF SANTE PREVOYANCE - Guillaume GATEFAIT
MILAI - FURUNO - Cynthia RODRIGUEZ
GROUPE DUBREUIL - AIR CARAÏBES - François DOURLLEN

Upload media

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