



Portsmouth, 7th November, 2011

PLUCKY BRITISH SAILOR ALEX THOMSON LEADS THE FLEET INTO 'A BOMB OF A STORM' ON NIGHT FIVE OF MAJOR TRANSATLANTIC YACHT RACE

HUGO BOSS crew suffers rough night with winds of over 50 knots

British off-shore sailor Alex Thomson, along with his Spanish co-skipper Guillermo Altadill on-board HUGO BOSS, is currently leading the 12 strong fleet of 60 foot yachts during the current edition of the Transat Jacques Vabre race, which began in Le Havre, France on Wednesday 2nd November. The race follows the traditional coffee trade route, headed for Puerto Limón, Costa Rica.

The HUGO BOSS duo, who are currently around a quarter of the way through the 4,730 mile race, last night met a severe storm head on; they were the first boat in the fleet to confront what French meteorologists have described as 'a bomb' of a low pressure system. A similar night of extreme and challenging conditions is forecast for tonight, with winds reaching around 50 knots and very rough seas.

In their position at the front of the fleet, made up of predominantly French competitors, Alex and Guillermo have taken a tactical decision to continue with their routing almost directly West to provide them with the best opportunity to maintain their lead over the coming days.

Alex Thomson, who was forced to pull out of the Barcelona World Race earlier this year due to an emergency appendectomy, remains cautious about the first place ranking of HUGO BOSS in these conditions. Speaking from the boat yesterday morning Thomson said: "The rankings show us in first place, but really we have to wait and see how the strategies play out. We are just trying to play it cool, not do anything stupid, play it cool, just through this storm and then head for the sunshine."

The race is expected to last around 15 days in total with competitors arriving in Puerto Limón from around the 16th November. To track the race, visit www.alexthomsonracing.com and click on 'Open Race Tracking'.

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For more information on Alex Thomson and to follow his preparations for forthcoming races, visit:

www.alexthomsonracing.com
[facebook.com/AlexThomsonRacing](https://www.facebook.com/AlexThomsonRacing)
www.twitter.com/alexthomson99

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Alex Thomson

Alex Thomson is the youngest skipper ever to win a round the world race, claiming victory in the 1998/99 Clipper Round the World Race; a record he still holds today. Alex then launched onto the

solo racing scene with a bang, breaking the world distance record in 2003. However his first two solo round the world attempts were met with frustration when structural failure of his yacht forced him to retire early from the Vendée Globe 2004 and Velux 5 Oceans Race 2006. He went onto victory in the 2008 Barcelona World Race, securing a 2nd place podium finish, and setting a second monohull world distance record. Alex then set his sights firmly on becoming the first Briton to win the world's toughest sailing challenge; the solo 26,000 mile non-stop Vendée Globe Ocean Race.

However only 3 weeks before the Vendée Globe was due to commence in November 2008, Alex's boat was dramatically struck by a French fishing vessel. His team fought against the clock to finish the repairs in record time to achieve the impossible – and get Alex to the start line. Alex's dreams were shattered after only 3 days when he discovered HUGO BOSS was letting in water. On inspecting the damage it was concluded that the repairs could not be completed in time to get Alex back to the race. Devastated, Alex announced his retirement from the Vendée. He is determined to return and compete in 2012, and achieve his dream to become the first Briton to win the Vendée Globe.

www.alexthomsonracing.com

About HUGO BOSS

The sponsorship portfolio of HUGO BOSS focuses on three major sports; Golf, Formula 1 and Sailing, as well as other sponsorship interests which already include Tennis (Davis Cup) and Football (Mario Gomez, FC Bayern Munich). In sailing, HUGO BOSS gets another platform to demonstrate its fashion competence both on the boat and shore-side. HUGO BOSS provides Alex and the crew with highly functional outfits for all possible weather conditions around the globe, and dresses the crew for every celebration function in the smartest possible way.

www.hugoboss.com

IMOCA Class

IMOCA stands for International Monohull Open Class Association. It is the governing body responsible for the technical rules and regulations of IMOCA Open 60 (ft) yachts that take part in well-known races such as the Vendée Globe, the Route du Rhum, the Transat Jacques Vabre and The Artemis Transat to name a few. IMOCA was established in 1991 and has been recognised as an International ISAF Class since 1998 – safety remains the main priority of the Class.

IMOCA not only manages the evolution of the technical rules but also defines the boats' IMOCA International Ocean Racing World Championship with point-scoring races. It is because of its widespread calendar with races taking place from France, the UK, Spain and the US, that attracts skippers from all around the world.

www.imoca.org

IMOCA Calendar 2011 – 2012

2011 - The Transat Jacques Vabre, The Transat B to B

2012 – Europa Race, Grand Prix Petit Navire (Exhibition race), The Artemis Transat, The Vendée Globe