

Press Release, Beluga Offshore Sailing Team in the Portimão Global Ocean Race
13th of March 2009

“Moments for all eternity”

Felix Oehme regarding the Beluga Duo, Cape Horn and modern sailing

Along a stretch of nearly 100 nautical miles, Boris Herrmann from Kiel and Felix Oehme from Hamburg, the crew of the “Beluga Racer” pursued the Chileans Cubillos and Muñoz aboard the “Desafio Cabo de Hornos” this Friday the Thirteenth of March, celebrating the half-time of the Portimão Global Ocean Race around the world. However, the German lead in the overall rankings (6.5 points) was not endangered. Along the third leg from New Zealand to Brazil, the ice border remained behind the participants, but some 3,400 nautical miles and a heavy storm are nevertheless waiting ahead. Prior to the rounding of Cape Horn, a significant milestone, the co-skipper Felix Oehme noted his thoughts per email regarding sailing in a two-man crew and drew some comparisons between sailing in previous ages and in the present time:

“Yesterday evening, before the sun dove down into the Pacific and illuminated our cockpit from astern with the last of her rays, we stood together and enjoyed the atmosphere – with only one can of beer! The lead of the Chileans didn’t cause us to worry much, because we don’t believe that they could just flee into another weather system and simply leave us trailing behind.

In just a week, we’ll reach Cape Horn. How are we going to feel as we sail around that notorious landmark? Happy? Thankful for being able to navigate in calm Atlantic waters again? Or will we somehow be sad about leaving the Antarctic waters of the impressive Southern Ocean behind? Maybe we’ll be stressed in the midst of large, constant winds, the shore and the cliffs jutting out into the sea – and by the telephone calls, the video filming and the podcasts. Would we be able to enjoy it all?

I often ask myself how I’d respond in an historic location or in experiencing a most unique moment. Naturally, I would recognize such occasions as being very special. But how should I react? Those are moments for all eternity, moments which no one would ever want to miss. Should I begin concentrating and reflecting? How did I feel during my last test and as I received my degree? How was it as we walked along the Cape of Good Hope? I want to save Cape Horn in my memories and simply enjoy it!

This mystical spot on the globe reveals quite clearly the dramatic changes in maritime transportation. Barely 50 years ago, the ‘Pamir’ sailed around the Horn as the last of the merchant sailing ships without motors. Back in my hometown Luebeck, one of her rescue boats can be seen in the Petri Church, commemorating those mariners who never returned from the sea. In the present age, the vessels sailing around the Horn are primarily regatta yachts. Industrial ships use the canal.

Regardless of whether one is a solo skipper in the Vendée Globe or a member of a two-man team, like we are in the Global Ocean Race, or underway with a complete

crew in the Volvo Ocean Race, all of us have highly modern yachts equipped with electronic navigation instruments allowing us to know our exact position at any given time. We can send emails and make phone calls, and we can even make videos which can be viewed via our website. The autopilot holds the course, and it does so 24 hours a day and is, notably at night, just as good as a helmsman made of flesh and blood. That was hardly the case in the olden days of sailing.

As soon as we go on deck, however, we do experience some parallels to those days. Sea spray gets into your eyes, your hands are moist. One hand for the man, the other hand for the boat! Such apparently antiquated maxims do have their validity today.

Our sextant aboard symbolizes the changes made. We have an extremely light artificial sextant with us. However, determining our position with the sun and the stars is something that Boris hasn't done for a long time, and I still have yet to preoccupy myself with it. We place our faith in the GPS instruments and in the electronic navigational charts. We have charts made of paper only for the planned destinations and for possible emergency harbors. It's true, some experienced sailors would regard this as being reckless.

How dangerous is such a regatta actually? What are we risking? Is it more courageous to sail during a regatta or to take a mortgage on a house? Maybe the sun knows the answers. At any rate, her sunbeams are disappearing beyond the horizon, letting only the underside of the clouds gleam in warm colors. The temperatures are getting cooler, we're chasing the Chileans, the night begins."

(The End)

Intermediate ranking during the 3rd leg this Friday (13th of March) at 10:20 h:

1. **Desafio Cabo de Hornos**, Felipe Cubillos/José Muñoz (Chile) 3,420.3 nm remain
2. **Beluga Racer**, Boris Herrmann/Felix Oehme (Kiel/Hamburg) 94.7 nm behind
3. **Mowgli**, Jeremy Salvesen/David Thomson (Great Britain) 130.8 nm behind
- Kazimir Partners**, Lenjohn and Peter van der Wel (South Africa) did not start

Overall rankings in the Portimão Global Ocean Race:

1. **Beluga Racer**, Boris Herrmann/Felix Oehme (Kiel/Hamburg) 26 Points
2. **Desafio Cabo de Hornos**, Felipe Cubillos/José Muñoz (Chile) 19.5
3. **Mowgli**, Jeremy Salvesen/David Thomson (Great Britain) 16
4. **Kazimir Partners**, Lenjohn and Peter van der Wel (South Africa) 6.5

High-resolution photos and videos are available in the Mediacenter of the Beluga Offshore Sailing Team at <http://presse.beluga-racer.com>.

The intermediate rankings will be updated every three hours, and you may follow via <http://www.globalracetracker.com>.

Additional background information may also be found via the internet sites www.beluga-racer.com as well as www.portimaorace.com.

The PR crew of the Beluga Offshore Sailing Team is delighted and ready to answer your questions, including interview questions for the sailors, at all times.