

# SKIPPER



ISSUE 3 - OCTOBER 2013

ALEX THOMSON:  
EXCLUSIVE  
INTERVIEW

KAYAKING  
ADVENTURES

ORACLE TEAM  
USA CONQUERS  
AMERICA

ROLEX MIDDLE  
SEA RACE

# AND HE'S BACK

**Marco Rodolfi** returns for another go at the Rolex Middle Sea Race, this time in the double-handed class.

**What memories do you have of your previous Rolex Middle Sea Race experiences?**

I've raced the Rolex Middle Sea Race three times in the past. My first time was on board *Berenice*, my former boat, a Swan 62. The conditions were not the best – we had light breezes for over the first half of the race, a storm between Pantelleria and Lampedusa with a wind strength of 50 knots, and then close-hauled sailing till the end of the race. It was really hard work.

During my second RMSR, again on board *Berenice*, we encountered variable conditions, with storms, gales and very rough sea between the Straits of Messina and Stromboli. From the start till the Strait of Messina, we broke three of the four gennakers on board and then lost the mainsail – this forced us to quit. It was a shame because the conditions dramatically improved in the second half of the race.

My last RMSR was in 2011, on board *Berenice Bis*, a Swan 80. Finally, this was almost a quiet one, even if the RMSR is always unpredictable.

**What boat will you be racing in this year?**

This year I will be racing a new boat, smaller than the ones I've used before. It's a Class 40, designed by Marc Lombard – the boat is well suited for offshore races or ocean crossings which also allows us to sail with a small crew. It's a perfect boat for downwind conditions and is designed for surfing.



**What class will you be racing in?**

I'll be racing, together with my partner Matteo Auguadro, in the IRC double-handed class. It will be a great challenge on all levels. This year we have already won two double-handed competitions: the duecento by two and the cinquecento by two.

**What preparations have you carried out for this year's edition?**

The races we ran this year have prepared us well for the RMSR in double-handed class. Being just a two-person crew requires that the racing boat's equipment is perfect in every part. We also need to be in optimum physical condition.

In fact, a double-handed race must be planned with a focus on security, about which we are being very careful, and on food provisions. The right choice of food, both energetic and easy to eat in any condition, is essential. However, it's also important to not forget a chilled beer for sunset when the weather is right.

**What is, for you, the trickiest part of the RMSR?**

The RMSR is not a long race but it is very challenging and stressful. Racing in two is even more difficult and, based on my past experience, the regatta seems never-ending.



The last miles could be the hardest, both with strong or light winds. The boat's technical preparation is essential to avoid breakdowns. From a strategic point of view, I believe that before and after the Strait of Messina and the leg to Egadi are the key parts of the course. When we arrive there we'll need to be very focused as the right tactical choice can make a real difference.

**What elements are unique to the RMSR?**

The RMSR is a unique race – it's one of the most beautiful and prestigious competitions in the world.

From a technical point of view, the race around Sicily, with the start and finish in Malta, can be very physically demanding. Anything can happen weather-wise and the sea conditions can change suddenly – this is what makes this regatta unique. The skipper and the crew need to be very attentive of the weather conditions and be prepared to cope with changes whether it's the sails, riggings or the route.

The RMSR is a competition in which you can never let up and you must continuously give it all you've got all the way to the end if you want to place well.

The landscape is simply wonderful because the race course touches some of the most stunning spots of the Mediterranean: Malta, Sicily's coasts, the active volcano of Stromboli, with the unforgettable billowing of ashes and lava throughout the night, Egadi Islands, Pantelleria, Lampedusa. Not to mention that it's possible to bump into dolphins, whales and turtles on the way.



**Who do you think are the main challengers for this year's title?**

This race's history, in the last years, has taught us that with the new boats and the IRC rules, the best boat to win on corrected time is between 40 and 50 feet max.

This is logical enough. Big boats that run for the line honours and also those of 60, 70, 80 and 90 feet, are not able to gain enough advantage over the little ones because of the changing weather conditions that have an elastic effect, allowing the smaller vessels to close the distance.

In all likelihood, the RMSR winner will be, once again, a smaller boat, around 40 feet, with good performance in every condition and with obviously a good rating.

**Where will you be off to after the RMSR?**

The Class 40 TWT UComm will rest until March 2014 and *Berenice Bis* will be in the refitting yard. As for me, I'll be off for an intense skiing season this winter. Then in 2014 we will run the Roma by two and return to the Adriatic Sea for the duecento by two and the cinquecento by two.☺

**RACING**



“THE RMSR IS A COMPETITION IN WHICH YOU CAN NEVER LET UP AND YOU MUST CONTINUOUSLY GIVE IT ALL YOU’VE GOT ALL THE WAY TO THE END.”

**Premium maritime craftsmanship**

Mersenne Yachts Limited, part of the Mersenne Group that operates Laguna Marina at Valletta Waterfront, has been awarded sole distributor status in Southern Italy, Malta and North Africa for **Windy Boats**. Award winning Windy Boats is the manufacturer of the Windy 31 Zonda, voted European Power Boat of the Year 2013 and the Windy 29 Coho, nominated for European Power Boat of the Year 2014 and specialise in the 25-58 foot range.

Dean Bucknell, director of Mersenne Group said, “We are pleased to represent a brand in Malta that represents a European benchmark for quality and attention to detail in the industry, the exact same principles we are applying to the services offered at Laguna Marina, Valletta Waterfront.”

Knut Heiberg-Andersen, President/CEO of Windy Boats added, “With the Mersenne Group in Malta, we are convinced that we have found the perfect partner for Windy Boats in this region. We share many of the same values and ambition and are looking forward to bringing our Scandinavian quality boats to Malta and beyond.”

Windy Boats AS is a wholly owned subsidiary of Periscopos AS, Oslo, Norway, a privately owned holding



company with interests which include publishing, media, hotels and property. Windy boats are all hand-built by skilled craftsmen. The fine woodwork and exclusive textiles are important distinguishing features of a Windy in just the same way as the modern technology involved in the construction materials, and the control and propulsion systems.

Laguna Marina is an exclusive, boutique marina on the Valletta Waterfront and the only marina in Malta to offer an all-inclusive option to its clients. The concept is for the motor yacht owner to find their boat ready to go, allowing them more time to enjoy the use of their craft. The service provided is personalised, professional and to the highest standards. Laguna Marina’s location offers an all-weather marina with safe and secure moorings thus extending the owners’ usage time of the yacht through the warm winter months.

For more information on Windy Boats, visit [www.windy.no](http://www.windy.no) or call on 2123 0980 or 9930 2095.



The new Dehler 38.  
Made for those who know.

Quality leaves a fingerprint.

Dehler 50th Anniversary / 1963 - 2013

// 50 % discount on „cruising pack“

// 50% discount on Pauger Carbon rigg




Nominated for European Yacht of the Year 2014



**Our Coordinates are:**  
LAT: 36 deg 01'.5N, LON: 014 deg .18'E.

**Channel: VHF 13**

**Port Facilities:**  
Maximum Length – 55m  
Reception, Offices & Concierge Service  
24 Hr Motoring Maintenance  
Water & Electricity Supply  
Restrooms & Showers  
Wi-Fi Connection  
24Hrs Security Guard Service  
Taxi Service & Car Parking Area  
Yacht Management and Yacht Care  
Bunkering, Provisions and Drinks



**Mgarr Marina**  
Gozo - Malta

**Enjoy the best bays and diving locations close to the marina.**

Mgarr Yacht Marina Office, Mgarr Harbour, Gozo, Malta.  
**Head Office:** 201, The Strand, Gzira, GZR 1023. Malta Malta.  
**Berthing Tel:** (+356) 9924 2501  
**Office:** (+356) 2099 2501 **Fax:** (+356) 2134 1714  
**24hrs:** (+356) 9945 2389 / (+356) 9949 3706  
**Email:** [info@gozomarina.net](mailto:info@gozomarina.net)

[www.gozomarina.net](http://www.gozomarina.net)

29 32 35SQ <sup>new</sup> 38 41 / proceed with speed / smart perfection / german design