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Volvo Ocean Race - Photo finish in Lisbon In Port Race + Video Replay

by Volvo Ocean Race on 3 Nov



Team Brunel edges out MAPFRE - Lisbon Stopover.The Mirpuri Foundation In-Port Race. 03 November, 2017 © Ainhoa Sanchez/Volvo Ocean Race

The sprint around the Portuguese city had a little bit of everything – including an unforgettable photo finish!

Bouwe Bekking's Team Brunel fended off a late charge by MAPFRE to win the Mirpuri Foundation In-Port Race Lisbon on Friday afternoon.

Conditions were challenging, to say the least, with squalls bringing rain and gusty, shifting winds. Not only that, but the confines of the mouth of the Tagus River meant a short leg length, with four laps of the race course – plenty of manoeuvres and boat handling for the teams.

"I think we did well, we've made huge steps as a team," Bekking said following the race. "I mean it's always nice to win but I think we sailed pretty nicely today. There was a huge wind shift at the end and that always makes the decisions tricky but I think we made the right calls. We sailed very conservative - as you will have seen we kept our big sail up, kept it simple and that worked very well for us today."



“It was intense. We knew it was going to be difficult today with the squalls,” said Xabi Fernández, the skipper of MAPFRE, who retain the lead of the In-Port Series after two races. “We did a good start, but at the upwind mark, we were very slow, and trailed. But we came back, step by step and on the last lap we were in the right place for the shift. In the end, we finished second and we are happy with that.”

Off the starting line, it was Turn the Tide on Plastic and team AkzoNobel who made the boldest moves, crossing behind the rest of the fleet on port tack so they could sail out to the favoured right-hand side of the course. It paid off, with the pair rounding in second and third spot.

But Bekking’s Brunel team led the charge, the furthest to the right of the rest of the fleet, making one less manoeuvre up the leg, and they were off. Those three led for most of the first half of the race, but on the third upwind, a big right hand shift shook things up, bringing MAPFRE and Dongfeng back into the mix and pushing Caffari’s Turn the Tide on Plastic team back.

“It was a good job from the team, we managed to come back - we did some nice manoeuvres and even if it didn’t look great from the outside, I know we were efficient,” said Dongfeng Race Team skipper Charles Caudrelier. “We did a good job to finish third, we did good.”

At the other end of the spectrum, Caffari was disappointed with the second half of the race.

“Four laps, short course, really intense. First lap was absolutely glamour, second lap still on the podium and still fighting, third lap was full of disasters and fourth lap was just a write-off,” Caffari explained. “We crossed the line eventually but we had sailed ourselves from first to last.”

It was an epic day, setting up the start of Leg 2 from Lisbon to Cape Town on Sunday at 14:00 UTC.

“Interesting race with a little bit of everything, sunshine, rain, big wind shifts, good gusts and little lulls,” team AkzoNobel skipper Simeon Tienpont opined. “Every ingredient good racing needs!”