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28 & 29 APRIL 2018
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Volvo OR: Turn the Tide on Plastics slows with mast issue



by Richard Gladwell, Sail-World.com/nz 31 Mar 11:06 AEDT
31 March 2018



Leg 7 from Auckland to Itajai. Cape Horn. 29 March, © Ainhoa Sanchez / Volvo Ocean Race

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Turn the Tide on Plastic has advised Volvo Ocean Race that she has slowed down to assess a potential problem with its rigging.

In a media statement at 17:30 UTC on Friday afternoon, Turn the Tide on Plastic informed Race Control it had reduced sail to slow down, so the crew could ensure the integrity of its mast/rigging.

An initial inspection has revealed an anomaly in the spreader (a piece of rigging that helps to support the mast) set up. The team has slowed down while it determines what needs to be done before returning to full-load sailing.

Other boats in the fleet are in the area and have been informed of the situation in order to render assistance if needed.

It is the third Volvo Ocean race competitor to have experienced mast issues in the vicinity of Cape Horn, the overall race leader MAPFRE was the first to pull into Cape Horn to effect mast repairs, however she has now resumed racing. Earlier today Vesta 11th Hour Racing dismasted 100nm from the Falklands.

The cause of the rig issues are not known, however the fleet has experienced one of the toughest legs in Volvo Ocean Race history with the VO65's frequently nose diving in the rough conditions and it would be expected that extreme strain on the rigs, with conditions prevailing for a sustained period of the race.