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Press release (long)

Hugo Picard, the French Classe Mini sailor, is living his dream - single-handedly crossing the Atlantic in a GO-kart of the seas!

SVB GmbH from Bremen becomes title sponsor of Hugo Picard, also known as "The Sailing Frenchman".

The mission

Hugo will compete in the forthcoming 2021 Mini Transat race in "Le Sables d'Olonne" under the name "SVB Team". SVB will be the main sponsor of this ambitious sailor and thus supports him in his quest to make his dream come true! 4050 nautical miles, 1 sailor, 1 boat and no assistance!

The skipper

Hugo Picard grew up in the French Pyrenees, in a place that's as far away from the sea as you can get. Nevertheless, he still discovered a path to his current passion. At 23 he traded his first boat the "Ann Alé" for a beer and that was the start of his sailing career. From that day on, Hugo set out to one day cross the Atlantic. But sailing is an expensive hobby. Even more so if your boat needs a complete refit. *"So I took one job after another, started working for the UN abroad...1 year later I had the money together and flew back to France to start work on the Ann Alé to set off for its Atlantic crossing 6 months later..," says Hugo.*

It's been 5 years since Hugo decided to fully commit to a career in sailing, and he hasn't left the sea since.

By participating in the Mini Transat 2021, Hugo is now ticking off another dream on his bucket list.

Sailing achievements / experience

2017: The big refit of the „Ann Alé“ gets underway to sail across the Atlantic.

2018: Cruising with the Ann Alé, Skipper on various charter boats, various transfers, first experience as crew on various regattas including: *Regattes Royales Cannes*, *Les Voiles de Saint Tropez*, *Antigua Race Week* and *Les Voiles de St. Barth*,...More than 15,000 miles sailed in approx. 2 years.

2019: Skipper on the *Clipper Round the World Race*, more than 25,000 miles sailed.

2020 - 2021: Training for the Mini Transat, more than 6000 miles sailed in Training and qualifying races.

The partnership

Hugo's hands-on mentality and positive approach is inspiring!

Hugo represents what many sailors and water sports enthusiasts aspire to - passion, freedom and adventure. He's not afraid to get his hands dirty and solves most of the technical problems on board himself.

More than 10,100 fans follow Hugo regularly on Instagram and Facebook. With over 3,700,000 views and 110,000 subscribers on YouTube, his videos inspire people all over the world.

"Hugo is very determined, lives in his van and put all his savings into the project. That has inspired us. We share a passion for sailing and the freedom on the water.

Since 1989, SVB has been a reliable partner when it comes to supporting our customers' wishes. We are able to do this by developing a worldwide delivery network and are now able to ship products to almost any port in the world. Wherever our customers are at any given moment, nothing should stop them from following their dreams and sailing the world with their boat," says Judith Stamann.

The challenge!

The Mini-Transat - One of the greatest challenges in ocean sailing for 44 years!

To this day, the Class Mini has been challenging solo sailors every two years. The transatlantic race demands everything from its participants: strength, stamina, courage, skill, navigational expertise and the ability to think on one's feet.

The race takes place over two stages, which are judged together to decide the victor: Les Sables d'Olonne, France - Santa Cruz de la Palma, Tenerife and Santa Cruz de la Palma, Tenerife - Saint Francois, Guadeloupe. The boat with the fastest sailed real-time results wins!

Experimental or classic?! How the Mini Class is classified.

Two types of boats are allowed in the race. **Prototypes** and **production** boats.

The prototypes are a unique category of boats. They are fully equipped, state-of-the-art vessels, but each one is unique. This is mainly due to the relatively open measurement standards. The only really strict specification is that the overall length of the boat must be 6.50m. Due to these open regulations, the prototype class of the Classe Mini has developed into the ideal model to test new technologies and developments. Today, high-performance prototypes are still made of carbon, with

daggerboards, ballast tanks, and much more. In a nutshell, a high-tech machine both in technology and racing.

Unlike prototypes, **production** boats have to meet stricter measurement standards. They must be easy to build, simple to handle, inexpensive to maintain and repair. By dividing into two classes, the main idea is to limit costs and make the support accessible to the greatest number, so that owners of production boats can take part in all Mini Regattas. This makes this class the perfect entry-level into the offshore scene. Above all, it is the skill and strategic capabilities of the sailor here that makes the difference, with less focus on technology or money. Nevertheless, production boats can easily reach 18 knots downwind. So they're anything but boring!

First Come, First In!

No qualification, no regatta!

To qualify for the Mini Transat, skippers must sail 1000 nautical miles single-handed, non-stop and accumulate at least 1.500 nautical miles by participating in Mini Regattas. For the upcoming Mini Transat 2021 there are 84 starting places in the production class. The first skippers to meet the qualification requirements may register for the Mini Transat. Hugo had already qualified for the race across the Atlantic in July 2020. A particular challenge is not only the size of the boat (6.5 metres) but also the minimalistic equipment on board. Weather routing by satellite and any contact with the land are prohibited during the race.

The boat: The "SVB Team"

No bells and whistles necessary!

The Class Mini is by no means gimmicky.

In keeping with his hands-on attitude, Hugo will compete in the production boat class in a Raison Maxi built in 2020. **The Raison Maxi boat has a scow bow**, which is admittedly not the most aesthetically pleasing, but is much more efficient when reaching and on downwind courses. As the Mini Transat consists mainly of these courses, this bow form has several advantages. Upwind, the Mini Raisons lose little in terms of performance. Such a shape could be the future of offshore sailing.

Aims

The Mini class inspires sailors of all nations, who are just as diverse as SVB's customers. France is SVB's 2nd largest market, so it is not only a good time to increase brand awareness, but also to leave a mark in French sailing and help up-and-coming sailors in the offshore scene realise their dreams.

„We can help you sail around the world, and that's exactly what we want to prove with this project", says SVB's managing director Thomas Stamann.

Together, we want to inspire people to realise their dreams. Just like Hugo!

Which is why our motto for the project is:

Let's sail the world!

Regatta calendar 2021

01/05/2021 Pronichet select: <https://www.la-cl.com/en/presentation-of-the-select-6-50-2021/>

22/05/2021 Mini en Mai: <https://www.snt-voile.org/regates/mini-en-mai/>

03/06/21 Trophée MAP: <http://map.winchesclub.org/en/>

13/06/21 Mini Gascogna: <https://www.mini-gascogna.com/>

26/09/21 Start Mini Transat: <https://minitransat.fr/en/>

Social Media:

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/SVB.de>

<https://www.facebook.com/TheSailingFrenchman>

Instagram: thesailingfrenchman

svb_watersport_equipment/

Online:

Web: <https://www.thesailingfrenchman.com/>