B&G PILOTS VAN LIEW TO VELUX 5 OCEANS WIN

Solo Round-the-World Race Winner Sweeps All Five Legs of the Velux 5 Oceans Relying on High-Tech Systems for Quick, Reliable Information

Leading marine navigation brand B&G helped U.S. sailor Brad Van Liew win the Velux 5 Oceans 2010-2011, a 30,000-mile solo race around the world.

Van Liew crossed the finish line in his 60-foot yacht on May 27, 2011, having begun the race on October 17, 2010 in La Rochelle, France. It is Van Liew’s second victory in the VELUX 5 OCEANS, and he is the only person in the race’s 29-year history to make two clean sweeps in the five ocean sprints that make up the race.

Solo sailing and the intense competitive nature of solo ocean races force sailors to rely on automated systems that fulfil some of the crucial tasks of a traditional crew. Confident in his superior marine electronics network of autopilot, instrumentation and navigation equipment, Van Liew relied on B&G’s outstanding systems to not only keep him safe, but also lend a competitive advantage that resulted in his first-place, record-breaking finish.

“Over the past nine months, the performance and reliability of my electronics were positively invaluable,” Van Liew said. “The race is a constant challenge of both the body and the mind, and when I couldn’t be at the helm, my electronics suite was. B&G’s autopilots and instruments stepped in as a reliable, high-performance driver, while my B&G Deckman software, helped me make the key tactical decisions necessary to be safe on the water and win this incredible race.”

Being alone at sea for the better part of nine months in some of the most brutal conditions on earth requires high performance and reliable electronics. During the race, Van Liew filled the role of driver, tactician, navigator, trimmer and bowman – not to mention medic, cook and communicator.

B&G Pilots are world-renowned for their performance and reliability, which Van Liew acknowledged as key factors in his ability to blast through the volatile Southern Ocean and navigate the more gruelling areas of the racecourse. The latest B&G gear boasts exceptional display technology, ease-of-use and durability. B&G’s Deckman, the world’s most advanced tactical navigation software, also assisted Van Liew in making critical decisions about race strategy and the proper course to choose on each of the five intense ocean sprints.

Leif Ottoson, CEO of Navico, said: “We are thrilled to congratulate Brad on his historic win and are tremendously proud that such a skilled competitor recognised the unparalleled performance of electronics and navigational equipment from B&G in choosing them to help put him in a position to win.”

The VELUX 5 OCEANS race began in La Rochelle, France and included ocean sprints to Cape Town, South Africa; Wellington, New Zealand; Punta del Este, Uruguay; and Charleston, US before returning to La Rochelle. Five skippers from five countries competed in the race, which is known as the Ultimate Solo Challenge.