



Groupama

PRESS RELEASE

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Groupama sailing team Redefined ambitions and marked support for Franck Cammas

Since 1998, the Cammas – Groupama pairing has been writing one of the finest chapters on sailing of French sport, securing wins in all of the major races contested in single-handed and crewed configuration, from the Route du Rhum to the Volvo Ocean Race, via the Transat Jacques Vabre, the Transatlantic record as well as the Jules Verne Trophy. The Cammas – Groupama pairing is also synonymous with a shared ambition and loyalty, which has enabled each of them to feel supported, even in the tough times.

In a difficult economic context since 2011, Groupama is refocusing on performance in the national market, which no longer justifies an international sponsorship strategy. As such French and European events will be the main sporting challenge reflected by Groupama's involvement. However, this doesn't mean that there will be any less support for its first-rate skipper in his desire to tackle a fresh challenge: the America's Cup.

A national focus for one, international development for the other: in these conditions it's difficult to continue with a fifteen-year old history!

And yet that's exactly what Groupama and Franck Cammas intend to do over the next three years.

Extracts from an exchange between the sailor and Sylvain Burel, Director of the Group's Communication:

What stays in your mind from the past fifteen years of this partnership?

Franck Cammas: It's obviously coloured by emotion. Beyond that though, to perform well, a sportsman and a sailor in particular needs to have the financial means to match his sporting ambitions, the necessary time to achieve them and, most importantly I think, trust in his partner or partners. Since the signing of our first contract with Groupama, on 12 November 1997, these three conditions have always been a part of our dealings together.

Sylvain Burel: Thank you Franck. The connection and the quality of our exchanges have always been a strength of ours. I'd especially like to highlight your basic qualities, which combine technical, competitive and mental prowess. I can safely say, in Groupama's name, you have always excelled in this area.

How can a boat owner make the decision to switch its programme after such a fine victory in the Volvo Ocean Race?

Sylvain Burel: After announcing such heavy financial losses in 2011, Groupama has redirected its strategy by focusing on the French market and its insurance expertise. In these conditions, the budgets involved thus far and the aim of extensive international communication no longer satisfy our criteria for moving forward.

As such we've decided to refocus on French and European programmes, which are closer to our territories and our offices with a third of the previous budget for the period spanning 2013-2015.

Franck Cammas: Groupama has never behaved like a sponsor and that's another reason why our association has worked well. It isn't for me to discuss their decision to refocus on the French market but rather to adapt to it. That's what we're doing by getting involved in the Tour de France à la Voile, which has been constantly developing since the A.S.O. took it over. As regards our research department, one of the team's real assets, which has been continually progressing for the past 10 years, this will continue to have free expression through Groupama's support. That's essential because without a high performance research department, I cannot tackle my next challenge, the America's Cup.

Actually, can you tell us more about your programme over the short and medium term?

Franck Cammas: In sporting terms, we're going to be participating in the Tour de France à la Voile in July 2013 in Groupama's colours. It's a race that appeals to me and, a bit like the Volvo, combines offshore and inshore racing. I'm also going to have a stab at Olympic preparation on a Nacra 17, with a view to competing in the Olympic Games 2016 in Rio.

Technically and competitively, we're committing ourselves to the C-Class, which some refer to as the Little America's Cup, again with Groupama.

This is a crucial point for us, for our team, because in the space of ten years we've created a really top-rate research department, which participated in the design of Groupama 2, Groupama 3 and finally Groupama 4, whose success people will be familiar with.

I say crucial because, over the medium term, my aim is to participate in the 35th edition of the America's Cup. To this end, we're creating Franck CAMMAS Racing and we'll participate in the AC 45 World Series circuit in 2013 with some new partners.

In practical and financial terms, what is Groupama's commitment to Franck in the sailing arena through until 2015?

Sylvain Burel: Despite this more constrained purse, we're continuing to actively support Franck over the next 3 years, by putting everything in place to enable him to continue with his ambitions at the highest possible level.

Groupama has renounced any claim for exclusivity to enable Franck to search for some new partners.

On a competitive level, Groupama is continuing to provide him with the means to train at the highest level so as he can one day have a crack at the America's Cup with another partner who has an interest in this race.

In addition to the programme Franck has just outlined, I would like to further stress the support of a high performance research department (40% of our budget), which serves

to sustain this added technological value, which proved so beneficial during the build of Groupama 2, Groupama 3 and Groupama 4 and the associated success of these three boats.

This is another reason why we're committing ourselves to working with Franck in the Little America's Cup, of which little is known about in media terms but is important in terms of technological development.

As regards our involvement in the Tour de France à la Voile, it is obviously linked to our Regional Offices' need to have Franck close to them again. The fact that A.S.O., the body responsible for organising the cycle Tour de France, has taken over the reins, is highly encouraging for us. However, I'd like to reiterate the fact that Groupama will not be committing to the Cup. It is neither within our budget nor part of our approach.

Today Groupama 4 is on show at the entrance to the Nautic Paris Boat Show and Franck Cammas is one of the nominees for the title of Sailor of the Year. Are you satisfied, very satisfied or disappointed by the media coverage of your victory in the Volvo Ocean Race?

Sylvain Burel: The Volvo Ocean Race has generated over 10,000 press plays for Groupama, which equates to an overall increase in value of €9 million.

In terms of quality, there's no doubt that there is more mixed feeling about a 9-month race which is less well known about in France, even though it should be noted that nearly 90% of the coverage generated by the sailing partnership has a positive connotation.

Ultimately it's all about positioning. The Volvo Ocean Race is certainly one of the best mediums for a global group. As far as we're concerned and given our strategy for refocusing, it is more appropriate for us to be involved in a programme of French races.

Franck Cammas: To conclude, I'd like to say thank you to Groupama for their support. Without them, I don't know if I could have competed and won so many races. I also hope that I have brought them some good, such as a fine image for example. What I care about today is the ability to continue at the same pace with this new objective, which is the America's Cup. It's ambitious but we have to be able to pull it off!

Sylvain Burel: Knowing Franck, I don't doubt his commitment for a second. Above all, I'd like to say again that we have our trust in him for the next three years that we will share together.

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