

The history of the race

It all began in 1979, when lone sailor David White came up with the idea of organizing regattas that would enjoy international fame and facilitate the search for the best helmsmen in the world. This goal was achieved three years later, in autumn 1982, when seventeen sailors joined in the struggle of the first BOC Challenge race, which got its name from its sponsor, the British Oxygen Corporation. The race began in a port located on Goat Island near Newport, Rhode Island, U.S.

The race consisted of four stages to be completed in Cape Town, Sydney, Rio de Janeiro and finally Newport, as the location of the finishing line was exactly the same as the starting line. During the race all sorts of speed records were broken and incredible stamina demonstrated. The attention of the whole world focused on this transoceanic struggle. The revelation of the race was French sailor Philippe Jeantot, normally employed as a oil rig diver, who not only won the race, but also completed each stage of the regatta first.

Subsequent races are held every four years. The list of participants changes each time, as do the stage ports and standing rules.

The seventh race is unique, especially for the Polish. It is the first time that a Polish citizen has participated in this prestigious race. This is possible thanks, mostly, to the extraordinary skills demonstrated by Zbigniew Gutkowski during the qualifications, but also because of a change in the yacht requirements. This year Eco 60 yachts are being used, as they are much more financially accessible to less affluent sailors.