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Du 19 au 24 septembre 2023

Défi Azimut - Lorient Agglomération

The low-down on a breathtaking edition!

The 2023 edition of this Défi Azimut - Lorient Agglomération heralds a turning point for the multi-format event created by Jean-Marie Corteville back in 2011. Playing host to 34 IMOCAs in Lorient La Base, Brittany, in what is this year's biggest line-up for the fleet, the Défi Azimut has shown that it has the stature of a major race meet. With the expert teams really keen to get involved, the fleet was able to cope admirably with the autumnal weather and compete in the two main events to crown a very fine champion. Charal, skippered by Jérémie Beyou and Franck Cammas, was the stand-out performer in this thirteenth edition thanks to her dazzling speed and her amazing control in flight mode. The incredibly high standard of the competition ensured that everyone brought their A game, as demonstrated in today's speed runs contested at supersonic speeds and won by Paprec Arkéa skippered by Yoann Richomme and Yann Eliès. The low-down on a breathtaking edition!

- An event perfectly orchestrated despite some tough weather conditions
- Charal, champion of the 48H Azimut after a top-flight match
- Epic speed runs round off today's action in the Bay of Lorient



Photo : Jean-Marie Liot / IMOCA

It was within the context of this very Défi Azimut, back in 2018, that Charal Mk I, a VPLP design, became the first foil-borne IMOCA. The amazing images circumnavigated the globe, yet they left in their wake a number of rather sceptical observers... Five years on, the show put on by the skippers, accompanied by their guests, was surely the finest demonstration that the progress of technology never stops. In today's final, the top twelve foiling IMOCA's powered through the mint green waters of Les Courreaux de Groix, flying along at between 30 and 35 knots leaving some truly unforgettable images in their wake.

Some breathtaking speed runs and a stellar 48H match

Charal, Mk II, the Manuard design launched last year by Jérémie Beyou, who is this year supported by Franck Cammas, did not secure outright victory. However, she did post the best time of the day with an average of 30.2 knots, driving the point home after her victory in the 48H Azimut. The latter proved to be an incredibly comprehensive course in bracing conditions and the perfect test of stamina, speed and reliability prior to the Transat Jacques Vabre, for which the Défi Azimut was a qualifier.

However, the main takeaway from this 13th edition certainly doesn't centre on just a single runner and rider pairing. "The competition is incredibly tight and we can see that the skippers are not frightened to go on the attack in all the different conditions. Three or four boats posted stand-out performances, but a good fifteen or so are sailing at a very high standard," said a delighted Antoine Mermod, President of Class IMOCA, this evening.

The arrival on the scene of the latest generation foilers, Macif Santé Prévoyance (Dalin-Bidégorry) and Paprec Arkéa (Richomme-Eliès), has shaken up the hierarchy and confirmed that everyone has a shot at the top spot. This is equally true for boats like Malizia - Seaexplorer (Herrmann-Harris) and Biotherm (Meilhat-Lobato), which competed in The Ocean Race and racked up a great deal of experience in their sprint around the world. Some boats, like For The Planet (Goodchild-Ruyant), third, as well as Teamwork, the ex-Charal Mk I helmed by Justine Mettraux and Julien Villion who finish sixth, have demonstrated that the slightly older boats sailed very well are also still capable of posting fantastic performances.

Moreover, the mixed duos have been a real force to be reckoned with in this edition. Sam Davies, accompanied at late notice by her new co-skipper Jack Bouttell, finished fifth. Meantime, the young Violette

Dorange, proved to be one of the big hits of the Défi. Accompanied by the experienced Damien Guillou, the 22-year-old managed to secure thirteenth place on DeVenir, Jean Le Cam's old boat, and top-ranked daggerboard boat in what was a formidable race within a race. Equally, two female On-Board Reporters - Anne Beaugé for best photo and Mathilde Fontan for best video – have secured victory in the media competition, which is organised every year by the Défi Azimut.

The only sorry tale in this year's event review is Corum's currently unexplained dismasting, which confirms that the IMOCA's mast remains their Achilles heel. It's a factor that will need to be taken into account given the numerous races which await the skippers prior to the Vendée Globe 2024, an event which will be synonymous with the end of a race cycle that began as the previous round the world race concluded in 2021.

New faces and some great encounters

In conjunction with the action out on the water, five conferences hosted in the auditorium within the Cité de la Voile Eric Tabarly were a dense platform for exchange and discussion, which were greatly enjoyed by both the local ecosystem in Lorient and the public.

Commencing on Tuesday with a workshop on integration in Offshore Racing on the initiative of Groupe Apicil, they continued throughout the day on Friday. Bretagne Développement Innovation organised three conferences on topics ranging from Artificial Intelligence applied to offshore routing, to the progress of carbon-free energies on IMOCA's and the latest developments in foiling, with notable links to the America's Cup. Every one of them was an opportunity to welcome some top-level contributors, sourced from a rich seam of talent from within Brittany's marine industry, which is at the forefront of all these topics.

Finally, the presence of 500 children from local schools within the Lorient Agglomération and an in-port visit from the expedition yacht Tara, expanded the Défi's horizons still further. "My takeaway from these five exceptional days is the great intermixture of all these audiences. The skippers, their teams, the on-board reporters, all these new sailors, the presence of Pen Duick and Tara, the excellent performances by the female contingent, including the youngest sailor in the race, for whom the Défi Azimut will always be her first ever experience of racing an IMOCA... All that fills me with joy and prompts me to label the Défi as a wonderful forum," enthused Jean-Marie Corteville this evening as he stepped off the video production catamaran Royale, which was following all the action in the speed runs. This exceptional footage will forge the reputation of the Défi Azimut, whose fantastic history is becoming increasingly rich with every edition.

Résultats :

48 Heures Azimut :

- 1- Charal (Jérémy Beyou, Franck Cammas)
- 2- Macif Santé Prévoyance (Charlie Dalin, Pascal Bidegorry)
- 3- For The Planet (Sam Goodchild, Thomas Ruyant)

Runs Azimut :

Vainqueur de la finale : Paprec Arkéa (Yoann Richomme, Yann Eliès)
Meilleur temps de la journée : Charal (Jérémy Beyou, Franck Cammas)

Concours On board Reporters :

- Photo : Anne Beaugé embarquée sur L'Occitane en Provence.
- Vidéo : Mathilde Fontan embarquée sur Fousier Mon courtier énergie.

Résultats complets sur www.defi-azimut.net



Photo : JM Liot / Défi Azimut - Lorient Agglomération



Photo : JM Liot / Défi Azimut - Lorient Agglomération



Photo : Vincent Curutchet / Défi Azimut - Lorient Agglomération

MEDIAS

Photos et vidéos au format HD sont disponibles sur le serveur [IMOCA](#).

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ACCREDITATIONS

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LES ENGAGES

- Groupe Apicil (Damien Seguin / Laurent Bourgues)
- Biotherm (Paul Meilhat / Mariana Lobato)
- Bureau Vallée (Louis Burton / Davy Beaudart)
- Charal (Jérémy Beyou / Franck Cammas)
- Corum L'Épargne (Nicolas Troussel / Benjamin Schwartz)
- Coup de Pouce - Giffard Manutention (Manu Cousin / Clément Giraud)
- DeVenir (Violette Dorange / Damien Guillou)
- D'leteren Group (Denis Van Weynbergh / Erwann Le Mene)

- DMG MORI Global One (Kojiro Shiraishi / Benoit Mariette)
- Fives group - Lantana environnement (Louis Duc / Remi Aubrun)
- For the Planet (Sam Goodchild / Thomas Ruyant)
- Fortinet - Best Western (Romain Attanasio / Loïs Berrehar)
- Foussier - Mon courtier Energie (Sébastien Marsset / Sophie Faguet)
- Freelance.com (Guirec Soudée / Roland Jourdain)
- Gentoo Sailing Team (James Harayda / Stéphane Le Diraison)
- Hublot (Alan Roura / Simon Koster)
- Human (Antoine Cornic / Jean-Charles Luro)
- Initiatives Coeur (Sam Davies / Jack Bouttell)
- La Mie Câline (Arnaud Boissières / Gérald Véniard)
- Lazare (Tanguy Le Turquais / Felix de Navacelle)
- L'Occitane en Provence (Clarisse Cremer / Alan Roberts)
- MACIF (Charlie Dalin / Pascal Bidégorry)
- MACSF (Isabelle Joschke / Alain Gautier)
- Maître Coq V (Yannick Bestaven / Julien Pulvé)
- Malizia - Seaexplorer (Boris Herrmann / Will Harris)
- Monnoyeur - Duo for a job (Benjamin Ferré / Pierre Le Roy)
- Nexans - Arts & Fenêtres (Fabrice Amedeo / Andréas Baden)
- Oliver Heer Ocean Racing (Oliver Heer / Nils Palmieri)
- Paprec Arkéa (Yoann Richomme / Yann Elies)
- Prysmian Group (Giancarlo Pedote / Gaston Morvan)
- STAND AS ONE (Eric Bellion / Martin Le Pape)
- Szabi Ocean Racing (Weöres Szabolcs / Irina Gracheva)
- Teamwork (Justine Mettraux / Julien Villion)
- V AND B - MONBANA – MAYENNE (Maxime Sorel / Christopher Pratt)

CONTACTS



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