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Du 19 au 24 septembre 2023

Défi Azimut - Lorient Agglomération

Beyou - Cammas (Charal): victory to crown an epic night



Photo : JM Liot / Défi Azimut

After sailing a masterful race, Jérémie Beyou and Franck Cammas crossed the finish line of the Défi Azimut - Lorient Agglomération's 48H classic at 04:16 UTC this Saturday in the pitch black of pre-dawn.

Charal's two co-skippers secured victory after 1 day 17 hours and 46 minutes of racing around an Atlantic course spanning about 600 miles, where the fleet encountered all the different points of sail in a variety of wind and sea conditions, punctuated by the passage of countless squalls.

This victory celebrates the alchemy of two sailors on a constant quest to perform well, focused solely on getting the absolute best out of their fantastic flying machine. They had to post a creditable performance against some incisive rivals who were attacking hard throughout, starting with the duos helming Macif Santé Prévoyance (Dalin-Bidégorry) and For The Planet (Goodchild-Ruyant).

As a result, even Lorient's erratic winds in the early hours were unable to shake up the podium positions in this 48H Azimut. Charlie Dalin and Pascal Bidégorry on Macif Santé Prévoyance were second across the line after 1 day, 19 hours and 34 minutes of racing, followed by Sam Goodchild and Thomas Ruyant on For The Planet (1 day, 20 h, 02 minutes).

A match made in heaven for these two pairings, ultimately they were able to

hold rank and guaranteed a thrilling battle at the top of the leader board from beginning to end, Macif even moving up into first place between waypoint 2 and 3 before yielding it once more on the third leg.

Thanks to a final squall at the end of yesterday, the three boats ended up bunched around the last mark. Positioned slightly to leeward, For The Planet allowed Macif Santé Prévoyance to sneak past them to gain a slight edge offshore of the Loire estuary and the podium order was decided.

The winner's lead of 1 hour 48 minutes in no way reflects the intensity of the race sailed by these three pairings, who will be lining up for the start of the Transat Jacques Vabre in less than a month with the prospect of a very different race format on the cards, albeit with the same ambitions...



Photo : JL Carli / Defi Azimut - Lorient Agglomération

Dockside reactions

A collection of the quotes from the two co-skippers of Charal upon arrival dockside in Lorient La Base. After a race they describe as “unsettled and intense”, Jérémie Beyou and Franck Cammas make no secret of their delight at securing victory after a hard-won battle coloured by a pacey offshore sprint that showcased the great cohesion of this high-performance duo.

The race

Jérémie Beyou

“On a competitive level first of all it was very comprehensive. We got off to a good start. We then got caught up in a whole bunch of seaweed and had to raise the foil. It felt great to beat our way back up through the fleet afterwards. The downwind section wasn't bad. We made a few small errors, but each time we found that we were a bit off the pace we managed to play catch up. The standard among the fleet is incredibly high. When you win intense races like these, it's quite something. Psychologically it feels good. I've been waiting for this for quite some time and it was especially nice to sail with Frank, who was a Défi Azimut rookie.

It's my second victory in this race, which I love and it always brings me something special.

We got caught in a squall at the last mark before the beat home and had to round up in haste and furl everything in, whilst the others really came back hard. That particular manoeuvre was far from easy and you come out of it shattered. We were pleased there was still a 200-mile beat to the finish.”

Franck Cammas

“Everything was quite complicated with fairly breaking seas. It was very unsettled. Yesterday afternoon, we got caught up in another 40-knot squall, which we weren't expecting. The 48H Azimut is very comprehensive with a course alternating between all the different points of sail. It's reassuring to finish in front. It means that we're on track in terms of speed. We didn't sail a very good reach, but on all the other tacks, we were definitely good, especially close-hauled at the end, with MACIF trying to hang onto us but ending up falling off the pace. Tactically we didn't make too many silly mistakes.”

The pairing

Jérémie Beyou

“We're still a young couple, but it's working out increasingly well. Strategically we're both on the same page. We agree on what needs to be done. It feels like each of us is able to bring to the plate what he feels will work and it's put to good use.”

Franck Cammas

“We easily come together on the same wavelength. Each of us was educated at Port-La-Forêt and we share the same way of thinking. We're moulded for that.”

The Transat Jacques Vabre

Franck Cammas: "It's not the same race. It's going to be very long, with some long days sailing downwind in the trade wind, at least that's how I hope things will play out. We'll see other boats stand out, but I hope we'll be among them. It's certainly a possibility as we've really stepped up our game this year."

Final word

Jérémie Beyou: "I'd just like to spare a thought for Nico Troussel. The reach was certainly pretty violent. It was an invitation to break a whole bunch of things. I'm disappointed it fell down to him again."

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- Charal (Jérémie Beyou / Franck Cammas)
- Corum L'Épargne (Nicolas Troussel / Benjamin Schwartz)
- Coup de Pouce - Giffard Manutention (Manu Cousin / Clément Giraud)
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- Fortinet - Best Western (Romain Attanasio / Loïs Berrehar)
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- Teamwork (Justine Mettraux / Julien Villion)
- V AND B - MONBANA – MAYENNE (Maxime Sorel / Christopher Pratt)

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