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10 days to go: The Azimut's new challenges

With more than 15 solo sailors poised to take the start, the Défi Azimut Lorient Agglomération is proving to be a big draw for the runners and riders kicking off the autumn racing season. All summer-long, the Azimut teams have been working flat out to pay tribute to this excellent cast and ensure that this 16th edition resonates ever more strongly with the IMOCA community and the heart of Sailing Valley.
On the programme for this latest edition is a whole new suite of digital tools to gen up on all the insider knowledge of the racing, complete with new faces and a partners' club to make the event even more dynamic… Suffice to say, the Défi Azimut is laying on a first-rate competition once again! We get the low-down on the line-up with just 10 days until the event kicks off on Tuesday 15 September at Brittany's Lorient La Base.

The human centre stage at the Défi.

Sam Goodchild, skipper of Macif Santé Prévoyance, who has his eyes on the top prize, refers to the Défi Azimut as 'the sharing race'. It is an insightful observation because this year, in a step up from the previous fifteen editions, the event will focus on sport as well as networking and exchanges from 15 to 20 September.

"*With five days of racing, the Défi is one of IMOCA's short format competitions and yet, paradoxically, it is an event where you can take your time*," notes Jean-Marie Corteville. "*We've placed even more emphasis on the networking and sharing experience in this year's programme*," explains the president of Azimut, a company specialising in IT solutions.

Scheduled for Friday are four conferences organised by Bretagne Next, Audélor and the Université Bretagne Sud. In line with 2025, Pierre-Yves Lautrou will once again host this series of sessions centring on naval architecture and innovation in the

domain of hulls, appendages and sails, with the focus on the Ferrari and K Challenge boats.

These and many other topics will also be discussed during two ‘Afterworks’ sessions organised late afternoon on the Thursday and Friday. These informal exchanges will primarily be open to this year’s newly created Partners’ Club with a view to bringing together all those providing private support to the Défi Azimut Lorient Agglomération, which Jean-Marie Corteville describes as “*companies with meaningful local roots who are helping us to go from strength to strength*.”

JL Carli / Défi Azimut

Another challenge overcome this year

Who will succeed the 2025 winner Macif Santé Prévoyance? Benefiting from a new hull design, Charal may well be the primary candidate, offering Jérémie Beyou the chance to lay claim to his fifth Défi Azimut title! Further hot contenders include MACSF (Corentin Horeau), Allagrande Mapei (Ambrogio Beccaria) and Association Petits Princes-Queguiner (Elodie Bonafous). Also worth monitoring will be the progress made by Les P’tits Doudous, Armel Tripon’s VPLP design, which was fresh out of the box last year and is now fully tweaked and raring to go. Three rookies will be making their single-handed debut in IMOCA: Pierre Louis Atwell (RESILIENT), Davy Beaudart (Bureau Vallée) and Japanese sailor Masa Suzuki (Milai-Furuno), who plan to use this event to gauge where they’re at in terms of performance against the category’s main movers and shakers.

To get the low-down, tune in from Wednesday 15 September at 2:30 pm, which is when the sporting action in the Défi Azimut will commence with speed Runs in the waters between the island of Groix and mainland Brittany. Raced in crew format with guests, the speed of the boats can be viewed in elapsed time on the website thanks

to advanced high-frequency communication chips integrated in the Yellow Brick positioning beacons.

The 48 Hours event will see the IMOCAs setting sail on Thursday 17 at 3:30 pm local time. It too will be an immersive experience thanks to an interactive and downloadable cartography, fleshed out with content from the On Board Reporters, who will be aboard with the solo sailors. These media professionals will be working under the guidance of Yann Riou (Polaryse), who has played a key role in bringing this profession front and centre and he remains one of the foremost specialists in this field.

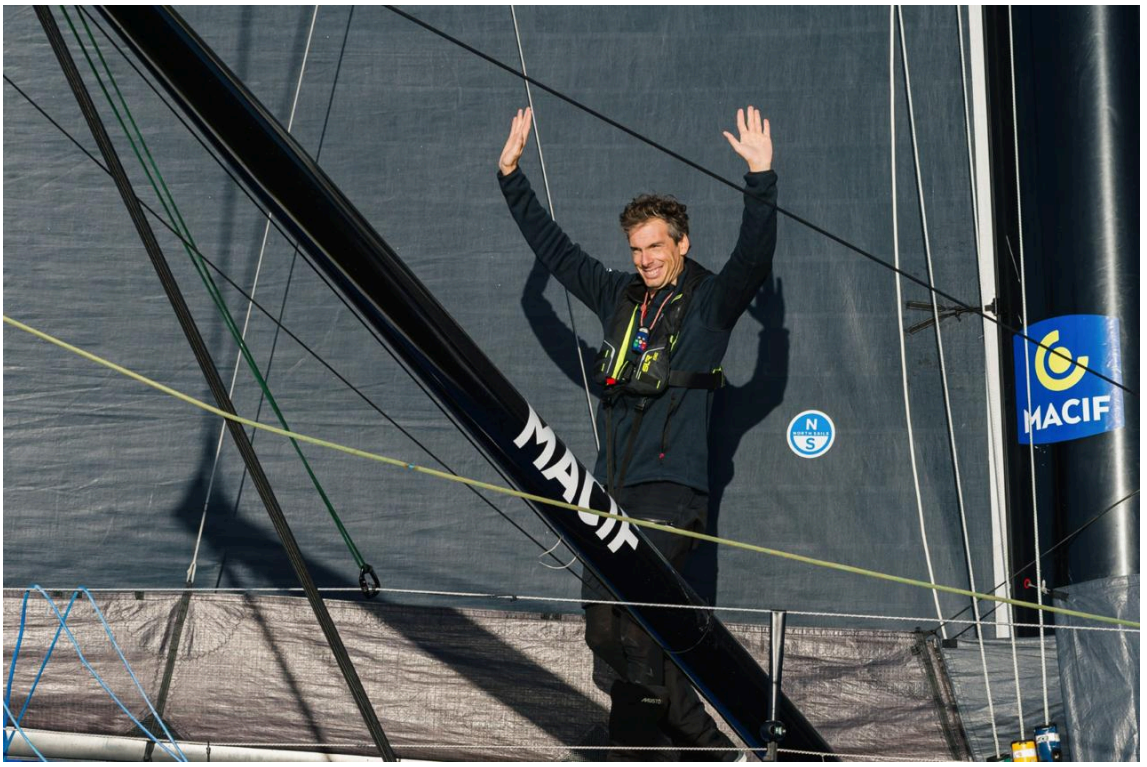
Alongside Francis Le Goff and Pierre Haÿs, who will once again step into a Race Management role, Christian Dumard will be the Défi's weather consultant, with a special emphasis on the offshore event that spans more than 500 miles and will be the final competitive showdown for the sailors prior to the Route du Rhum Destination Guadeloupe.
All the Runs, together with the start of the 48 Hours, will be broadcast live and available to view on YouTube and france.tv/sport.

In memory of Charlie, of course.

Prior to Wednesday's speed Runs, most of the IMOCAs will have already come together out on the water the day before as they sail to nearby Concarneau and back as a final tribute to Charlie Dalin.

They will also be accompanied by a number of other boats - Ultims, Figaros and sailing dinghies – for a huge parade around the port of registry of last year's Vendée Globe winner. Slated to be a lively, musical celebration, as requested by the skipper who passed away on 10 June 2026, his wife Perrine is eager to honour his wish.

With the IMOCAs scheduled to return to Lorient La Base before 08:00 am, our memories of Charlie as a modest, elegant, approachable and hugely talented sailor will continue to live on. Indeed, he had a major influence on this event as he skippered a boat in the Défi no fewer than five times and racked up three masterful wins in 2021, 2022 and 2024.



JL Carli / Défi Azimut 2025

The Défi Azimut in numbers – over 16 years

4 — **The record for the most victories** is held by **Jérémie Beyou.** Just behind him, **Vincent Riou and Charlie Dalin** have each won the race **three times.**

14 — **Louis Burton holds the record for most appearances**, having been there since the inaugural 2011 edition. He is handing over the helm of his Bureau Vallée to Davy Beaudart this year.

5 — **Number of competitors at the inaugural edition,** a self-managed event co-organized with JM Corteville. This figure peaked at 30 in 2022.

30,2 — knots: the **average speed of the best Run ever recorded**. It was achieved **in 2023 on Charal 2**, in truly mind-blowing conditions.

1h 08m 10s — **Tour de Groix record**: held by **Vincent Riou on PRB since 2015**... and still unbeaten!

The 16th Défi Azimut fleet:

Fabrice Amedeo - FDJ United - Ocean Calling (IMOCA à dérives)
Pierre-Louis Attwell - Résilient (IMOCA à dérives)
Ambrogio Beccaria - Allagrande MAPEI
Davy Beaudart - Bureau Vallée
Jérémie Beyou - Charal
Élodie Bonafous - Association Petits Princes - Quéguiner

Manuel Cousin - Coup de Pouce
Violette Dorange - Initiatives-Cœur
Nicolas d'Estais - Café Joyeux (IMOCA à dérives)
Sam Goodchild - MACIF Santé Prévoyance
Corentin Horeau - MACSF
Sébastien Marsset - FOUSSIER (IMOCA à dérives)
Masa Suzuki - Milai - Furuno (IMOCA à dérives)
Armel Tripon - Les P'tits Doudous

How to follow us :

Full schedule for the week:
https://www.defi-azimut.net/fr/le-defi-1/programme

To embed the live streams into your media:
- Wednesday, September 16 speed runs live stream:
https://youtube.com/live/vw739RJslNU
- Thursday, September 17 - 48h Azimut start live stream:
https://youtube.com/live/O3fk0OI40jY

Further reading:

[PDF] Download the document here
Download "Best of 2025" images below

Click here

Schedule :

Monday, September 14

- **From 10:00 AM: Teams and media registration,** at the Maison des Skippers
- **2:00 PM - 5:00 PM: "Tech'Afternoon" workshop: "Shipyard hazards and mast climbing",** organized by 507 Works, at the Karré (Cité de la Voile Éric Tabarly)

Tuesday, September 15

- **8:45 AM - 4:30 PM: Materials & Mobility Day**
- **2:00 PM:** Free afternoon - **Collective tribute organized by Charlie Dalin's family and loved ones in Concarneau**
- **From 8:30 PM:** Welcoming the IMOCAs back from the sea - Défi Azimut, at the Maison des Skippers

Wednesday, September 16

- **11:00 AM: General briefing and Speed Runs schedule** at the Cité de la Voile Éric Tabarly, open to the media (zone, course, weather)
- **1:30 PM:** IMOCAs dock-out / leaving the harbor
- **2:30 PM: Start line open** for the Speed Runs
- **5:30 PM: Speed Runs start line closed**
- **8:00 PM:** Opening night and Speed Runs Prize Giving, in the Muséo area of the Cité de la Voile Éric Tabarly

Thursday, September 17

- **1:30 PM:** IMOCAs dock-out / leaving the harbor
- **3:30 PM: Start of the 48h AZIMUT**
- **2:00 PM: Press Tour focused on sustainable innovation in ocean racing**
- **6:00 PM: "Apéro pro Azimut"** (B2B networking drink) in partnership with the Bretagne brand, at the Comptoir Groix et Nature

Friday, September 18

- **8:30 AM - 4:00 PM: Conferences: Architecture, Innovation, and Business Model Changes**, with Bretagne Next, Audélor, and the UBS (University of Southern Brittany)
- **5:00 PM:** "Apéro pro" (B2B networking drink) for Breton networks with the Bretagne brand, at the Comptoir Groix et Nature

Saturday, September 19

- **10:00 AM - 6:00 PM: IMOCA arrivals / finishes**
- **8:00 PM:** Crew party and 48H AZIMUT Prize Giving

Sunday, September 20

- **11:00 AM:** IMOCAs dock-out / leaving the harbor
- **12:30 PM: Start of the Tour de Groix**
- **5:30 PM:** Skippers & OBR photo/video contest Prize Giving (Lorient La Base dock)

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