



Saturday, 19 september

D+6

And ultimately, victory goes to Macif!

- By all accounts, Sam Goodchild has been untouchable this year and pockets his second consecutive win in the 48 H Azimut.
- Astern of the Macif Santé Prévoyance skipper, the favourites have lived up to the hype and Ambrogio Beccaria (Allagrande Mapei) and Jérémie Beyou (Charal) complete the podium.
- Disappointment for the five skippers who retired from the course so they can compete in tomorrow's Tour de Groix round island race.
- Still out on the racetrack, Davy Beudart (Bureau Vallée) and Nicolas d'Estais (Café Joyeux) are due to finish tonight and tomorrow.



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It was well ahead of croissant time when Sam Goodchild made it back to Lorient La Base this morning. Satisfied with his performance after devouring 556 miles in a little less than 39 hours, the 'Franco-Briton', who is seldom guilty of self-satisfaction, was savouring the feeling that he had done justice to his Verdier design, which is "*ideally suited to this type of challenge*". In fact, he went so far as to admit that "*Yes, it was the perfect race.*" In competitive parlance, it is another way of saying that things went according to a plan drawn up 48 hours earlier with his team: to start strong and make the most of the opportunity to steal a march in a weather scenario which, as was rumoured before the start, would always favour those at the front.

A cracking pace

The pace set by Sam Goodchild impressed his rivals, even those who remained in contention for a podium place, like Jérémie Beyou, third on Charal, who acknowledged that "*first place was out of reach.*" "*It was my first race back in the saddle and my automatic*

reflexes were lacking, noted the winner of the last double-handed transatlantic race. For an hour and a half, I really had my work cut out finding the right trim. By that point, Sam had kind of got away, as had Ambrogio.”

Indeed, for Ambrogio Beccaria, credited with a very fine second place, the clincher was after the BXA buoy, the first course mark off the Gironde estuary, as the wind dropped: *“Sam’s boat is still the most incredible boat in history in those conditions! She goes like a rocket upwind. She is at least a knot faster than the best boat in the fleet and she was going two knots faster than me!”* explained the sailor from Milan, who is as good a storyteller as he is a skipper and has every right to be pleased with his “well-controlled” 48 H race.



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Control

Control of both one’s boat and one’s emotions was a hot topic among the sailors as, one by one, they made it back to Lorient la Base. 4th on MACSF, Corentin Horeau hopes he has *“gained confidence and improved his automatic reflexes to keep pace with the leaders.”* Meantime, Violette Dorange was *“a little scared of not being up to speed on the first leg”* whilst noting that *“even though I lost a tiny bit of ground I held firm”*. In actual fact, the young woman delivered yet another very solid performance to secure 5th place aboard her Initiatives Coeur, which she was only given the keys to this year.

All of the skippers came into this competition to test their mettle, and this was especially true for Sébastien Simon, who was debuting his brand-new Verdier design. 7th in Lorient, the skipper of Groupe Dubreuil - Air Caraïbes admitted on arrival: *“As someone who’s competitive, it’s a slightly frustrating result, but I think we were right to work hard to take part in the Défi Azimut. The boat has real potential, even if there’s still a lot of work to do to harness it. I’m fairly pleased with the ergonomic choices we’ve made. I did all the nav without my foulies on, in socks in my cockpit!”*

To each their own race

As we go to press, two competitors are still doing battle offshore. Davy Beaudart on Bureau Vallée, who is set to finish at nightfall and Nicolas d'Estais, who might well manage to cross the finishing line before it closes on Sunday at 10:00 am. Seriously delayed by the ridge of high pressure, the skipper of Café Joyeux is digging deep to complete the course. Five other skippers in a similar position, Masa Suzuki (Milai - Furuno), Manuel Cousin (Coup de Pouce), Armel Tripon (Les P'tits Doudous), Pierre-Louis Attwell (Résilient) and finally Sébastien Marsset (Foussier), opted last night to head straight back to Lorient outside the ranking so that they can enjoy the third act of the Défi Azimut.

The famous Tour de Groix round island race, which will set sail at 1:00 pm tomorrow, will be the perfect opportunity for everyone to come together again and share their IMOCA's with their partners and guests.

LES MOTS À L'ARRIVÉE



The words of Sam Goodchild - Macif Santé Prévoyance



The words of Ambrogio Beccaria - Allagrande Mapei



The words of Jérémie Beyou - Charal



The words of
Corentin Horeau, Violette Dorange, Elodie Bonafous et Sébastien Simon.



The finish line photos
Find photos of the finish line crossings



The finish line photos
Find photos of the port arrivals

LES MEDIAS



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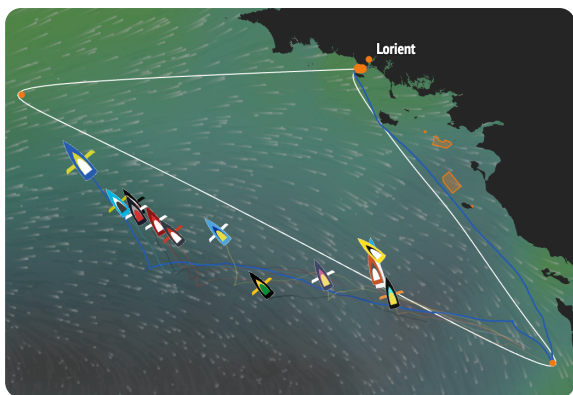
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Follow the race

Follow the rankings and the fleet's progress on the tracker. Christian Dumard will comment on weather developments in the live chat.

The tracker

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