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LE DÉFI AZIMUT

LORIENT AGGLOMÉRATION

12th edition



NEWSLETTER
Friday 22 July 2022

Défi Azimut - Lorient Agglomération 2022 : Fully booked!

TO NOTE

| The 12th Défi Azimut - Lorient Agglomération will take place in Lorient, Brittany from 13 to 18 September 2022: 5 days of racing in multiple formats with Speed runs, a 48-hour sprint and the Tour de Groix round island race.

| An exceptional line-up: around thirty IMOCA's expected, 7 of them making their race debut.

| Officially part of the IMOCA GLOBE SERIES Championship since 2021, the Défi Azimut now counts towards the qualification system (miles) for the upcoming Vendée Globe.

| For the first time, the event will serve as the IMOCA warm-up for The Ocean Race.



What an epic turnout for this twelfth Défi Azimut - Lorient Agglomération! Though every edition of this multi-format event, so popular with the IMOCA skippers, brings something new to the plate, the 2022 version is shaping up to be truly exceptional. Up against the top boats from the last Vendée Globe, there will be no fewer than 7 brand-new prototypes christening their foils this September offshore of Lorient.

30 competitors, 7 new boats, 9 rookies

Biotherm (Paul Meilhat), *Charal 2* (Jérémie Beyou), *Initiatives Cœur* (Samantha Davies), *Maître CoQ V* (Yannick Bestaven), *PRB* (Kevin Escoffier), *Malizia - Seaexplorer* (Boris Herrmann) and *V and B-Monbana-Mayenne* (Maxime Sorel) are eagerly awaited... to which we are tempted to add Charlie Enright's *11th Hour Racing Team - Mâlama*, precursor of this new generation, launched for the Défi 2021.

"It takes time to get the best out of a new design, but it's going to be thrilling to size up the true performance of each architectural option, especially in the Runs," commented Charlie Dalin, reigning champion of the Défi Azimut - Lorient Agglomération, which he won in double-handed format last year alongside Paul Meilhat. The skipper of *Apivia* continues: *"Since all these new boats were announced, I've been really looking forward to the Azimut. Essentially, it's synonymous with the start of the second half of the season, which will culminate with November's Route du Rhum - Destination Guadeloupe."*

New boats then, but also some new faces: The Défi Azimut - Lorient Agglomération will be a great opportunity to get to know several of the event's rookies, some of whom have also just arrived on the IMOCA circuit. These include Benjamin Ferré (*Monnoyeur-Duo for a job*), Nicolas Rouger (*Demain c'est loin*), Guirec Soudée (*Freelance.com*), Tanguy Le Turquais (*Lazare*), James Harayda (*Gentoo Sailing*), Ollie Heer (*Ollie Heer Ocean racing*), as well as Louis Duc (*Five-Lantana Environnement*), Eric Bellion (*COMMEUNSEULHOMME powered by Altavia*) and even Kojiro Shiraishi (*DMG MORI Global One*)... all of whom will be sampling the delights of the Défi for the first time. Another opportunity to set the standard then, as well as a chance to rack up the miles with a view to their qualification for the Vendée Globe 2024-25.

Fundamentals and innovations

It's a first for the Défi after its integration in the IMOCA GLOBE SERIES Championship last year and it is *"great recognition for all the work we've been doing for the past ten years and more"* according to Candice Crépeau director of the Défi. *"The remarkable line-up of around thirty competitors, a third of whom are from overseas, really steps things up a gear across every aspect of the organisation. It's a challenge for our team and that's what we like!"*



It'll be important to get inventive out on the water too. Indeed, this year, the Runs will be contested in pools, as Race Director Hubert Lemonnier explains: *"Within each group, we guarantee the skippers a minimum of 2 runs. As they'll be battling over a shorter period, the sporting equity will be enhanced."* The winners from each pool will go through to the final, with the outright champion being decided on Wednesday evening.

"On the fringes of the competitive arena, the Défi Azimut - Lorient Agglomération will once again be an opportunity to bring together the network's protagonists around a series of meetings, debates and round tables, which will inject some added soul into the Défi, along with a unique conviviality," announces Jean-Marie Corteville, president of the Défi and director of Azimut, a company which provides computer solutions.

So see you from 13 September for 5 days of intense battles, with sharing in abundance!



4 crews at the start in 'The Ocean Race' mode

In this Route du Rhum year, the 48 Heures du Défi Azimut must be raced in solo format (with an on board reporter). However, the event's proximity to The Ocean Race (ex. Whitbread Round the World Race, ex. Volvo Ocean Race), the round the world race with stopovers, which will set sail from Alicante in Spain on 15 January 2023 for its 14th edition, means that 4 or 5 boats will be contesting the race in crewed format (4 sailors, including at least one woman, plus an on board reporter).

"The Défi Azimut has always been geared around the next major race, thus serving as the ideal warm-up. As a result, it is entirely logical to have those boats due to participate in The Ocean Race competing in crewed configuration. Naturally, that in no way affects the line-up of singlehanded sailors, who will still be able to compete for the traditional event record,"

explains Antoine Mermod, president of IMOCA.

In this way, *Biotherm*, *GUYOT Environnement - Team Europe*, *Malizia - Seaexplorer* and *11th Hour Racing Team - Mālama* will benefit from their first ever match together in the 48 heures. Their course will be slightly longer, with line honours logically going to the best solo sailors.

| SPORTS PROGRAMME 2022

WEDNESDAY 14 SEPTEMBER

13:30 – 17:30 UTC: Runs Azimut Bretagne – Time in crewed format

THURSDAY 15 SEPTEMBER

12:30 UTC: Start of the 48h d'Azimut

SATURDAY 17 SEPTEMBER

08:00 – 14:00 UTC: Arrival of the boats

SUNDAY 18 SEPTEMBER

11:00 UTC: Start of the Tour de Groix Azimut

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www.defi-azimut.net



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