



Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez – 28 September, 6 October 2019

Anniversary edition: 20 years

29 September 2019

They believe they can sail...!

- ***Pitch, Sonda, France* and *Blitzen*, prize-winners of the Yacht Club de France's Autumn Cup**
- **The Modern boats kick off proceedings tomorrow. With Wallys, Maxis and Prototypes... more than 150 Hi-Tech sail boats are set to hit the bay**
- **Les Voiles, the clincher in the Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge**

Summer continues to reign across the bay in France's Var region, despite the arrival mid-afternoon of the 35 yachts competing in the Yacht Club de France's Autumn Cup, by way of a competitive prelude to what promises to be a wonderful anniversary week at Les Voiles. Racing from Cannes to Saint Tropez, it was the perfect opportunity for spectators to get a foretaste of the upcoming races as the large gaff schooners and speedy cutters, some dating back to the thirties, burst onto the race zone. Snatching victory in their respective categories, *Pitch* (Tofinou 9.5m), *Sonda* (8mR), *France* (12mR) and *Blitzen* (sloop) celebrated their wins in style whilst nearly 4,000 sailors continued with their final preparations and the inauguration of the race village, which has been entirely revamped prior to the first races tomorrow for all the Modern yachts, split into 5 IRC groups, together with the powerful Wallys. In line with tradition, the Classic yachts will hit the racetrack on Tuesday, completing the line-up for this magical event.

The Yacht Club de France's Autumn Cup

Anticipating a shifty wind at midday, those competing in the Autumn Cup set sail from the bay of Cannes at 10:15 hours this morning on a 23-mile sprint to Saint Tropez. The SW'ly breeze forced them onto a beat, a point of sail relished by some of the yachts. It was the Tofinou 9.5 *Pitch* skippered by Patrice Riboux that dominated her Esprit de Tradition category, an achievement matched by Eric Leprince's *Sonda* among the Marconi rigs of less than 15 metres in length, Jacques Kade's *Blitzen* for boats over 15 metres, and Pierre Bausset's *France*, which outpaced *Il Moro di Venezia* among the 12mRs.

The Modern boats get down to business tomorrow

Tomorrow, Monday, the fleet of Modern yachts, IRC boats and Wallys are raring to get going with their last competition of the season. Indeed, Saint Tropez is synonymous with a settling of accounts as it hosts the grand finale for a number of series, including the latest new race created under the aegis of the International Maxi Association, the Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge, where either *Wallyno* and *Lorina* are lined up to take the win at the end of this week at Les Voiles. Among the newcomers to the legendary port in southern France are two new yachts sure to create a stir: the V68 *Pelotari* (20m), launched in late June and designed in collaboration with the architect Mark Mills, and the GS80 *Essentia* (24m), designed by Ceccarelli Yacht Design and Engineering,

which is making her race debut here. The V68 *Pelori* is a development of the V62 *Supernikka*, winner of 3 Mini Maxi Rolex World Championships. The fully carbon boat is unique in that her retracting keel reduces her draught from 4.20m to just 2.90m.

The Italian yard Del Pardo, builder of the famous Grand Soleils, is launching a new range entitled Grand Soleil Custom. *Essentia* is the first of these, designed by Ceccarelli. Measuring 25.95 metres in length and built from carbon fibre, she embodies the Grand Soleil's speed and seaworthiness, as well as boasting a supreme standard of equipment. She'll certainly be one to watch at Les Voiles...

A star-studded Saint Tropez!

As with every edition of Les Voiles, anniversary edition or not, sailing's stars from all manner of backgrounds on all manner of boats, flock to compete at Saint Tropez. Among this year's celebs are Thierry Peponnet, Jochen Schümann and Tom Whidden, Jean-Pierre Dick and the illustrious American helmsman Peter Holmberg, Patrizio Bertelli, boss of the Luna Rossa challenge, Michel Desjoyeaux, Simon Le Bon, Nicolas Berenger, Yvan Bourgnon, Brad Butterworth, as well as Dee Caffari, Sébastien Audigane, German Frers, Philippe Monnet, Lionel Péan, Loïck Peyron, Christopher Pratt, Marcel van Triest, Bruno Troublé, and writer Yann Quéffelec to name but a few!

Weather

As it tracks eastwards, a small low-pressure system is set to sweep the coast of the Var region with WNW'ly winds of 16 to 18 knots.

Today's partners:

The Port of Saint Tropez

Boasting some 734 moorings split between two basins that span 9 hectares and enjoying a central location at the heart of the village, the port of Saint Tropez is one of the Mediterranean's main stopover hubs where innovation and the quality of the services make it one of the world's most renowned ports. Since 2018, two terraces are available on the Jean Réveille jetty that includes the 200-berth "La Batterie", which can be rented out on request.

Les Marines de Cogolin

Les Marines de Cogolin can be found at the far side of the bay of Saint Tropez, to the south of the mouth of the River Giscle. Located 6km outside Saint Tropez, 80km from Cannes and 130km from Monaco, this port stands out from other marinas thanks to its three spacious and sheltered basins that span 22 hectares, with 5 kilometres of quayside and pontoons. Featuring an entrance 80m wide and a swing circle in its outer harbour of 110m in diameter, it is a very comfortable and safe spot. With an average depth of 4m, the port will be able to accommodate 1,400 boats of all sizes once its modernisation is complete.

The Esprit Village in Saint Tropez

In line with tradition, the spectacular entertainment in the race village at Les Voiles is put on by "l'Esprit Village" and includes musical offerings after the racing, together with the central bar, which is a must for all sailors.

This evening's inauguration of the village saw a massive cocktail being served up for a thousand people, with copious amounts of choice morsels provided with the help of the village partners: Damoiseau rum, La Tarte Tropézienne's local flans, Chevalier Torpès wines, Grand Marnier and "Blonde de Saint-Tropez" beers. Singer Soul Ayom and his powerful Blues will ensure the event really goes with a swing.

PROGRAMME

MODERN YACHTS

Saturday 28, Sunday 29 September: Registration and inspection

Monday 30 September, Tuesday 1, Wednesday 2, Thursday 3 (J. Laurain Memorial Day, Challenge Day), Friday 4 and Saturday 5 October: Inshore races, 1st start 11:00 hours

CLASSIC YACHTS

Sunday 29 and Monday 30 September: Registration and inspection

Sunday 29 September: arrival of the Yacht Club de France Autumn Cup feeder race from Cannes

Tuesday 1, Wednesday 2, Thursday 3 (J.Laurain Memorial Day, Challenge Day, Club 55 Cup, GYC Centenary Trophy), Friday 4 and Saturday 5 October: Inshore race, 1st start 12:00 hours

Prize-giving for everyone

Sunday 6 October, from 11:00 hours

Sponsors of Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez

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LES MARINES DE COGOLIN

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CHEVALIER TORPEZ (VINEYARDS OF SAINT TROPEZ)

L'ESPRIT VILLAGE DE SAINT-TROPEZ

SUPERVISION

BRIG

SUN 7 GRAPHIC

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