

### The SNIM's finest

**It was a grandiose final in Marseilles to round off the SNIM (International Nautical Mediterranean Week), where a series of races were launched in the northern harbour shortly before 1300 hours, in a steady 20-25 knots of NW'ly wind and a big swell after two days of Mistral. And when the Mistral comes into play, the spectacle is well worth a look: surfing, broaches to windward and leeward and full-on heeling... Amidst a series of freestyling and compulsory figures, which went some way to upsetting the outright ranking, the boats performed in their final rounds today, to the great delight of spectators and participants alike. With a backdrop of wind and sunshine throughout the event, the highly motivated crews fought tooth and nail in this the 45<sup>th</sup> running of the Semaine Nautique Internationale de Méditerranée.**

#### A technicolour final

*"Marking out a course was difficult but the racing was able to take place thanks to the persistence of the race committee"* highlighted the President of the Société Nautique, Bernard Amiel. And their efforts were justly rewarded. With Marseilles' famous landmark, the Bonne Mère, watching over them, the sailors fought like lions. *"Everyone did their own little acrobatics number today"* confirmed Marc Emig, who was competing in his 10<sup>th</sup> SNIM aboard a Swan 42. *"It's good to be able to sail in breezy conditions; it brings back some great memories!"* confided the local skipper, who was sailing with a crew of amateurs on *Axelle S*.

It has to be said that the tough conditions have forged the SNIM's reputation over the years, to the extent that today it has become a real trademark of the competition.

#### The winners... and the others

Aboard *Nikimar*, the final day of the SNIM proved particularly exhilarating. Christophe Picard's boat dominated the entire race, even racking up a few runs making 20 knots of boat speed. Some clean manoeuvres, a top class crew and a knife-edge finish under spinnaker: the Farr 52 crossed the line with a lead of more than 10 minutes over her pursuers. It came as no surprise then that *Nikimar* took victory in class 1 of the SNIM. Her helmsman, Sébastien Josse, who hadn't sailed in Marseilles for several years, relished the experience: *"The landscape is stunning. It's one of the most beautiful race zones in the world. Added to that, there is a different way of sailing between the southern and the northern harbour course. It's very interesting"*.

Aboard *Glen Ellen V le Marseillais*, the atmosphere was a little less festive. The final race proved fatal for the A 40 RC skippered by Dominique Tian, who ended up in second place (in extremis) in IRC 2. Taking first place was her sistership *Joujou Extra 2*, which had been delivered to the Mediterranean from Pornic in Brittany over the winter to race this circuit. Still, the owner of *Glen Ellen V le Marseillais* wouldn't miss an SNIM for the world after competing in 35 runnings thus far. *"I've a lot of memories filled with beating into the Mistral at night, and flat-out runs under spinnaker with broaches to windward and leeward. I competed in my first SNIM 15 years ago and the boats were more physical before"* commented Dominique Tian.

Finally, in class 3, the final race of the day also changed the tone. The A 35 *Hector* on which Kito de Pavant was sailing, had first place snatched from under her by another A 35, *Alhena 3*.

On the southern round however, the jury opted not to let competitors race today for safety reasons. *"We stayed in position for more than an hour and the sea really began to build. We got hit by gusts of over 30 knots"* explained Dominique Bérenger, the President of the Race Committee for IRC South, who had nevertheless managed to validate six races since the start of the SNIM. In class 4, it was the Sun Fast 3200 *Addiction* who won the Semaine Nautique Internationale de Méditerranée ahead of the A 31 *Mimosails*. Meantime, in IRC 5, the Half Tonner *Général Tapioca* was the first to finish. This legendary boat has been skippered for over 30 years by the Belgian, Philippe Pilate. A seasoned sailor, he doesn't stop at anything when it comes down to racing: he made a return trip between Nieuwpoort and Marseilles, towing his 9.6 metre boat on a trailer in search of a *"dose of sunshine after a very harsh winter in Brussels"*.

For a lot of crews the SNIM marks the end of the winter and the weather really threw everything at the competitors. With S'ly wind, E'ly wind and then a steady, followed by a powerful Mistral, there really was something for everyone. *"That's what the SNIM is all about: blue, white and wind"* resumed the President of the Société Nautique, Bernard Amiel.

One of the most striking new elements to this 45<sup>th</sup> SNIM was the participation of the Class40s. Designed for offshore racing, these boats sailed to Porquerolles and back overnight. *"It was a way of rekindling the legendary tradition of night races"* explains Bernard Amiel. *"Our aim was to see a fleet of Class40s sailing across the Mediterranean with Italians and Spaniards"* explains Thierry Bouchard. The skipper of *Mistral Loisirs* also heads the Class40 sports committee: *"We're keen to get together with the Société Nautique to organise a return transatlantic race, following on from the Route du Rhum, with a finish in Marseilles just before the SNIM 2011"*.

And Bernard Amiel continues: “we’re in the starting blocks and very keen for the media impact of the SNIM to put the spotlight on the city of Marseilles”.

**The SNIM is also...**

**130 miles** covered between Marseilles and Porquerolles by the Class40s.

**150 boats, 1,500 crew.**

The dates of the next SNIM: from **22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> April** 2011.

Between **5 and 7 races** run in each boat category.

**A surge of solidarity** which must continue: the Société Nautique is calling upon donations to get the CNPA sailing club (Nautical Open-Air Club) on Ile de Ré, near La Rochelle, back on its feet after it was struck hard by the Xynthia storm in February 2010. Visit [www.lanautique.com](http://www.lanautique.com).

**80 volunteers** who’ve been involved in the organisation of the event.

*Writing: Delphine Nougairède*

Results

**Class40 Group:** 5 races (4 retained)

- 1/ Mistral Loisirs-Pôle Santé Elior
- 2/ EDF Energie nouvelles/ Vestas
- 3/ Great Circle
- 4/ Cecileenmer

**DAY BOAT Group:** 5 races (4 retained)

- 1/ Jasmin
- 2/ Rollmop's
- 3/ Pablo

**FIRST 31.7 Group:** 6 races (5 retained)

- 1/ Sagai
- 2/ Firsty II
- 3/ Mintaka-SNCM

**Sélection Group:** 6 races (5 retained)

- 1/ Sarbacane
- 2/ 2J Impression
- 3/ Le Petit Prince

**CLASS 2 Group:** 7 races (6 retained)

- 1/ Nikimar
- 2/ Lady First
- 3/ Maluba

**CLASS 2 Group:** 7 races (6 retained)

- 1/ Joujou Extra 2
- 2/ Glen Ellen V le Marseillais
- 3/ J Lance IV

**CLASS 3 Group:** 7 races (6 retained)

- 1/ Alhena 3
- 2/ Hector
- 3/ Tchin Tchin

**CLASS 4 Group:** 6 races (5 retained)

- 1/ Addiction
- 2/ Mimosails
- 3/ Aïda

**CLASS 5 Group:** 6 races (5 retained)

- 1/ General Tapioca
- 2/ Ville de Toulon-C.N.M.T
- 3/ Jin Tonic

**The Partners**

**CITY OF MARSEILLES**

**MARSEILLE PROVENCE METROPOLE**

**CONSEIL GENERAL 13**

**PACA REGION**

**OFFICE DE LA MER**

**SLAM**

**NORTH SAILS**

**BENETEAU**

**PERNOD**

**CAGOLE beer**

**USHIP**

**CHAZAL**

**The suppliers' club**

**DATA BURO**

**BI NETWORKS XEROX**

**Organisation**

Société Nautique de Marseille, President: Bernard Amiel

Head of the Sports Committee: Yvon Carpier

Secretariat, registration: Chantal Benigni [regate@lanautique.com](mailto:regate@lanautique.com)

Website: [www.lanautique.com](http://www.lanautique.com)

**Press Relations**

Maguelonne Turcat

Tel +33 (0)4 91 31 57 40

Mobile +33 (0)6 09 95 58 91

Email [magturcat@orange.fr](mailto:magturcat@orange.fr)

**Photo:** Pierrick Jeannoutot

**Video:** Philippe Benhamou, Digivision