



Press release – Saturday 8 July 2017

33rd Manche Ports Race Tomorrow is the big day

In less than 24 hours the starting signal for the 2017 edition of the Manche Ports Race will be given at Granville. 81 participants are registered for this major event in the Normandy nautical calendar, and the competition is going to be intense. Tomorrow, the boats will set sail for Barneville-Carteret in the first stage of the race, covering a distance of 30 or 40 nautical miles depending on the groups and on weather conditions. This 33rd edition of the race looks set to begin in the best possible conditions, in bright sunshine with a light breeze.

The Chausey Islands as a backdrop

Although the Manche Ports Race is primarily a competition, it is also a great opportunity for the 700 sailors to get to know or to re-visit the coastal landscape of la Manche. Tomorrow's stage gives the fleet a real picture postcard journey from Granville past the Chausey Islands and on to Barneville-Carteret. But they can't let themselves be distracted by the scenery, because throughout the entire voyage, each crew's strategic choices will make all the difference. *"During this stage, even if the route appears straightforward, the sailors' skills will really be challenged"* explains Gilles Lezan, President of the Granville Yacht Club and marine coordinator of the event.

"The first markers will bring the competitors very close to the enormous stretches of beach at Donville-les-Bains and Bréville-sur-Mer, where being able to analyse the currents successfully will have a significant impact on the result. After that, the whole voyage will be a dilemma where they have to choose between sailing out at sea where the winds are more stable, or inshore along the coast, where there are a lot of rocks but the currents are more favourable." The arrival will be adjudicated about 2 nautical miles from the entrance to the port of Barneville-Carteret, level with Port-Bail. The Manche Ports Race fleet will be eagerly awaited, and the large and loyal crowd of spectators traditionally gathers along the quaysides and applauds the crews as they arrive, extending a welcome worthy of the biggest ocean-racing events!

A strong line-up of competitors

The line-up of crews for this 33rd edition is impressive, as usual! Among the 81 competitors, there are several favourites to watch. In group 1, with orange pennant, the Auguin family in Pied d'Alouette: Christophe won the Vendée Globe in 1996-7 and this boat will be a serious contender for victory. Having come second in the Manche Ports Race in 2015 and first last year, it's quite clear that the crew has come to defend the title against the regulars Pacha and T'imoun, also regular winners. In groups 2 and 3, white and yellow pennants, Marc Gadbin's boat Axe Sails, and Thierry Fortin's Défi Voile Adaptée, are each in the running for first place in their respective group. But

that doesn't take account of the young crew of Rapido II, skippered by Paul Angot, which has every intention of standing up for itself and will try to do even better than the third place they secured in group 3 in 2016.

Competition will be stiff in group 4, blue pennant, because even though the wacky regulars of Rapetous often come first, the crews of Manche Fibre Kunkel Palettes, of la Railleuse, of Gwaihir Venturi and of the Guernesey boat Blue Jade, are all gunning for victory. Finally, in group 5, pink pennant, the category for the largest boats, keep an eye on Ville de Donville, skippered by Olivier Rapeaud and on Crédit Mutuel, skippered by Vincent Bunel, although for this group especially, there are several potential winners..

Meanwhile, ashore...

After a splendid regatta afternoon, the prize-giving ceremony for the Manche Ports Kids took place at the Granville Regional Sailing Centre. The budding sailors, aged between 7 and 12, were able to enjoy perfect conditions on the water and a warm welcome ashore. A wonderful inter-generational event!

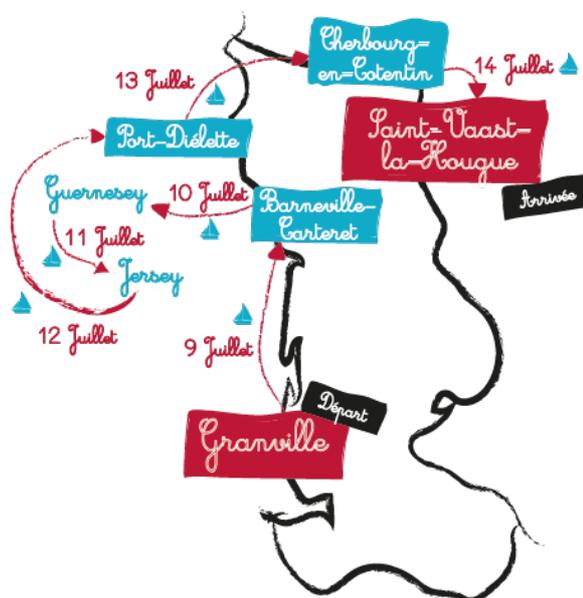
For the competitors in the Manche Ports Race, it has been registration day. This evening at 7.30pm they are all invited to a general briefing before enjoying dinner and a concert on the esplanade of the Granville Yacht Club.

Be there tomorrow at 10.00am, for the start of this 33rd edition of the Manche Ports Race!

Dates to remember

- 8 July : Manche Ports Kids
- 9 July : Start of race - Granville / Barneville-Carteret
- 10 July : Barneville-Carteret / Guernesey
- 11 July : Guernesey / Jersey
- 12 July : Jersey / Port-Diélette
- 13 July : Port-Diélette / Cherbourg-en-Cotentin
- 14 July : Cherbourg-en-Cotentin / Saint-Vaast-la-Hougue - Arrivée

Route for the 33rd edition



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