

// TRANSAT QUÉBEC SAINT-MALO //

HEADING TO SAINT-MALO

The people of Québec came out in large numbers today to cheer on the maxi-trimaran *Spindrift 2* of Yann Guichard and Dona Bertarelli, and the MOD70 *Musandam-Oman Sail*, for their start of the 9th edition of the Transat Québec – Saint-Malo. After the monohulls and multihulls in the Class40, Open and Multi50 categories started last Sunday in a lively wind of around 20 knots, it was the turn of the two trimarans in the Ultime class to begin their race towards Saint-Malo. At 16:00 (local time), the crews crossed the start line between the cities of Québec and Lévis, following the other participants along the Saint Lawrence River. A legendary 2,897-nautical mile (5,365-kilometre) crossing full of challenges awaits the skipper, Yann Guichard, and his 13 crew, who will aim to break the record of 7 days 20 hours and 24 minutes set by Loïck Peyron in 1996.

An unpredictable river: the Saint Lawrence

Joining the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes, the Saint Lawrence River will be the first crucial part of this transat. Famous for its rich ecosystem and its iconic landscape, it is above all an area full of challenges where the natural elements leave no room for mistakes. Saturday morning was devoted to briefing the sailors on the conditions to expect and highlighting the peculiarities of twisting 371-mile course. The sailors will have to manage the sometimes narrow parts of the river as well as the unstable winds and currents that make it difficult for sailing down to the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. *Spindrift's* sailors will need to take account of these elements in order to move quickly on to the second part: the Atlantic Ocean. Regarding the beginning of the race, the weather forecast is rather favourable for the team who will be able to sail downwind with a South-West wind of 20 knots.

Rounding the Percé buoy

Prior to heading out into the open sea, the trimarans in the Ultime category must go around the buoy at Percé, a town in Québec on the tip of the Gaspé Peninsula opposite the famous Percé Rock. That will be the last point from which spectators can admire these two large sailing boats before they head to Saint-Malo.

The multihulls have two additional route requirements to fulfil before Saint-Malo: they must round the archipelago of the Magdalen Islands to the south and leave the Fastnet lighthouse to starboard (except in case of bad weather).

Making the crossing in less than 7 days

Loïck Peyron made history on *Fujicolor II*, an ORMA 60 trimaran, in the 4th edition of the race, when he shaved an hour off Serge Madec's time from 1988, to set the course record, which has remained the time to beat for 20 years. *Spindrift* will have to be tactically smart to avoid the pitfalls of Saint Lawrence and get up to the Gulf as soon as possible. To face the challenge, a large number of Guichard's crew were

part of the record attempt on the Jules Verne Trophy last winter, including Dona Bertarelli, who won the title of the fastest woman to sail around the world.

Yann Guichard reactions, *Spindrift 2* skipper, before leaving Québec harbour:

"We are really happy to be here in Québec and to participate in this magical race. The weather conditions should be good even though Loic Peyron set the bar quite high with a 7 days crossing. The weather forecast is on our side with a downwind start of the race which should allow us to sail the Saint-Lawrence river quite fast and we hope to reach Saint-Malo after 6 or 7 days. It's the first and only race we will do before our round the world record attempt so the Transat is a great opportunity to prepare ourselves for the next Trophy Jules Verne."

Dona Bertarelli reactions, helmsman-trimmer onboard *Spindrift 2* :

"It is quite emotional to be back onboard Spindrift 2 after a round the world. The Quebec Saint-Malo is a mythical race, there are only few of those in the world and people here in Quebec have been so warm and their welcome have been amazing. We will take advantage of pretty good conditions with a southwest wind which means all downwind for Spindrift 2 during the Saint-Laurent crossing, its best sailing conditions. Loïck Peyron is hard to catch as we have seen in the a round the world, we are going to sail the best as we can and to take each day as it comes, a race is a race many things can happen!"

At the time we're writing, three Multi50 boats are leading the race, first place for Arkema, followed by French Tech Rennes Saint-Malo and by Ciela Villages which are getting closer of the archipelago of Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon. Most of the other participating boats are rounding Percé, the last mark before entering the deep blue of the Atlantic Ocean.

Spindrift racing team members for the Transat Québec Saint-Malo

Yann GUICHARD

Dona BERTARELLI

Duncan SPÄTH

Erwan ISRAEL

Erwan LE ROUX

Xavier REVIL

Jacques GUICHARD

Antoine CARRAZ

Simone GAETA

François MORVAN

Thierry DUPREY DU VORSENT

Jack BOUTTELL

Sam GOODCHILD

Chris SCHMID (mediaman)

To follow the race:

- There will be a **map** available on the [Spindrift racing website](#)
- There will be a **daily log** throughout the voyage with photos and videos from on board.
- Information on the progress of the team will be posted on our **social networks**: [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).
- Race radio broadcasts will be organised throughout the event to keep in touch with progress of the sailors on different boats.