

2009 SAINT BARTH CATA CUP

MISHA HEEMSKERK AND EDUARD ZANEN TAKE TOP HONORS

BY ELLEN LAMPERT-GREAUX

The Dutch duo of Mischa Heemskerk and Eduard Zanen were the top team among the 35 racing catamarans in the 2009 Saint Barth Cata Cup, which took place on November 20 to 22 on the French Caribbean island of St. Bartélemy. The three-day event suffered from a lack of wind, especially on day two of racing, but spirits remained high and the event has firmly taken root as one of the leading catamaran rallies in the region.

Day one of the Cata Cup featured an around-the-island race, with zigzags into the bays of Saline and Gouverneur where buoys were close to the shore. Enrique Figueroa, an F18 competitor in the summer Olympics, and Victor Aponte from Puerto Rico were ahead until they sailed too close to the coast and out of the wind. Closing in from behind, Belgians Patrick Demesmaeker, from the Royal Belgium Sailing Club, and Olivier Gagliani moved quickly into the lead and held on to first place, winning the race.

The local team of Jeff Lédée/Vincent Jordil had to abandon when the halyard on their spinnaker broke right after passing Tortue. Another local team, Vincent Beauvarlet and Bruno Hock made quite a splash when they capsized, yet managed to finish in 8th place on day one.

On Saturday the wind barely passed 10 knots, making for slow going out on the water. In the morning, the race headed past a buoy

RESULTS

- 1st:** Mischa Heemskerk and Eduard Zanen, Netherlands
- 2nd:** Enrique Figueroa and Victor Aponte, Puerto Rico
- 3rd:** Patrick Demesmaeker and Olivier Gagliani, Belgium

near Pointe Milou before heading toward Forchue with spinnakers unfurled, then back to Saint Jean where Mischa Heemskerk and Eduard Zanen took first place.

It was another bad day for the Puerto Rican team, when Figueroa and Aponte confused a Marine Park buoy with one of the race markers. By the time they realized their mistake, the Dutchmen had already sailed toward victory.

Due to the lack of wind, race organizers shortened the afternoon race, which was won by Emmanuel Boulogne, French F18 world champion, and Tanguy Kervin (winners of the Cata Cup in 2008), while Pierre-Paul Cornet sprained his knee during a maneuver and came to shore in the race boat with a doctor aboard.

There were two final races on Sunday, both won easily by Heemskerk and Zanen, making them the clear winners of the 2009 Saint Barth Cata Cup. Race organizers Thierry Linhares, Hélène Guilbaud, Vincent Jordil, and Jeff Lédée, from the association Saint Barth Multihulls, should be proud of their efforts in making the Cata Cup a truly international event, with meals and parties on shore at La Plage restaurant right on the beach in St. Jean. *Additional information about the event can be found at www.stbarthcatacup.com.* ☺

Ellen Lampert-Gréaux lives in Saint Barthélemy where she is editor-in-chief of Harbour Magazine, and has been a regular contributor to All At Sea since 2000.



The Dutch duo of Mischa Heemskerk and Eduard Zanen, winners of the 2009 St Barth Cata Cup

PHOTO BY ROSEMOND GREÀUX