

# USA teams dominate 3rd St. Barths Cata Cup



One of the exciting starts during the third St. Barths Cata Cup that took place this weekend.

By Robert Luckock

ST. BARTHS--The American duo of John Casey and Dalton Tebo on Bernuth won the F18 St. Barths Cata Cup at the weekend, ahead of second placed compatriots Robbie Daniel and Gary Chu on Tropical Hotel/Bernuth.

It was a double triumph for the new Australian designed C2 catamarans, debuting at this regatta and used by the American teams to punishing effect.

The top two USA teams prevailed against a daunting field of competitors that included 2010 F18 world champion Olivier Backes, 2003 F18 world champion Emmanuel Boulogne, 2006 Hobie Tiger world champion Jean-Christophe Mourniac, and 2009 Cata Cup winner, Dutchman Mischa Heemskerck.

Third place went to the French team of Jean-Christophe Mourniac and Kristoffer Johnsson on Guanaani 4, while Olivier Backes

and Alexandre Udin on St. Barths Isle de France took fourth place.

The Belgian team of Patrick Demesmaecker and Olivier Gagliani on Christopher Hotel finished in fifth place while Mischa Heemskerck and Eduard Zanen on Emeraude Plage 3 just fell short of the top five.

The only St. Martin team competing, Olivier Bernaz and Markku Harmala on St. Barths Multihulls, finished in 17th place. Olivier was delighted with his new partnership with Markku and promptly arranged to purchase John Casey's C2.

Forty-three international teams took part in the three-day regatta organised by the St. Barths Multihull Association under the auspices of French Sailing Federation (FFV) and the Formula 18 Association.

The many islands and outcroppings around St. Barths combined with numerous mark roundings made for interesting and

testing courses with plenty of reaching, upwind and downwind legs. That, together with 15-18 knots of wind, made for spectacular racing in superb conditions.

Saturday's around the island race included a mark rounding all the way inside Gustavia port. Amazingly the whole fleet got around it, overcoming shifts, holes and anchored boats. There were tense moments as traffic jams built up at the mark.

"We went from being in second place to losing ten places in the harbour," remarked Robbie Daniel. "But up until that point, we were right up there."

Only on Sunday did Race Director Didier Flamme cancel two of the three proposed races in the bay of St. Jean for safety, when winds increased to 20-25 knots with rough seas. The one race that got off before the cancellation had 13 boats that did not finish. In the end just four races counted, with the worst race allowed as a discard.

Florida-based Casey and Tebo were razor-sharp, muscled up, and well prepared throughout the regatta, taking two bullets and one second place. They discarded their worst result, a third in the only race on Sunday.

"We eased off the throttle to avoid breaking anything and assure we had enough

in hand to win, but didn't know the last two races would be cancelled," said Casey, a three-time winner of the Tybee 500 from Key Largo to Florida and sixth place finisher at last year's Cata Cup with Yngling Olympic medallist Carrie Howe. "We were fast and we sailed smart without doing anything too outlandish."

World champion and 2004 Olympian Olivier Backes regretted he and new crew Udin were 20 kilos too light for the conditions compared to Casey and Tebo.

"But we were happy with fourth place," said Backes. "It was tough competition and of course you want to win, but the concept of the regatta still made it very enjoyable to be here."

The regatta organisation drew an extra 150 persons to host restaurant Nikki Beach in St. Jean, where casual world of sailing collided with a chic, well-heeled party crowd. Bankie Banx and his group performed on Saturday and Sunday nights.

President of the French F18 Association James Baeckler joined participants in expressing great satisfaction with the organisation of the event. Camaraderie and sportsmanship meant judge Luc Poupon

was not called on to hear protests.

"Our goal with this event is to have high level competition on the water with high level partying on the beach," said Jeff Ledée

from the four-member organising committee.

Senator Michel Magras was one of several dignitaries who presented trophies at the awards ceremony.

## IAAF

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ed that they are eligible to represent the Netherlands with immediate effect."

The decision was posted on their website the same day.

Yesterday president of NAOC, William Millerson, was on St. Maarten to brief local sporters including Minister of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth Affairs Rhoda Arrindell and Brown about the effects of the IAAF decision. "Apparently NAOC's agreement with the IOC is only verbal. They have nothing in writing," said Brown.

The problem stems from the Curacao Sport Federations. Members of the CSF have been lobbying the IOC for permission to form their own National Olympic Committee. Current IOC rules only allow independent nations to form Olympic Committees.

Letters have been sent to international federations questioning the legality of the NAOC now that two of

its members have achieved Country Status. The IAAF is the first federation to react.

"The next big international event is the Pan American Games next year," said Brown. "I hope we can get this mess sorted out before then."

Brown is concerned other International Federations will follow suit. "If other sports break away, St. Maarten may not have the option of staying with NAOC."

On Bonaire the IAAF decision was hailed as a major victory for the athletes. "We will be meeting with Saba and Statia on Wednesday," said Glenn Albertina, a top track and field coach and sport leader and instructor on Bonaire. "We are looking forward to linking up with the Netherlands. If NAOC had treated all the islands better in the past, they would not have this problem now."

## INDIA

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boundaries and a six in his knock, before offering a tame return catch to Daniel Vettori.

"It was really important from the team's perspective and it helped me as well. He (Dhoni) took the pressure away from me by scoring quickly," Dravid said about Dhoni's innings.

"We had just lost three wickets in the morning and it was nice to see him play positively."

The tourists had a couple of half chances in the day but the fielders failed to cling on, making it more

difficult for the under-assault bowlers.

Tendulkar (61) could add just four runs to his overnight score before he edged debutant Andy McKay to wicketkeeper Gareth Hopkins to become the left-arm seamer's first test wicket.

Laxman followed soon after as Chris Martin bowled a big inswinger to breach his defence while New Zealand captain Vettori dismissed Raina through a bat-pad catch at silly mid-on.

The three-test series is tied at 0-0 after two draws.



San Diego Chargers' fullback Mike Tolbert (35) is tackled by Denver Broncos' wide receiver Eddie Royal during the first quarter of their NFL football game in San Diego, California, November 22. Chargers won 35-14. Chargers' quarterback Philip Rivers completed 15 of 24 passes for 233 yards and four touchdowns.

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