

8th Monaco Energy Boat Challenge 6-10 July

8th Monaco Energy Boat Challenge: first visions!

Thursday 8th July 2021. D day for the 32 teams in three classes at the 8th Monaco Energy Boat Challenge. After a year of restrictions due to the pandemic, the 22 universities from Europe and rest of the world were finally able to show off the fruits of their research. It was their first confrontation on the water off Quai Rainier III, starting with the parade, followed by sea trials and an afternoon of qualifying heats for the races tomorrow. There was little room for error in the three categories in competition: Energy Class and its 19 protagonists, Solar Class (10 boats) and Open Sea Class (5 boats). The sun shone and sea and wind conditions were ideal for these prototypes of the future which tomorrow will have to demonstrate their seaworthiness, speed, endurance, manoeuvrability and above all reliability.

The Sound of Silence

The three classes of futuristic boats here in Monaco were invited to show off their advantages, silence, performance and economy, in bespoke events for each, the Energy and Solar classes racing round a half nautical mile course, aiming to do as many laps as possible off the main harbour wall. Before tomorrow's big 16 nautical mile Monaco-Ventimiglia-Monaco race, they also had to prove how well their vessels manoeuvre in a restricted space. Docking, reversing, mooring recovery, 360°, buoy recovery – all the seamanship exercises required of a mariner, under the merciless sanction of the stopwatch. *Lanéva Boat* won ahead of *Candela* and *Tenderworks*.

Meanwhile in the Solar Class the Dutch *Sunflare Solar Team* who peaked at 14.37 knots look like serious contenders ahead of their compatriots from *TU Delft Solar Boat* de HAN Solar Boat, both posting speeds above 14 knots. But it is the Swiss from *Swiss Solar Boat* who are on the second step of the podium this evening. In the Energy Class, the Italians from Bologna and their *UniBoat* set the best qualifying times, while the Polish from *E-Racing Team*, although over a minute adrift, seem well placed, as do the French from *Mines Energie Challenge*.

Three separate classes – sport, performance and experimentation

Energy Class

This is in effect a one design class, launched in 2018 by Yacht Club de Monaco which supplies each team with an identical 5m catamaran hull. Working with manufacturers, the students have to design the most effective and durable cockpit and propulsion system from a renewable energy of their choice, using a given amount of energy. These small 250kg prototypes are like mini-laboratories of innovation experimenting with a host of different approaches: fuel cell, heat recovery to optimise propulsion and artificial intelligence to name a few.

Solar Class

Boats must comply with a set of rules covering technical dimensions and power systems. In the Solar Class, a prototype is drawing energy from an onboard reserve continuously being recharged by solar panels on the deck. A match race (duel), slalom challenge and endurance course face this category that has been attending since the event was launched in 2014. With a length of 7m, these prototypes are capable of carrying their 140kg weight at nearly 25 knots!

Open Sea Class

Formerly called the Offshore Class, the Open Sea Class is open mainly to boats either on the market or about to enter it, and face a rally to Ventimiglia in Italy from Monaco and back, a coastal course of 16 nautical miles (29.6km). These boats are already impressing with their performance, as evidenced by *Vita X* which racked up 44 knots in absolute silence, apart from the sound of water flowing along its 10m length hull. The foil-equipped *Candela C-7* meanwhile takes off fast and planes above any small chop.

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A full day of talks and discussions on energy transition in yachting

While the 400+ international students were testing tomorrow's solutions out on the water, Yacht Club de Monaco devoted this first day of action to a conference on energy transition for the yachting sector. Twelve speakers took turns during four sessions to give a broad overview of the environmental solutions available now for the industry and the avenues they can go down to reduce carbon emissions.

Hydrogen at the heart of the 8th edition

Specialists, ecologists and economists all spoke of a solution that has the wind in its sails. Hydrogen is the object of much speculation and numerous studies and analysis. A round table will be devoted to it tomorrow, Friday, an opportunity for Monaco government representatives, and institutions from the Principality and neighbouring states to discuss the development and potential of hydrogen projects adapted to maritime and land mobility issues.

Innovations right down to the propeller

At the Monaco Boat Energy Challenge there is no limit set on innovation as long as it is working towards saving resources. The team from *Mines ParisTech* have been working hard with Ferme 3D to develop a revolutionary propeller both in terms of its design and rate of return, printed in 3D, to take advantage of the flexibility this technology offers engineers.

Alex Caizergues aims for 150km/h on water!

The multiple world record holder for speed on a kiteboard and first man to break 100km/h on water under sail, Alex Caizergues is in Monaco. He is following all the talks with great interest, is on the Jury that will decide the prizes, and tomorrow will present his Syroco project, a speed-craft designed to smash the speed record on water propelled only by the wind. His goal: 150km/h! Tomorrow, Friday, Alex unveils a scaled down prototype of his speed-craft.

A world first – a solar powered foiling prao!

Seven metres in length, with solar panels and complex outrigger, that is expected to top 30 knots, the *Swiss Solar Boat* is no ordinary boat. Its asymmetrical aspect has earned it the name "Dahu". Students from EPFL in Lausanne had the idea to develop and build it in the shape of a prao, an asymmetrical multi-hull inspired by Polynesian dugout canoes. The 60 students involved in this project made a good impression today, their foiler "flying" at a respectable 17 knots round the course.

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Provisional Programme

Friday 9th July	8am	Drivers Briefing			10am – 6pm Exhibition open to the public 10am – 12 noon & 2pm – 4pm Exhibitor demonstrations 9.30am – 1pm 2nd Monaco Hydrogen Round Table 11.30am Syroco Press Conference
	9am	Start of fleet race	Start of 16nm laps circuit	Start of 16nm Coastal Race (Monaco - Ventimiglia - Monaco)	
	3pm	Speed Record			
	5pm	Tech Talk & Daily Results Speed Record Prize-giving			
	After the Tech Talk	Happy Hour – Job Dating			
Saturday 10th July	9am	Drivers Briefing			10am – 6pm Exhibition open to the public All day 10am – 12 noon & 2pm – 4pm Exhibitor demonstrations
	10am	Start of Slalom event	Start of Endurance Challenge		
	2pm	Start of Championship Race			
	5pm	Tech Talk & Daily Results			
	8pm	Prize-giving and closing dinner			

For more information: www.energyboatchallenge.com

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