



THE XIV PALERMO-MONTECARLO HAS STARTED IN PRESENCE OF HIS HIGHNESS PRINCE ALBERT II OF MONACO WHO WAS ON BOARD OF A SHIP OF THE ITALIAN COAST GUARD WITH THE MAYOR OF PALERMO LEOLUCA ORLANDO AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE CIRCOLO DELLA VELA SICILIA AGOSTINO RANDAZZO.

Palermo, 21 August 2018 - Yesterday was a busy day at the Circolo della Vela Sicilia, marked by a crowded press conference attended by, among others, the Mayor of Palermo Leoluca Orlando, the Councilor for Tourism, Sports and Entertainment of the Sicilian Region Sandro Pappalardo and the President of the Italian Federation Vela Francesco Ettore, by the skippers briefing managed by the Race Director Alfredo Ricci and by an evocative and successful Dinner Party dedicated to the crews. Finally, today, at 12 the kick off of the XIV edition of the Palermo-Montecarlo.

The presence of 54 boats on the start line means a new record for the regatta organized by the club from Palermo in collaboration with the Yacht Club de Monaco and the Yacht Club Costa Smeralda, and with the support of the City of Palermo, the Regional Council of Tourism, Sports and Entertainment, and of the Fondazione Sicilia, as well as the sponsors Banca Mediolanum, Tasca d'Almerita, Condorelli, RioloCar and Gesap. Divided in the classes ORC International, IRC and multihull, the fleet made the show in the Gulf of Mondello in light wind conditions (6 knots from 110°) and sun.

After the start, the fleet tacked a buoy upwind – at this first mark the first five boats were in order the Maxi Rambler 88 owned by George David, with on board the America's Cup legend Brad Butterworth and the Italians Silvio Arrivabene and Alberto Bolzan; Lucky owned by Bryon Ehrhart; Atalanta II owned by Carlo Puri Negri (with tactician Gabriele Benussi) and Pendragon VI. Those first boats were followed by the Cookson 50 Endlessgame owned by Pietro Moschini, with Gabriele Bruni and Lorenzo Bressani in the afterguard. The fleet started then to sail offshore, along the 500 miles that separate Palermo from Montecarlo, a route interrupted by the passage of a "gate" positioned in front of Porto Cervo in Sardinia. Up to grabs, in addition to individual class prizes, the Angelo Randazzo Challenge Trophy will award the IRC group's winner in compensated time, and the Trophy Giuseppe Tasca d'Almerita will go to the first hull on the finish line in real time.

Many people have witnessed the start of the regatta from land or at sea. On the beach of Mondello there was a lot of curiosity, especially for the arrival of His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco who followed the departure live for the first time, before receiving the honorary citizenship of Palermo, on board Gregoretti, ship of the Italian Coast Guard. The Mayor of Palermo Leoluca Orlando, the General Secretary & CEO of the Monegasque club Bernard d'Alessandri accompanied him along with Agostino Randazzo, President of the Circolo Della Vela Sicilia.

Many people from CVS, along the beach and from the Punta Celesi pier in Mondello followed the starting operations. Others have chosen a privileged position following the fleet from the sea, positioning themselves next to the Regatta Committee boat or near the upwind buoy. In total at sea, along with the 54 racing boats that left for Montecarlo, there were also about thirty boats among dinghies, sailboats and the organization's support boats which have guaranteed the photo and video coverage, with drone support during the starting sequence.

Francesco Ettore, the President of the Italian Sailing Federation, was also present and looked at the departure from the terrace of the Circolo della Vela Sicilia together with the club members: "The Palermo-Montecarlo is now a more than consolidated regatta and I have to compliment the club and its President Agostino Randazzo for the perfect organization of this event, one of the flagship regattas of our Italian Offshore Championship, and in general for the promotion of sailing on the territory", said Ettore.



Same opinion from the General Secretary of the International Maxi Association, Andrew McIrvine, who has been to say the least enthusiastic about having had the opportunity to experience directly the start of the Palermo-Montecarlo, last stage of the Mediterranean Maxi Offshore Challenge. "Finally I managed to accept the invitation of President Randazzo. Among the Maxis there are a lot of owners who love the long offshore regattas and just to respond to their wishes, the IMA wanted to identify and enclose in a special circuit - with awards ceremony scheduled for September 5 in Porto Cervo - offshore regattas that, in the Mediterranean, were more successful and could ensure an excellent level of organization: the Palermo-Montecarlo is certainly one of those events and I am sure that even with the Circolo della Vela Sicilia IMA will travel a long and profitable route".

Among the boats on the start line, it is worth mentioning the presence of the Class 40 Made in Midi by the well-known French ocean sailor Kito de Pavant and two boats of the Circolo della Vela Sicilia, the First 50 Freedom with on board the Under 25 crew from the Sailing Youth Offshore Academy, the initiative that sees working alongside the CVS with the Yacht Club de Monaco, and the Swan 45 Aphrodite with on board, among others, the skipper Edoardo Bonanno, the offshore veteran Gaetano Figlia di Granara and the former Olympians Giuseppe Angilella and Pietro Zucchetti.

After the first five hours of sailing – the race can be followed on land thanks to the satellite system of YB Tracking (from the site and appropriate APP) - the fleet is lead by the Maxi Rambler 88, followed by the trimaran Ad Maiora owned by Bruno Cardile (first multihull), from Lucky, Pegasus, Atalanta II and Endlessgame. Established in 2015 by the Maxi Esimit Europa 2, the record of the regatta is 47 hours, 46 minutes and 48 seconds, a hard time to beat, considering the weather forecast for the coming days.

CONTATTI

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