



Mumm World Championship
Press release N°3

Full scale rehearsal in la Trinité

The 27th Spi Ouest-France held late last month in la Trinité looked to many observers like a full scale rehearsal for the upcoming world championship to take place early june on that very same place in southern Brittany. British, Irish, American, Dutch and German crews showed up in good form, eager to reconnoitre the many specific qualities of the Golfe du Morbihan.

International crews let no one doubt about their final ambitions and British Louis Browne led his « Asterix » to an impressive victory, showing great consistency up front. He will be the man to watch nextjune for the world title.

American Deneen Demourkas and her high class crew featuring Harnish Pepper and Laurent Pagès took second place, showing the kind of inspiration that impressed so many french teams during last year's Tour de France. Noteworthy Dutchman Peter De ridder's « Mean Machine » performances throughout the week end. The current European Champion cannot be ignored.

As for the french crews, they could not dominate the event as they usually do. Pierre Loic Berthet, despite showing some good speed, could not win his fourth Spi Ouest France. One of the leading french Mumm specialist, he has taken good notice of the kind of agressiveness he must expect from international experts. The good news came from young Jean Pierre Nicol who led his Région Ile de France to third place. He showed strong potentials and should give the favorites some tough competition. The Normans from Dieppe Seine Maritime kept a steady pace and succeeded in staying close to the top boats. 8th in the ranking, Courier Dunkerque's new crew has also showed some talents with Christophe Clévenot and Pierre-François lepoutre alternating at the helm.

Let's keep in mind that Australia's Richard Perini, Farr 40 world defender will participate in the world championship next june, along with up to 4 italian specialists...

1. How do I regard winning Spi Ouest-France ?

Spi Ouest is a major regatta by any standards and to win his or her class at Spi Ouest is an achievement that any racing sailor will remember with pride for many years. This year the Mumm 30 world championship will be at La Trinite so there were Mumm 30s from all over Europe at Spi Ouest, not to mention Deneen Demourkas's Grooverderci from the USA, so it was a true rehearsal for the World Championships. To win against this strong competition is a great help to our confidence. But I am well aware that it was a rehearsal and in June at La Trinite there will be other teams we have not yet sailed against and the teams whom we met at Spi Ouest will have moved up a gear so we will keep working hard every weekend until the beginning of June.

2. How do I explain winning at Spi Ouest ?

The most important thing was that we have a team who are calm and who enjoy sailing together. Over the Easter weekend we only sailed one race (the last one) without mistakes. However in all the other races no one worried when things went wrong; we all just got on with the job and so we were able to get good results even when things were not looking good.

The other factors that helped us were that we had good boat speed, good tactics (our tactician at Spi Ouest, Chris Draper, has sailed at several major events on Asterix since 2003 and is accustomed to the Mumm 30), and our boat handling was good.

3. Who do I see as the strongest competition for the World Championship ?

I regard the French Mumm 30 fleet as the strongest but because of the restriction on professionals it is hard to know which French Mumm 30 teams will be present at the Worlds. Jimmy Pahun and Region Ile de France will be there and I would expect them to be contenders for the championship. Pierre-Loic Berthet and his Bouygues Telecom team have probably been the most consistently successful team at the highest level over the last few years but I am not sure whether they will be at the Worlds since their focus is on the Tour Voile.

Peter de Ridder's Mean Machine are hard to beat and from outside Europe there will be Deneen Demourkas from the USA and Richard Perrini, the current Mumm 30 and Farr 40 World Champion. No Italians came to the European Championships last year so I am rather out of touch with how things are going in Italy but, apart from the 2004 world championships, they have dominated Mumm 30 racing since winning the Worlds in 2000, so I am sure that there will be strong teams from that country at the Worlds.