

BUFFET PLAYS The Bucket



'Closer than Farr 40 finishes' was how participating crews summed up the champagne sailing experienced at this year's St Baths Bucket, which also raised US\$175,000 for charity





“Best Bucket yet,” agreed the competitors and organisers of the 13th Annual St Barths Bucket as they enthused about this year’s event. And with 30 yachts on the start line and the Trades blowing between 15 and 22 knots, the fleet was powered up and the finishes were nail-biting.

Hank Halsted and Holly Patterson, who herd the fleet and organise the programme in Gustavia every year, know exactly how to pitch their event and it might be suggested that regatta organisers elsewhere should take a close look at the Bucket format and style – it really works.

The American Bucket regattas – there’s another one in Newport – were born out of a casual race in 1986 in Nantucket among skippers establishing bragging rights. The competition stuck. The Bucket – allegedly an old spittoon – is much loved

Main picture: the big Perini Antara dodges the rocks off St Barths. From far left: Kenny Combes guides Altair; party time aboard Ranger; the fleet in the harbour





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and raced for in a safe, gentlemanly manner. Fun is the name of the game and the trophies reflect that.

This year the popular Gerry Dykstra-designed schooner *Windrose of Amsterdam* took 1st overall and *The Bucket*, from *Rebecca* and *Gliss*.

The highlight of the social calendar was Saturday night's fund-raising party when the yachtsmen's favourite singer Jimmy Buffet, along with Melanie Smith and the Race Committee, took a collection for FEMUR, the St Barths and US-based charity which provides emergency diagnostic equipment for the local St Barths Hospital.

This was followed by a Buffet at the Bucket concert on the dock featuring Jimmy and the Coral Reefer band. By the end of the evening US\$175,000 was raised.

The Bucket Committee is also working with Camper & Nicholson's International who have agreed to provide a fleet of Vanguard dinghies for the St Barths Yacht Club Sailing School.

Other awards

Royal Huisman Spirit of the Bucket – *Visione*

Vitter's Shipyard Polished Performance – *Ranger*

All Star Crew Award, presented by Holland Jachtbouw and The Yacht Report – *Avalon*

Best performance by an Alloy Yachts-built yacht – *Paraiso*

Perini Navi Cup – *Antara*

Escargot Cup – *Perseus*

The Skulduggery Cup was awarded to *Rebecca* for their fabulous cow outfits worn during the racing...

For the full story see www.bucketregattas.com

Top: *Rebecca* looks a dream and finishes in 2nd.

Far left: *Sojana* (right) hunts down *Symmetry*. Above left: victorious *Windrose*. Left: *Salperton* with *Mystère* to weather