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Meteor, a 52-meter gaff-rigged schooner launched in May 2007 at the Royal Huisman shipyard in Holland, won the 14th annual St. Barth Bucket, crowning its first appearance in the regatta.

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St Barth Bucket 2009

Meteor Streaks to Win



What A Bucket!

By Ellen Lampert-Gréaux

The 2009 St Barth Bucket may go down in the annals of Bucket history as one of the best regattas ever! It started with a record size fleet: 35 incredible sailboats on the starting line, 33 of which were over 100' in length (the exceptions were Windcrest at 98' by Hodgson Yachts and Symmetry at 96' by Yachting Development—as well as Wild Horses, a 76' W-Class boat that spends every winter in Saint Barth). Not an easy feat, to assemble so much yacht power in one place at the same time, especially in a year when an economic crisis has reigned in the sails on a lot of other activities, nautical and otherwise. “As Buckets go, this one was epic,” says Hank Halsted, organizer of this annual event, the 14th edition of which took place March 27-



The crew of Meteor, which won the 2009 Bucket and took first place in the Grand Dames class.

29. The weather, waves, and winds all cooperated, providing perfect conditions for some great sailing. Organized in conjunction with The Port of Gustavia and the St. Barth Yacht Club, the Bucket is also now affiliated with the French Sailing Association (FFV) and an official event on the French sailing calendar. Major sponsors include Holland Jachtbouw, Perini Navi, Royal Husiman, Vitters Shipyards, and Alloy Yachts—all of which find the Bucket to be a great place to show off their yachts, do business, and enjoy a truly unique event, where the crème of the yachting world gathers for the weekend.

The Bucket fleet is divided into two classes: Les Grand Dames de la Mer, or cruising boats, with Meteor, a 170' Royal Huisman gaff-rigged schooner, Tom Perkins' high-tech, 289' Maltese Falcon (winner of the Perini Navi trophy presented at the Bucket), and Windcrest coming in first, second and

third respectively; and Les Gazelles, or racing boat class, which was won by the 128' Ganesha by Fitzroy Yachts, with P2, Perini Navi's new 125' racing yacht in second place, and Destination Fox Harb'r, a 134' Alloy Yachts entry in third place. Other notable entries included the 125' Ranger, a replica of the J-Class America's Cup boat, and last year's winner, the 152' Holland Jachtbouw yacht, Windrose. With captain Dean Maggio at the helm, Meteor sailed beautifully, winning the first and third days' races, placing a disappointing 13th on the second day, yet putting in the best overall performance to take top hon-

ors. In the overall standings, Adela, a 180' Pendennis Restoration took third place, with Windcrest second. Two newcomers, Baracuda, a 186' Perini Navi, and Varsovie, a 100' Swan, tied for the Escargot Cup, awarded to the “snails” in the race.

Camper Nicholson Yachts had generously donated 12 small Vanguard sailboats to the St Barth sailing school after last year's Bucket, and this year the kids from the school raced in a junior-Bucket with British sailor and double Olympic Gold Medalist Shirley Robertson on hand to give out the awards. In continued support of the children on the island, this year, the Bucket organizers donated 17,500 Euros, or 10% of the entry fees from the race to the junior high for new computers. “Our computers are antiquated, this will make us much more modern,” explained school director Christian Ledée.

At the awards ceremony on the dock on Sunday, March 29, president Bruno Magras noted: “This is an important event for the island and I offer a big thanks to the owners of these fantastic boats. We hope to host the Bucket for many years to come.” If this year's Bucket was any indication, the 15th annual regatta in March 2010 ought to be quite a party!

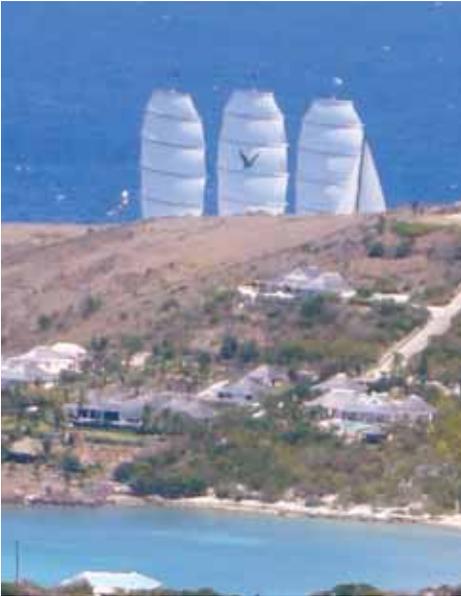
A list of all 2009 awards and winners can be found at:
www.bucketregattas.com/stbarths/awards.html



Ranger speeding along with spinnaker unfurled



Spinnakers unfurl near Frégate



Maltese Falcon—a real attention getter



Too close for comfort?



During the second day of racing, a duel of titans between Adela and Maltese Falcon



The fleet with its colorful spinnakers between Toiny and Fourchue

Bucket 2009



Two beauties nose to nose



Meteor takes the lead



The first Bucket outing for P2, a new generation of Perini Navi racing yachts



A close finish on Sunday during the last race



left to right: Hank Halsted, race director, with the "boys" from Maltese Falcon: Tom Perkins, owner, Jerry Dykstra, designer, Chris Gartner, captain



Ron Joyce (left) owner of Destination Fox Harb'r, winner of the Alloy Yacht Cup.



The crew of Axia, winners of the Skulduggery Award.



Milena Perini and Giancarlo Ragnetti present the Perini Navi Trophy.