

## **Nacra dominates Formula 18 class at Eurocat 2007**

The last weekend in April saw the 21st edition of the regatta run by Carnac Yacht Club. With 11 nationalities represented the regatta had a great cosmopolitan feel.

The F18 fleet was a tightly contested affair from the start to finish. With Dutch Sailors Mischa Heemskerk and Bastian Tenjil sailing Nacra Infusion winning the event,.

The event started on a breathless Saturday afternoon, with 3 course areas, pink for Handicap (Tornado included), , one area for Formula 18 and area for Dart18, Hobie Cat16, Hobie Cat16 with spinnaker and SL 16, KL 15.5.

The wind didn't appear until 1730 and then only on a couple of course areas. The 125 F18's were split into 2 fleets. One race was held for each fleet in some light to non-existent wind conditions. Nacra Infusion sailors Billy Besson the victor of the first fleet – Heemskerk second. In the second fleet Darren Bundock, Hobie 1st ,2nd Carolijn Brouwer- Nacra Inf.

The second day of Eurocat began with the lack of wind meant a delay onshore till 1400 and then a southerly wind set in and allowed all course areas to race. The F18 fleet was fired off, in double wiring conditions. Bundock won one heat and Brits James and Gillian Power a startling performance in the other. The next races went to Heemskerk and the other to Moana Vaireaux.

The wind gradually dropped as the day went on and the last couple of races were sailed in 7 knots. Team Styles were finding their feet, by this stage and finished the day with results in the top 5. Heats four were won by Bundock and Heemskerk, with Besson in second. This put the three of them in contention for the lead. The last heat of the day in a dying southerly went to an improving Besson and Coen De Koning (Nacra Infusion) in the other fleet.

Monday began another windless but the OOD decided a long distance race was the order of the day. With a French style gate start and 300 ish boats on the line! Chaos ensued. However eventually the race got under way. A dying breeze saw a largely upwind race with big calm patches and haze preventing the marks to be seen. At mark 1 the Nacra Infusion Yamaha F18's held top 4 places. Then the wind died with Heemskerk in the lead at mark 2, followed closely by Besson and Carolijn Brouwer. With the next mark 3 – 4 km in the hazy distance Besson lead the charge to the Quiberon shore, where as Heemskerk opted for the open sea. The shore won initially and Heemskerk cut his losses to get back to the pressure, but too late to catch Besson. Styles and Crawford on a roll stormed through the fleet to just behind Heemskerk in the pressure towards the shore.

However it was Wouter Samama (NED) making a play for the seaward option, whose gamble came off. He carried into a zephyr of wind and into the lead and at mark 3 the OOD shortened the course. Line honors going to him, 2nd Besson, 3rd Paul Wakelin and Emma Curtis (GBR Dart 18, coming through on the developing sea breeze), 4th Heemskerk and 5th Styles.

The F18's saw Styles starting really well leading heat 6 for a while, but Besson got the upper hand to win the race and Heemskerk 2nd. Bundock won the other heat with Vincent Huntleman (Nacra) second. Straight into heat 7 and a changing breeze going left and dropping; Styles got the upper hand leading from the start, with Bundock finishing second. Styles performance was mirrored by Besson in the other flight, with Heemskerk an ever solid 2nd.

This left it all to play for with podium positions between Heemskerk, Besson and Bundock, all within 1 point after 7 races and all in the same heat. It turned into an anticlimax with Besson and Bundock taking themselves out by getting DSQ for being premature starters. This left Heemskerk the winner without having to race the last heat; with Besson taking 2nd from Bundock in 3rd. DeKoning and Styles team Nacra sailors, battled through race 8 to decide 4th and 5th

**The top 5 of the Formula 18 class ( 125 boats)was dominated by Nacra infusions finishing in 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th**