



WATCH JOURNAL REVIEW

LES VOILES DE ST. BARTH | RICHARD MILLE SPONSORS INAUGURAL CARIBBEAN EVENT

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Last April, St. Barthélemy's impossibly azure waters and steady easterly trade winds treated sailors to ideal conditions at the first Les Voiles de St. Barth regatta, sponsored by Richard Mille. This ambitious addition to the Caribbean yachting calendar invited a variety of boats to face off in a series of challenging courses that drew world-famous sailors, including America's Cup veteran helmsmen Lööck Peyron and Peter Holmberg, who led Alinghi to its 2007 win. Even renowned photographer Patrick Demarchelier, one of the island's famous residents, joined in the challenge on *Puffy*, his Swan 45.



The RM 028 Les Voiles de St. Barth, \$84,000



Left: Sailing Les Voiles; Right: the RM 028 on board

In all, 23 crews participated in the launch event, which was envisioned to bring together five classes of boats—from classic sloops to high-tech maxi yachts—and test their skills on four different 20- to 30-mile-long courses over four days of racing. Planners picked each day's course from 20 different options to match conditions, which were consistently exhilarating with 20-knot winds kicking up heavy swells.

"Sailing is a sport with a rich heritage, and it only gets more intriguing as new technologies are adopted," says John Simonian, CEO of Richard Mille, the Americas, explaining

why the brand, which is typically associated with motorsports, sponsored an event that relies on nature as a power source. "The boats are not only fast, but they employ the most advanced technology, such as carbon

fiber sails and the lightest metals and composites on earth. Richard always loves to mix contemporary with heritage, as you see in his very modern watches, which may, for example, incorporate a tourbillon invented centuries ago."

The 115-foot super yacht *Sojana* embodies this blend of history and cutting-edge technology with its classic lines and carbon fiber hull designed to enhance speed. "It was exciting racing against *Rambler* and

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Money Penny," says owner Peter Harrison, who—despite his star crew, which included Holmberg and Peyron—placed second in the class. "The courses were long, challenging and a bit dangerous with the rocks, so navigation is very important."

Rambler, a maxi yacht owned by American George David, won the Super Yacht class and captured the coveted crystal trophy along with the Richard Mille RM 028 Les Voiles de St. Barth timepiece, a limited regatta edition of Mille's 47-mm round titanium dive watch outfitted with a bright yellow rubber strap and yellow accents on the crown and bezel. The regatta's logo appears on the dial near 8.

Richard Mille will produce 100 RM 028 Les Voiles de St. Barth timepieces, which are built to remain water resistant to 300 meters, thanks to three-part case construction, 22 torque screws and the screw-down crown. The automatic skeletonized movement features Mille's exclusive variable rotor geometry that adapts the rate of winding to the wearer's activity level with the adjustment of two 18-karat-gold wings.

"Richard Mille has always been involved with yachting," points out Dominique Gerente, Richard Mille's area manager, noting the brand's two Perini Navi-inspired watch models. "He wants to keep the yachting impulse in the brand." lesvoilesdesaintbarth.com, richard-mille.com