

Solar Sport: Where innovation is born

September 6th 2017

The first two days of the 40th Wereldhavendagen, Rotterdam were the backdrop to the Solar Sport Zonnebootrace. An event where boats, constructed by the teams and powered only by the sun, compete for the title. This sport which has been in existence for a few years, is the breeding ground of innovation. During the 'Sprint', through technical creativity, speeds of up to 48,5 km/h were achieved which was a real spectacle!

Inspiring

"A great location where we could reach lots of people, inspire them and fill them with enthusiasm. It was a great sight to see the ships silently coming over the water under the Rijnhavenbrug towards us", Chief Solar Officer Marcelien Bos-de Koning (former Olympic sailor) is very satisfied with this event. "Friday the teams experienced some difficulties keeping their craft on the water." The cloudburst over the Rotterdam Harbour gave the teams a big challenge to keep their boats technical equipment running. Water and electricity remains a difficult combination! The power of the downpour was ironic too. "The concerns over our climate is one of the reasons to let young technocrats, in the pressure-cooker environment of the Zonnebootrace, think about new possibilities. Our highest aim is shipping constructed from durable resources powered only with renewable energy."



A Step Beyond

The competition is made up of four different elements. During and between these elements it speaks for itself that the batteries cannot be charged from an external source. Only the energy of the sun gives the craft sailingpower. In the V20 class, the leadership kept changing but a photo finish wasn't necessary to declare the Koninklijke Marine team winners of their class.

An impressive performance from the Clafis Victron Energy Solar Boat Team. They won all the elements in their class. Team Captain, Gerard van de Schaar explained that victory is in the preparation. "Preferably we think a step beyond the race so that we are more than ready!", he said with the shining winners' cup in his hands. HAN Solar Boat Team were the winners in the A class.

Next Generation

The Netherlands seeks new technical talent. The Young Solar Challenge (a class for 14-17 year olds) gives these students a podium. The competition in Rotterdam came far too early in the school year, but nevertheless two V5 class craft participated in the sprint event. Several school groups enjoyed a tour of the competition location and amongst others a Discovery reporter from the Wereldhavendagen and a Young Maritime Representative had the chance to try out a solar boat.

In Closing

This was the last race of this year. The teams have collected enough information to be able to go back to the drawingboard this winter to develop new electronic devices. The hulls will also undergo improvements. Next year there will be new race locations and new chances to set Solar Sport and sustainability in the spotlight to get the attention of technocrats, dare devils, gadget freaks and Water sport enthusiasts.

Final Results

A-class

1. A01 HAN Solarboat Team 14
2. A04 VHL Nordwin Zonnebootteam 29
3. A02 Sunflare Solarteam 37

V-class

1. V02 Koninklijke Marine 8
2. V01 DB-20 10
3. V04 Engineers of Innovation 18

Top-class

1. T04 Clafis Victron Energy 6
2. T03 Solar Boat Twente 14
3. T05 TU Delft Solar Boat 22



Information

For further information follow us online or get in touch:

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