

Record number of female sailors took part in The Ocean Race 2022-23

More females also featured in other traditionally male-dominated roles, including onboard reporters and race jurors

GENOVA, ITALY, June 30, 2023
/EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Ocean Race 2022-23](#) featured more female sailors than in any of the previous events in the Race's 50 year history.

Overall, across the five IMOCA's taking part in the round-the-world Race and the six VO65s taking part in the The Ocean Race Sprint, there were 39 female sailors, making up 28% of the competitors overall and 98 male sailors, making up 72%.

This is a third more than the previous edition of the Race and continues the upward trend of more women sailing in the Race. In 2014-15 18% of competitors were female, while in the last edition (2017-18) the figure rose to 21%.

While each IMOCA is required to have at least one female competitor onboard the four-strong sailing team, and three of the ten sailors onboard VO65s are required to be female, Biotherm exceeded the quota, with two men and two women sailing in three of



The Ocean Race 2022-23 onboard Biotherm. Mariana Lobato and Amélie Grassi trimming the sail. CREDIT Ronan Gladu / Biotherm / The Ocean Race



The Ocean Race 2022-23 - onboard Team Holcim - PRB. Abby Ehler assists the unfurl and trim of the J0 on the start line of Leg 6. CREDIT Georgia Schofield | polaRYSE / Holcim - PRB / The Ocean Race

the seven legs*. The French IMOCA team also had a female onboard reporter (OBR) for several legs, as did Team Holcim - PRB, while Viva México had a female onboard reporter on all their legs and Mirpuri/Trifork Racing Team for leg 2. This marked another record for the Race, which had only one female OBR in the last edition and two in 2014-15.

The Ocean Race also made strides in the race for greater equality in sailing off the water, with other traditionally male-dominated roles seeing an increased number of women.

Following a big push to bring gender balance to the race official roles, the current edition had an international jury of 11 members, composed of 6 women and 5 men. This figure is significantly higher than elsewhere in the industry, with certified international sailing judges only consisting of around 15% women.

Richard Brisius, Race Chairman, The Ocean Race said: "Making sailing more inclusive is one of the most important things we can do to secure the future of the sport. We're delighted to have a record percentage of female competitors in the Race and more females taking on traditionally male-dominated roles. We are sailing in the right direction, but more needs to be done to break down barriers and create pathways into the sport for women. Just as we have set an industry benchmark in driving more female participants in the sport, we need to move the dial on diversity and leave a legacy in which the sport becomes much more accessible to all.

"Coming together as an industry and working collaboratively is the only way that this can be achieved. For the Race, we will continue to work with our host cities and local and national sailing federations to create pathways and opportunities. We also need greater commitments and action across the industry."

Holcim - PRB Sailor and Co-Founder of The Magenta Project Abby Ehler said: "I have participated in four editions of this Race and The Ocean Race 2022-23 has taken a step forward in terms of inclusivity. I have genuinely felt part of a team, and not a token gesture to a rule. This in my mind says a lot and shows that change is happening. Men and women competing side by side in a team is now being normalised – we are one of many, rather than the first, or the only.

"I do believe that the rules around crew diversity help to increase female participation and inclusion and I hope this continues with the pathways and opportunities ensuring that crew



The Ocean Race VO65 Sprint Cup 2022-23 - 21 June 2023, onboard WindWhisper Racing Team. Gemma Jones. CREDIT Georgia Schofield | polaRYSE / Holcim - PRB / The Ocean Race

diversity occurs organically without the need for a rule."

During this edition, The Ocean Race teamed up with logistics partner GAC Pindar, The Magenta Project and World Sailing Trust to host a series of panel discussions and networking events aimed at driving greater diversity and equality in sailing. The four events, held in three continents, featured local and international voices from across the maritime industry, with the final "On the Horizon" session being held today in Genova, the Grand Finale.

The Ocean Race was the first round the world crewed race with female sailors, with 13 women competing in the first edition in 1973. For the 2017-18 edition, the Race introduced a rule requiring all teams to include at least one woman.

*On legs 4 and 7 Biotherm crew included Marie Riou (FRA) and Mariana Lobato (POR) and on leg 5 Amélie Grassi (FRA) joined Mariana.

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