

2026 ST BARTHS BUCKET

PRELIMINARY CLASS BREAKS

Comments from the Race Chairman...

Posted 2 March, 2026

I ask that participating yacht owners, captains and afterguard members assess the class breaks in the context of the facts and considerations presented in this letter. As always, we welcome your feedback and comments, but ask that only the yacht owner's *designated representative* contact us with feedback, questions, or concerns.

BACKGROUND

We recognize that getting class breaks 'right' can be as important to good competition as proper handicapping. These preliminary class breaks are published after considerable analysis and dialogue with our race managers, the SYRA and ORC. There are many factors considered when determining class breaks including, but not limited to, Rig Type, Ratings, Displacement/Length Ratio (DLR), Sail Area/Displacement Ratios, Furling Jibs when Tacking, etc. But there are also limiting factors from the race management standpoint, such as practical class size, the number and type of yachts entered, and rating bands.

Based on longstanding feedback from participating owners, one of our goals with superyacht racing is to group yachts with relatively similar sailing characteristics together - that is, to have yachts which perform in a similar fashion in a variety of different conditions compete in the same class. This is difficult to achieve in some instances given composition of the fleet and how disparate superyachts typically are, and this year has its own set of challenges. Some of the classes are smaller than we would prefer, however, larger class options would have featured very dissimilar sailing characteristics.

Assigning classes based solely on ratings would be a simple task, look neat and tidy on the scratch sheet and result in tighter rating bands, but this rarely provides the quality competition that superyacht owners desire and expect.

2026 FACTS and CONSIDERATIONS

In any given year there are unique considerations and limitations regarding class breaks and 2026 is no exception:

- Once again, we have a fairly large, diverse fleet of sloops, ketches, and schooners with yacht length ranging from 28-78 meters, displacement between 53-718 metric tons, and a speed differential from the fastest to slowest rated yacht in fleet of over 8 minutes per mile!
- There are 34 yachts divided into four 'conventional' Bucket cruising superyacht classes, two non-spinnaker Corinthian Spirit classes, a 3-mast schooner class, a 90' class, and a Maxi 100 Racing Class (scored under IRC).
- 2026 Bucket classes:

A – 2 yachts	Les Cent Pied (<i>Maxi 100 Racing</i>)
B – 6 yachts	Les Gazelles des Mers
C – 3 yachts	Les Petites Dames (<i>90' Cruising</i>)
D – 3 yachts	L'esprit de la Mers-1 (<i>Corinthian Spirit-1</i>)
E – 3 yachts	Les Elegantes des Mers
F – 5 yachts	Les Mademoiselles des Mers
G – 6 yachts	L'esprit-2 de la Mers-2 (<i>Corinthian Spirit-2</i>)
H – 3 yachts	Les Grandes Dames des Mers
I – 3 yachts	Les Goelettes des Mers
- Class A (Cent Pied) Two returning Wally Cento yachts are the Maxi 100 Racing Class. These are two of the fastest yachts in fleet. They will have two W/L races on Thursday before joining the fleet for coastal/island racing Friday-Sunday (starting first and scored under IRC).
- Class B (Gazelles) Six performance oriented yachts, 3 sloops and 3 ketches, with some of the fastest ratings in fleet. All featuring deep draft, low DLR with plenty of downwind sail area.
- Class C (Petites Dames) Three performance oriented cruising sloops of the same designer and builder make up the '90 Foot Class' featuring a reasonable rating band and similar measurement values across the board.
- Class D (L'esprit-1) These are 3 of the 9 non-spinnaker Corinthian Spirit class entries. All of the same designer with similar length and displacement and none furling to tack. Two of the three will race with a headsail set flying. The Corinthian Spirit Class rules ([NOR Exhibit 2 Corinthian-Spirit-Class-Rules.pdf](#)) provide an overview of the racing philosophy and eligibility criteria.
- Class E (Elegantes) All sloops with similar Draft/Length ratio and CDL and none having to furl to tack. This class features an extraordinarily tight rating band (8 secs/mile).
- Class F (Mademoiselles) This 5-yacht class of sloops features similar LOA with all having to furl to tack.
- Class G (L'esprit-2) This 6-yacht non-spinnaker class features quite a mix. These are the largest of the 9 Corinthian Spirit entries with LOA's ranging from 43-77 metres and significantly larger displacement than the Corinthian-1 class yachts. Three of the six will be racing with headsails set flying.
- Class H (Grandes Dames) This class consists of three of the largest yachts in fleet, all Perini Navi builds. LOA ranges from 46-59 metres and displacement between 350-560,000 metric tons.
- Class I (Goelettes) We are pleased to have three 3-masted schooners at the 2026 edition— racing in their own separate class.

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In keeping with Bucket tradition, the 2026 Bucket regatta and Thursday's stand alone, optional race will feature the popular pursuit racing format with a focus on class racing. Individual start times will be structured such that each yacht in class hypothetically finishes together (as opposed to the entire fleet), with class finishes staggered for safe racing purposes. The class finishing gaps will depend on course length, wind strength and class composition, and the class finish order and gaps may change day to day. This practice has not only proved effective for safe racing, but for fair racing as well, to some extent lessening interaction of yachts competing in other classes.

As stated earlier, I welcome your comments and feedback, but please respond in a timely manner. **Any submissions provided just prior to racing on site are unlikely to be addressed.** We ask that captains please share this letter and the accompanying class break worksheet with your yacht owners and afterguard members before they get on site.

I look forward to seeing everyone soon and to the prospects of another year of competitive, enjoyable Bucket racing!

Peter Craig
Race Chairman