

Press release

Norbert Sedlacek at the Vendée Globe 2008: Austria's most successful extreme sailor starts with Kapsch in the world's hardest one-handed regatta

The Vendée Globe 2008 starts on 9th November 2008. Austrian extreme sailor Norbert Sedlacek will be at the starting line. With his nauticsport-Kapsch racing yacht, the local extreme sportsman has set himself the goal of winning the hardest one-handed regatta in the world. He first won over the Kapsch Group as his partner and sponsor.



Norbert Sedlacek (46) started his second career in 1996 when he gave up his safe job and started his first round-the-world trip. After this first awesome journey Sedlacek became the first Austrian in the world to circle around Antarctica non-stop in 2000/2001. He then participated in The Transat regatta and the first running of the Vendée Globe 2004 (which ended for him in the South Atlantic). His most recent adventure was the "Round the World 2005-2007". For 2008 the Vendée Globe is again in the sights of the local extreme sportsman. The Kapsch Group will support him as his partner and main sponsor.

"What fascinates me about sailing is learning to use nature," explains Georg Kapsch. "In fact Kapsch Group has focused on sponsoring art for many years – not sport. But here is someone who gives up a safe, pragmatic job to sail around the world – to travel into uncertainty. I like that because that is what do all the time as entrepreneurs: we move out of safe havens to reach new shores – just like Norbert Sedlacek. So we have decided to support Austria's most successful extreme sailor," explains Kapsch.

The challenge of the Vendée Globe 2008

"If other people say you can't do that or it's stupid – then I want to do it. It goes without saying that this is also the case for such challenges as the Vendée Globe and I can gather massive amounts of experience as the manager and skipper. That is why I am starting the Vendée Globe 2008," declares Norbert Sedlacek.

An Austrian in the hardest one-handed regatta in the world

The Vendée Globe is a non-stop regatta for one-handed sailors that goes around the world and is considered the hardest one-handed regatta in the world. The race has taken place every four years since 1989. All boats are IMOCA class Open 60s. The race starts and ends at Les Sables d'Olonne, France. The participants have to cover 27,000 nautical miles (around 50,000 kilometres) around the world without using the assistance of others or stepping foot on land. So the Vendée Globe demands absolute physical fitness, mental concentration and incredible stamina from the 30 participants for around three to four months at sea.

The course goes from Les Sables d'Olonne to the Bay of Biscay then across the north and south Atlantic to the Antarctic drift ice limit. The yachts sail round the Antarctic and pass all of the earth's infamous Capes, such as Cape of Good Hope, South Tasmania, South New Zealand and Cape Horn. Then the "ascent" starts, the last but still 16,000 km stretch through the Atlantic back to Les Sables d'Olonne.

Boat with more safety – up to 130 days around the world

"I have calculated a travelling time of 110 days with the nauticsport-Kapsch racing yacht – up to 130 days would still be ok. I am optimistic that I can successfully master the Vendée Globe," declares Norbert Sedlacek. "Many people have been surprised that I am doing the Vendée Globe again. Why try again with the old boat? Because I know what to expect; we know where the weaknesses are and have improved a lot. The boat is much safer than last time. And last time I also saw that many more new boats gave up than old one".

Key data on the ship:

- Name: Nauticsport-Kapsch
- Class: Mono 60
- Overall length: 18.28 metres
- Width: 5.1 metres
- Draft: 4.5 metres
- Weight: 10 tonnes
- Year of manufacture: 1995/2003
- Sails upwind: 240 m²
- Sails downwind: 420 m²
- Number of sails: 8
- Architects: B. Nivel / N. Sedlacek / Prof. Dipl. Ing. R. Kuchar
- Shipyard: Garcia/N. Sedlacek
- Material: Aluminium / Conticell
- Top speed of 40 knots (approx. 75 km/h)



For more information refer to: www.vendeeglobe.at and www.vendeeglobe.org/en/.

About the Kapsch Group:

The Kapsch Group follows a combination of tradition, profitability and growth. With its subsidiaries Kapsch BusinessCom AG, Kapsch TrafficCom AG and Kapsch CarrierCom AG, it combines an international strategy and claim to IT leadership with the roots of a modern, family-run company. Kapsch sees itself as a globally active company as a result of customer relationships in a total of 46 countries.

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