

without any major breakages. It was a slog to keep both boats and body together, but the fleet prevailed against some extremely testing upwind conditions. In the end the winner was no surprise. Michael Desjoeaux, known simply as "the professor," sailed *Geant* across the Boston finish line in an astonishing time of 8 days, 8 hours, 29 minutes and 55 seconds.

To say that he sailed into Boston understates his arrival. On a warm summer afternoon Desjoeaux stormed into Boston, approached the official finish line off Deer Island sailing at 25 knots, barely acknowledging the fleet of spectator craft struggling to keep up with him, and crossed the finish line without slowing down. He caught a hot gust off the buildings in downtown Boston and with two hulls flying and the third barely skimming the surface of the water, he charged up President Row to the "other" fin-



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Taking part in a race dominated by European sailors were two new American solo racers, Joe Harris, left, and Kip Stone, center. American multi-hull recordbreaker Rich Wilson also took part in the race after the finish was moved to his hometown of Boston. Benoit Stichelbaut/DPPI photo

ish line off Rowes Wharf. Once across he rounded the boat into the wind, let the main halyard go, and only after the massive mainsail was down and lashed did he lower his concentration and wave to the stunned crowds. Over the last century there have been many arrivals in Boston harbor, but certainly none has been so precise and spectacular as the arrival of *Geant*.

Thirty of the 37 competitors finished The Transat. The new course was slightly shorter than the old one that finished in Newport, Rhode Island, so course records were really just race records, but no one disagreed that Boston was a fine place to end one of the toughest ocean races.

"We'll do it again in four years time, hopefully bigger and better," Mark Turner said once the last boat had crossed the finish line. "Next time we will have more time to plan, so wait and see what the future holds."

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