



RACE NINE 2005-06

Winner ABN AMRO ONE  
 Skipper Mike Sanderson/NZL  
 Boat Juan Kouyoumdjian Volvo Open 70  
 Flag NED  
 Elapsed time 097:11:15:39

Podium positions (on points)

1 ABN AMRO ONE/Mike Sanderson/NZL (96 points)  
 2 Pirates of the Caribbean/Paul Cayard/USA (73 points)  
 3 Brasil 1/Torben Grael/BRA (67 points)  
 4 ABN AMRO TWO/Sebastien Josse/FRA (58.5)  
 5 Ericsson/Neal McDonald/GBR (55 points)  
 6 Movistar/Bouwe Bekking/NED/ (48 POINTS)  
 7 Brunel/Matt Humphries/GBR (15.5 points)

Course

Leg 1 Vigo - Cape Town  
 Leg 2 Cape Town -Melbourne  
 Leg 3 Melbourne - Wellington  
 Leg 4 Wellington - Rio de Janeiro  
 Leg 5 Rio de Janeiro - Baltimore  
 Leg 6 Baltimore/Annapolis - New York  
 Leg 7 New York - Portsmouth  
 Leg 8 Portsmouth - Rotterdam  
 Leg 9 Rotterdam – Göteborg  
 Distance 31,250 nm  
 Entries 7 boats

START DATE	LEG DISTANCE	WINNER
05-Nov-05	6,400	ABN AMRO ONE
12-Nov-05	6,100	ABN AMRO ONE
02-Jan-06	1,450	movistar
19-Feb-06	6,700	ABN AMRO ONE
02-Apr-06	5,000	ABN AMRO ONE
07-May-06	400	ABN AMRO ONE
11-May-06	3,200	ABN AMRO ONE
02-Jun-06	1,500	Brasil 1
15-Jun-06	500	Pirates of the Caribbean

2005-06 Overview

- Brasil 1 was dismantled.
- movistar sank.
- Hans Horrevoets was lost overboard from ABN AMRO TWO on Leg 7. His body was recovered, but he never regained consciousness.
- The radical Volvo Open 70 was raced as a class for the first time.
- It was the first time a boat with a canting keel was used.
- The race started outside the UK for the first time and it was the first time a Spanish port was included.
- In-port races were introduced, but not in all ports.

- Scoring gates made their debut.
- Ice gates to prevent the fleet from sailing too far south were included for the first time.
- Paul Cayard returned to skipper Pirates of the Caribbean.
- Brazilian multi Olympic gold medallist Torben Grael made his debut as a skipper in the race.
- Pirates of the Caribbean retired from Leg one on the first night with a cracked bulkhead and a leak around their keel.
- movistar retired from Leg 1 on the first night with damage to her rudder, daggerboard and the leading edge of the keel.
- Ericsson was shipped to Australia on Leg 2 after hydraulic problems with her keel.
- Brasil 1 was trucked to Australia after dismasting on Leg 2
- movistar beat ABN AMRO ONE by nine seconds to win Leg 3 – the closest finish in the history of the race.

### Leg 1 Vigo - Cape Town

Both Dutch boats, ABN AMRO ONE and ABN AMRO TWO screamed to the front early on Leg 1. ABN AMRO TWO took the lead on the first night, while disaster struck Pirates of the Caribbean who retired with a cracked a bulkhead and a leak around her keel. She headed for Portugal from where she was flown to South Africa.

movistar was the next casualty, landing off a wave with a bang and colliding with a submerged object. A rudder, daggerboard and the front of the keel were all damaged, along with major damage to the mountings for the keel hydraulics. She too retired and was shipped to Cape Town.

Before the first weekend was over, Sunergy broke her gooseneck and stopped in Madeira for repairs. They suspended racing for 15 hours and were 700 miles behind the pack upon resuming.

Onboard ABN AMRO ONE a fire broke out which came within five seconds of being uncontrollable. The navigator re-wired the electronics and saved the day. The boat then took maximum points at the Fernando de Noronha scoring gate.

ABN AMRO ONE eventually racked up 546 miles in 24 hours, setting a new record and the pair of Dutch boats led by ABN AMRO ONE was first into Cape Town, while Ericsson reported a failure in their keel system that allowed it to swing wildly on the approach to Cape Town.

### Leg 2 Cape Town -Melbourne

There was almost no breeze as the fleet embarked Leg 2, which would take the fleet into the Southern Ocean. It took two hours to complete a two-mile short course and, at times, the boats drifted backwards in the adverse current.

Barely 300 miles from Cape Town, Ericsson headed back due to hydraulic problems with her keel. The team retired from the leg and the boat was later shipped to Australia. Brasil 1 discovered a crack in the deck close to the mast and returned to make a repair. ABN AMRO TWO smashed the world 24-hour record, setting a new mark at 562.96 miles, finishing second to her sister ship who won the leg.

Meanwhile, Pirates of the Caribbean and movistar both pulled in to Albany after yet more issues with their hydraulic keels rams and Brasil 1, having fought her way back into the fleet, was dismasted and travelled the final few thousand miles across the Australian wilderness on a truck.

### Leg 3 Melbourne to Wellington

In Melbourne, Sunergy, renamed as ING Real Estate Brunel, withdrew to make modifications and the six-boat fleet started in rough conditions. On board ABN AMRO TWO bowman, Gerd-Jan Poortman was smashed me down the deck into the daggerboard. He dislocated his tailbone and needed the onboard medic to stitch up a head wound as the boat careered along at 20 knots.

ABN AMRO ONE and movistar were at the front of the fleet for almost the entire leg. With just the Cook Strait to be negotiated, ABN AMRO ONE looked sure to win, but the wind fell from 28 knots to two in half an hour bringing movistar back in to play. For six hours, the pair battled as they came into the view of thousands of spectators lining Wellington's waterfront. movistar's lead was less than a boat length after more than 1,400 miles of racing and her winning margin was nine seconds – the closest in race history.

### Leg 4 Wellington to Rio de Janeiro

The ride out of Wellington was blistering, and almost immediately, the fleet pitched into a downhill charge across the Southern Ocean. ABN AMRO ONE headed hard south and lost 43 miles on the fleet, but the tactic paid off and by the time she reached the first ice gate, she was 224 miles clear of her sister ship and set a course for Cape Horn in 50-knot winds.

For the crew of ABN AMRO ONE, this was a wonderful surprise. The boat was optimised for reaching but now she was showing the best numbers downwind. Further back, Ericsson suffered a Chinese gybe at night. She had just righted herself after a broach in 25 knots when she swung out of control and onto her side. It took the crew two hours to clear up the mess before they were able to resume racing.

As movistar approached Cape Horn, the bomb doors around her keel failed and water exploded through the watertight keel box into the boat. Ericsson and Brasil 1 were asked to standby for a rescue while movistar's watch leader Chris Nicholson, a trained electrical engineer, attempted to start the emergency pumps. The electrics had flooded and Nicholson wired the pumps directly to the battery terminal, taking 20 24-volt shocks before the pumps came to life and the boat was saved. movistar headed for Ushuaia in Argentina for repairs and a long talk among the crew over whether their injury-prone yacht was safe enough to finish the race.

By day 12, ABN AMRO ONE had passed Cape Horn and held on to win her third leg. Ericsson finished the gruelling leg in fifth leading to big changes in the afterguard.

### Leg 5 Rio de Janeiro to Baltimore

Ericsson's results so far had been less than sparkling and before the start of Leg 5, John Kostecki who had led illbruck to a win in the previous race replaced Neal McDonald as skipper. McDonald was relegated to watch leader.

Elsewhere, there was a slight feeling of optimism in the fleet. With over half the points still available, the remainder of the race was expected to be fought in predominantly light winds – conditions in which ABN AMRO ONE did not excel. After winning the Rio de Janeiro In-Port race, the leg couldn't

have started much worse for the Dutch team. A halyard lock failed in the opening hour and sent their headsail tumbling down to the deck, costing the team a vital 18 minutes.

movistar, meanwhile, had sailed inshore of the fleet and the tactic had paid off. Ultimately, it was spoiled when she was trapped under a cloud, handing the race back to ABN AMRO ONE, who rounded the scoring gate at Fernando de Noronha in first place, one minute and 25 seconds ahead.

ABN AMRO ONE crossed the finish five hours ahead, a win that put her within touching distance of the overall title.

#### Leg 6 Annapolis to New York

In front of an enormous crowd, the sailing capital of America watched on as ABN AMRO ONE struggled at the start of leg six. Sunergy, now refitted and racing under the new name of Brunel, had bolstered the fleet.

The route to New York included everything from flat calms to 55-knot squalls into which the fleet headed at 11 knots. Quicker than everyone else was ABN AMRO ONE who entered the Hudson River 17 miles ahead of Pirates of the Caribbean. movistar, Brasil 1 and Ericsson with Neal McDonald back in charge, were separated by just two miles as another thrilling finish unfolded. Pirates of the Caribbean was able to hold on to second, but Brasil 1 took third after navigating through a dangerous shoal, and Ericsson crept ahead of movistar. All four boats were separated by 14 minutes. Pirates of the Caribbean had overtaken movistar in the standings by half a point.

#### Leg 7 New York to Portsmouth

The skies at the start were grey and the mood mixed. movistar was forced to cross the start line two hours after the fleet as a penalty for repairing a damaged winch system during the pit stop and the first 1,000 miles turned into another upwind struggle.

Eight days after the start, a low-pressure system had formed and was set to rattle the fleet with 35 to 40 knots from the west. At around 0200 on May 18, ABN AMRO TWO was 1,300 miles from the finish in fifth place when the wind rose from 12 to 25 knots. Skipper Sebastian Josse was at the wheel as one by one the crew went below to fit their safety harnesses. Hans Horrevoets was trimming the spinnaker and waiting for his turn when ABN AMRO TWO ploughed into a wave. The boat was buried under tons of water and she shook herself off, the spinnaker was flogging and Horrevoets was gone. After 40 minutes of searching, the crew found his lifeless body and hauled him back on board, but life had drained out and Horrevoets could not be resuscitated. A few hours later, the shocked and shaken crew put ABN AMRO TWO back on course for Portsmouth.

Two days later, movistar landed off a big wave with a huge bang. Water surged into the through the broken keel structure. With a storm of 50 knots promised within the next 24 hours, decisions were crucial. The crew did not know if the keel would stay in the boat and if it didn't, she would sink in seconds. ABN AMRO TWO stood by and the next day as the storm approached, the crew of movistar abandoned ship into a life raft and transferred to the safety of ABN AMRO TWO.

Meanwhile, at the front of the fleet, ABN AMRO ONE had scored her sixth leg win in seven, and had made sure of the overall title.

## Leg 8 Portsmouth to Rotterdam

The course up the west coast of Ireland and around the tip of Scotland was potentially one of the toughest, but on the day of the start, there was no wind at all and after 20 hours of racing only 120 miles had been covered.

After four days, the tightly packed fleet reached the Fastnet Rock, but once they reached the north of Scotland, a weather system caused a huge split. A small trough developed in the high-pressure system, which stranded Pirates of the Caribbean, ABN AMRO TWO and Brunel, while the rest opened up a 60-mile lead. Brasil 1 forged a lead they would never lose, beating ABN AMRO ONE by just three minutes. It was a thrilling finish to a leg that most the sailors wanted to forget.

## Leg 9 Rotterdam to Gothenburg

Happily, for ABN AMRO ONE, the race had already been won, because she made a terrible start at the back of the fleet. The wind was variable and with one missed shift Pirates of the Caribbean fell to the back of the fleet and Brasil 1 shot to the top. Cutting her losses, Pirates of the Caribbean peeled off towards the coast, setting up a thrilling final night at sea. Soon she had jumped to third. ABN AMRO opened a 15-mile lead on Brasil 1 – and then the order changed again. Just 15 miles from the finish, ABN AMRO TWO was becalmed, but all the while, a spec on the horizon behind them grew bigger. Pirates of the Caribbean loomed into view heading for the lead. And when she took it, she didn't give it back. The final margin was four minutes.

ABN AMRO ONE, meanwhile, finished last. "We were last in the first in-port race and we're last here," skipper Mike Sanderson said. "I guess it's what you do in the middle that counts." He was right.