



## **Iridium Pilot(TM) Selected by IMOCA 60' as Satellite Communications Platform for Prestigious International Europa and Vendee Globe Sailboat Race**

MCLEAN, Va., May 30, 2012 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Iridium Communications Inc. (Nasdaq:IRDM) is providing vital satellite broadband communications connectivity for sailors competing in the prestigious international Sailboat Races of the IMOCA Championship. The Europa Warm'Up Race kicked off May 19 and runs through June 9, 2012.

Twenty sailboats will be equipped with Iridium Pilot™ terminals, the new Iridium maritime broadband platform, as part of the telecommunications package provided by Geolink, a long-time Iridium partner and innovative race communications supplier. Relying on the world's only truly global satellite network, skippers and crews can access real-time weather reports, sailing conditions, benefit from an emergency communications safety link, and stay connected to family and friends via phone, email, Facebook and Twitter throughout the race.

The Europa Warm'Up is a 3,200-nautical mile (more than 5,000 km) race for IMOCA 60-foot monohull yachts. It serves as an opportunity for seven competitors to sail in race conditions similar to those they will face in the round-the-world Vendée Globe Race in November 2012. This two-stage race began in Barcelona and tasks sailors to navigate a grueling Mediterranean course, where they will cross the finish in La Rochelle on June 5 or 6, 2012.

The skipper of each boat will then go on to participate in the Vendée Globe Race, which will begin in France on November 10, 2012. The Vendée Globe is a non-stop round-the-world yacht race, known to be one of the most difficult competitions in ocean racing. Participants must sail single-handed around the Antarctic and will likely face extreme conditions during their journey. Iridium will be the primary communications provider for all vessels taking part in the race.

As the first leg of the Europa Warm'Up was completed, Vincent Riou, the skipper of boat PRB, expressed his satisfaction with Iridium Pilot. He confirmed, "It is loads better than the previous installation and it works perfectly well. This is a very good partnership!"

"Iridium Pilot, supported by the Iridium OpenPort® service, is the ideal satellite communications solution for maritime, providing reliable communications connections everywhere sailors go," said Greg Ewert, executive vice president, global channel distribution, Iridium. "Combine that with a compact sized terminal, low-cost airtime, high quality voice and data communications, and there is really no comparison to other satellite network services that only work in certain regions, using large terminals and expensive air time costs. Our critical communications services are ideal for mariners in any market sector, merchant, fishing, racing, or leisure, where weather conditions can change rapidly and connectivity needs to remain consistently robust. We are proud to be the service provider of choice for the IMOCA races and to keep sailors connected wherever they may sail."

Iridium Pilot is the Company's second-generation broadband platform that utilizes the Iridium OpenPort service -- the world's first fully global satellite broadband communications service. Iridium Pilot is engineered for enhanced durability to withstand harsh maritime conditions, packaged in a small, lightweight antenna. It has a fixed, electronically-steerable, phased-array antenna, designed to maintain connectivity even in rough seas. Iridium Pilot offers broadband connectivity in addition to three independent phone lines, all of which work simultaneously. Iridium Pilot maintains one of the best service programs in the industry, the Iridium Global

simultaneously. Iridium Pilot maintains one of the best service programs in the industry, the Iridium Global Service Program, and the industry's only standard five-year limited warranty.

"The racing industry has to build yachts of the highest caliber and strength to endure excessive waves and difficult conditions," said Bruno Gicquel, maritime operations director, Geolink. "This requirement naturally applies to all the equipment onboard and we are pleased to say that Iridium Pilot, and its predecessor Iridium OpenPort, withstood the voyages of previous races and gave us the confidence to rely on an Iridium only communications solution."

#### **About Iridium Communications Inc.**

Iridium is the only mobile voice and data satellite communications network that spans the entire globe. Iridium enables connections between people, organizations and assets to and from anywhere, in real time. Together with its ever-expanding ecosystem of partner companies, Iridium delivers an innovative and rich portfolio of reliable solutions for markets that require truly global communications. The company has a major development program underway for its next-generation network — Iridium NEXT. Iridium Communications Inc. is headquartered in McLean, Va., U.S.A., and its common stock trades on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the ticker symbol IRDM. For more information about Iridium products, services and partner solutions, visit [www.iridium.com](http://www.iridium.com).

The Iridium Communications Inc. logo is available at <http://www.globenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=10426>

#### **About Geolink**

For two decades, Geolink's mission has been to provide reliable, continuous and secure telecommunication services, as well as all value-added services required by individuals and organizations in the modern information society (voice, fax, mail, Internet, data file transfer and GSM phone) where traditional terrestrial or mobile telecommunications means are unusable or non-existent, or can simply not be economically envisaged. For more information, visit [www.geolink.com](http://www.geolink.com).

#### **About IMOCA**

IMOCA 60-foot monohulls are among the fastest modern racing monohulls. Built using composite materials, they are designed to be as light as possible (speed gains) while at the same time being solid enough to withstand the worst conditions you can find when racing on the open seas.

With more than thirty skippers signed up, the IMOCA championship includes two round-the-world races, a round Europe race and several ocean races. The IMOCA class aims to make ocean racing more international and it brings together ideas about competitions, innovation, human adventure and safety.

Most of the races are solo and double-handed and its world championship rewards exceptional sailors, who race on the most difficult seas in the world.

[www.imoca.org](http://www.imoca.org)

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