

New York Yacht Club Invitational Cup

20 Entries Accepted; Yacht Clubs to Field Amateur Teams

NEW YORK, N.Y. (December 14, 2008)—Twenty yacht club teams from around the world have accepted the New York Yacht Club's (NYYC) invitation to compete in the first-ever New York Yacht Club Invitational Cup. Announced in August and scheduled to debut September 15-19, 2009, the event is for Corinthian (amateur) sailors representing their yacht clubs and respective nations. It will take place on the famed waters off Newport, R.I., where Harbour Court, the NYYC's on-the-water clubhouse, is located.

"The response was greater than we could ever have expected given the current business climate that affects the world," said NYYC Commodore David Elwell. "Many of the entries actually arrived after the financial crisis became apparent. To date, we have entries from five different continents."

The event will showcase the finest amateur sailors in the world and will be the most significant event that the New York Yacht Club has hosted in recent memory. For 132 years, the New York Yacht Club successfully defended the America's Cup and ran the America's Cup races on Rhode Island Sound for 53 years until 1983, when Australia finally wrested the Cup from the U.S., ending the longest winning streak in sports history.

"The New York Yacht Club and Newport, Rhode Island, are synonymous with competition and fun," said Russell Murphy, commodore of the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club (RPAYC) in Australia, "and we became quickly interested when we saw that this event is entirely consistent with our encouragement over the years for members to participate in Corinthian events. Our interest was further piqued because a group of mates could get together, form a competitive amateur team 'out of pocket' and encourage our families to join us. We could be surrounded by other genuine amateurs, enjoy quality competition in an internationally recognized venue and, as a byproduct, unashamedly showcase our club and our home waters to like-minded people."

Racing will be aboard NYYC Club Swan 42s (www.swan42class.org), unique one-design racer/cruisers created by the NYYC in partnership with Nautor's Swan to boost Corinthian sailing and promote increased competitiveness within an owner-driver and amateur sailing framework. Introduced in October, 2006, it is the eighth one-design class developed by NYYC since 1900.

"With the New York Yacht Club hosting and the world's most illustrious yacht clubs participating, the Invitational Cup is positioned to become the Wimbledon of sailing," said World Champion sailor Enrico Chieffi, who is Nautor Group Marketing Director. "The Club Swan 42 levels the playing field so that the focus can be on the skills of the individual teams."

The worldwide fleet of Club Swan 42s currently consists of 46 boats, 23 of which are owned by New York Yacht Club members. The NYYC awarded yachts to invited clubs based on the availability of charter boats. Yacht clubs from outside the U.S.A. that wish to bring their own boat and can comply with the Notice of Race may still submit a request for an invitation. All submissions will be given careful consideration.

"For us," added RPAYC Commodore Murphy, "we are traveling a long way to sail in unfamiliar waters in a yacht we will see for the first time on the 10th of September 2009, so I suspect we will have our work cut out for us. That said, the broader issue is of

genuinely friendly inter-club competition of which we are vocal supporters. In this particular context, I applaud that initiative and the effort to resurrect Corinthian racing because burgeoning professionalism has effectively meant pricing quality competition out of reach of many, to the detriment of our sport and our clubs. This is a wonderful and timely competition.”

Italy’s Yacht Club Costa Smeralda (YCCS), which is also fielding a team, has competed in NYYC events before. “It is always a special emotion to sail off Newport and to experience the very warm, welcoming atmosphere of Harbour Court,” said YCCS Sports Director Edoardo Recchi. “At any kind of competition, there is the pride of representing the burgee that you are racing for, and on the water there is always the strong will to perform at your best in the fairest way. The nice thing about friendly competition between yacht clubs, however, is that once you have finished your race and you arrive at your berth, all the people involved are interacting and commenting on the just-finished races. The amicable atmosphere is one of the best things about this type of competition.”

Recchi explained that to determine its team YCCS is scheduling a series of trials in Porto Cervo starting in early spring 2009. “The Team will be put together to have the best possible mixture of skills needed to sail the Club Swan 42. Another important factor is the team spirit and creating a crew of sailors who instinctively work well together.”

Prizes will be awarded to the top three teams, and the winning yacht club's name will be engraved on the NYYC Invitational Cup that will be permanently displayed at NYYC's 44th Street Clubhouse in Manhattan. Former NYYC Commodore Robert James and Trustee Charlie Robertson are donating the trophy.

The participating clubs, to date, are:

Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club, Sydney, Australia
Royal Bermuda Yacht Club, Hamilton, Bermuda
Royal Canadian Yacht Club, Toronto, Canada
Royal Danish Yacht Club, Hellerup, Denmark
Yacht Club de France, Paris, France
Norddeutscher Regatta Verein, Hamburg, Germany
Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club, Hong Kong, China
Royal Cork Yacht Club, Co. Cork, Ireland
Royal St. George Yacht Club, Co. Dublin, Ireland,
Yacht Club Costa Smeralda, Porto Cervo, Italy,
Yacht Club Italiano, Genoa, Italy
Japan Sailing Federation, Tokyo, Japan
Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron, Auckland, New Zealand
Royal Cape Yacht Club, Cape Town, South Africa
Real Club Nautico Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain
Royal Yacht Squadron, Cowes, United Kingdom
Royal Ocean Racing Club, London, United Kingdom
Royal Thames Yacht Club, London, United Kingdom
St. Francis Yacht Club, San Francisco, Calif., USA

Full details can be found at www.nyyc.org/worldinvitationalcup or contact Event Chair John Mendez at Jmendez@nyyc.org or +1(401) 862-5202.