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Annapolis-to-Newport Race Committee Announces New Competition Manufacturer's Trophy will promote rivalry battles between various boat types

ANNAPOLIS, MD (March 19, 2015) – A significant influx of performance cruising designs has enabled the Annapolis-to-Newport race committee to create a fun, new competition. The Manufacturer's Trophy will promote friendly rivalry battles between such boat types as Beneteau, DuFour, J/Boats, Jeanneau, C&C-Tartan and Swan just to name a few.

“From the outset of planning for the 2015 Annapolis to Newport Race our goal was to increase participation. With that in mind, we created the Performance Cruising class and the response has been very positive,” said Garth Hichens, a key member of the organizing committee for the renowned biennial event. “This class is not for the custom racing yachts, but rather for the production boat builders that specialize in performance cruiser-racers.”

The 35th edition of the Annapolis to Newport Race, which begins June 5, 2015, has already attracted 84 entries and many of the registered boats fit into the Manufacturer's class. For instance, the Swan 53 Music (James Blakemore) from the IRC 1 class could team up with the Swan 43 Akela III (Djoerd Hoekstra) and the Swan 44 Stormy Weather (Mike Maholchic) from the Offshore Racing Rule class along with the Swan 51 Tonic (Mark Myers) from PHRF Double-Handed.

“We already have four manufacturers that have met the five-boat threshold to be eligible so we know we will have an exciting competition,” Hichens said. “We felt it was important to reward the manufacturer whose top five boats post the best results.”

According to the Annapolis-to-Newport race committee: The Manufacturer's Trophy will be presented to the manufacturer with at least five boats completing the race and whose top five boats score the lowest number of points using the low point scoring system, irrespective of what class they enter. The manufacturer will be presented a perpetual trophy while each boat will receive an award.

Ken Comerford, owner of North Point Yacht Sales in Annapolis, believes the inaugural Manufacturer's Trophy is a great idea. Comerford has been encouraging many of his customers to compete in the 2015 Annapolis to Newport Race and has been challenging other yacht brokers and manufacturing companies to get involved.

“I think it is a phenomenal way to encourage participation within particular makes of boats. It’s just one more opportunity for skippers to get some extra recognition and awards,” Comerford said. “I applaud the Annapolis Yacht Club for establishing the Manufacturer’s Award. It’s good for the industry and we are strongly encouraging our local clients to participate.”

Comerford agreed with the Annapolis-to-Newport race committee’s opinion that there is much untapped potential within the performance cruising market with regard to distance racing. North Point Yacht Sales is the local dealer for J Boats and Dufour and said the latter manufacturer produces designs that are ideal for the 475-nautical mile passage from Annapolis to Newport.

“Dufour makes boats that are great for doing this type of journey. They are great offshore boats,” he said.

In other news, competitors in the Annapolis to Newport Race are being offered discounted entry fees for the New York Yacht Club Annual Regatta and Block Island Race Week.

After arriving in Rhode Island, Annapolis-to-Newport competitors can enter one or both of the famous New England regattas. The 161st NYYC Annual Regatta, presented by Rolex, is being held June 12-14 out of Newport and features three great days of action, including the Around-the-Island Race (Conanicut Island).

IRC, One-Designs, 12-meters, 6-meters S-Class and Classics will race around government marks on Saturday, June 13th while PHRF classes will take to the course on Sunday, June 14th. Visit www.nyyc.org to register.

Meanwhile, the 50th anniversary of Block Island Race Week will be celebrated June 21-26. As always, it will feature five days of competition with the highlight being the Round Block island Race. Classes are offered in IRC, PHRF, Double Handed, Cruising Spinnaker and Cruising Non-Spinnaker.

For the Cruising Classes, who race one distance race each day, the entry fee is already discounted to 60% of the regular fee. Annapolis-to-Newport racers will receive an additional discount. Cruising Class entries can live aboard, with family and friends, moored in the Great Salt Pond and enjoy the traditional camaraderie of Block Island Race Week. To enter, please visit www.blockislandraceweek.com.

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