



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Competitors embrace changes to the Annapolis-to-Newport Race New starting format, informative seminars get ringing endorsement

ANNAPOLIS, MD (June 2, 2015) – About two years ago, organizers of the Annapolis-to-Newport Race made some bold decisions. Co-chairmen Dick Neville and Mark Myers recognized that even a popular and successful event needs to evolve and set about introducing some changes to make the 2015 Annapolis-to-Newport Race more user-friendly.

Perhaps the most notable change will be on display later this week when the 35th biennial Annapolis-to-Newport Race begins on Thursday and Friday. This year marks the debut of a new starting format that has the smaller boats starting on Thursday and the bigger boats starting on Friday. In the past, all the boats entered in the Annapolis-to-Newport Race started on Saturday.

“Our goal is to get the entire fleet finished in Newport by Tuesday afternoon and the best way to ensure that was to create a new starting format,” Neville said. “Giving the smaller, slower boats a 24-hour head start on the bigger, faster boats increases the chance they will all finish in closer proximity.”

Spectators are encouraged to come out on the Chesapeake Bay to watch the starts, which begin at 11 a.m. on Thursday and Friday. Starts will no longer be divided by class, but rather each fleet will start at the same time. In order to start approximately 40 boats at once, organizers will set a two-part line that employs three race committee boats. Annapolis Yacht Club race chairman George Anderson will be aboard the signal boat, which will be anchored in the middle of the starting box. On either end of the line, two mark boats will be positioned to help record any boats that are on-course-side.

“I think starting the smaller boats on Thursday is the greatest idea ever. That way, the whole fleet shows up in Newport at pretty much the same time,” said Sam Septembre, crew member aboard the Beneteau 373 Sea Patience. “A big part of doing a major race like this is the camaraderie and it’s fun for everyone to be in Newport together for a couple days.”

Contributing to the feeling of camaraderie and community among Annapolis-to-Newport Race participants is the fact Newport Yachting Center has been designated as race headquarters on the finishing end. Annapolis Yacht Club has booked a large number of slips at Newport Yachting Center and will maintain a welcome center for arrivals. A significant number of boats gladly

accepted the offer to berth at Newport Yachting Center and having the majority of boats in one location should provide a festive atmosphere.

“It makes a lot of sense to have all the boats at the same marina. It will be neat to walk up and down the docks swapping sea stories with sailors from other boats,” said Victor Plavner, skipper of Sea Patience. “I’ve spoken with the folks at Newport Yachting Center several times already and they have been very accommodating.”

The Annapolis-to-Newport Race organizing committee made attracting first-time participants a priority for the 2015 edition and those efforts have paid off. Competitors in the two Performance Cruising classes are almost all first-time entrants while some in the Classic/Corinthian class are as well.

“We made a concerted effort to get first-timers into the race and we are very pleased with the response we received on that front,” Neville said. “We have two classes of boats that have never done this race before and there are other first-timers sprinkled in with some of the other classes.”

To assist first-time entrants, the Annapolis-to-Newport organizing committee conducted five seminars designed to provide information and expertise on a variety of topics. Roger Coney, crew member aboard the Tartan 37 Solstice, said seminars that covered provisioning, safety equipment, medical emergencies at sea and weather routing were very helpful.

“I thought the speakers were very knowledgeable and very succinct. They provided very specific information in an easy-to-understand manner. They pointed out some of the issues a crew can encounter during an offshore race and covered some of the solutions,” Coney said.

The Annapolis Yacht Club would like to extend a special thank you to all of the official Annapolis-to-Newport Race sponsors: The British Virgin Islands, Samuel Adams, Coral Reef Sailing Apparel, Switlik Survival Products, Gill and The Traveler Beer Company.

Also helping to make the 35th biennial Annapolis-to-Newport Race a success are VIP sponsors Annapolis Rigging, Beneteau, Fawcett Boat Supplies, Chelsea Clock, Iemon & line, North Sails, Mercedes Benz of Annapolis, Watermark Cruises, Weather Routing Inc., and New England Boatworks.

Annapolis-to-Newport Race organizers also appreciate the support of media sponsors Cruising World, Sailing World and SpinSheet Magazine.

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