



PRESS RELEASE

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Initial Annapolis-to-Newport Race seminar to be held during Boat Show

Renowned offshore sailor Michael Keyworth to serve as speaker

Annapolis, MD (August 18, 2016) — Michael Keyworth has logged more than 200,000 nautical miles as a boat captain. The Annapolis native has traversed all the world's oceans while racing, cruising or delivering sailboats and other vessels.

Keyworth has encountered just about every challenging situation that can arise on the open seas and always come home safely.

That's because Keyworth does not leave the dock without proper safety gear and repair equipment, begins the passage-making with a strategy and has a backup plan in case things don't go as anticipated.

"I make absolutely sure the boats I go sailing on are thoroughly prepared and the members of the crew are competent," Keyworth said.

Keyworth will share the immense knowledge he's amassed during four decades of offshore sailing at an Annapolis-to-Newport Race seminar being held on October 7. This will be the first of several seminars offered by host Annapolis Yacht Club in advance of the 2017 edition of the biennial race, which begins June 2-3 on the Chesapeake Bay.

Skippers and crews considering competing in the 36th edition of the Annapolis-to-Newport Race will not want to miss the seminar featuring Keyworth, who recently retired following a 28-year tenure as general manager and vice president of Brewer Cove Haven Marina in Barrington, Rhode Island.

Keyworth has held a United States Coast Guard 100-ton license since 1976 and spent a decade as captain of sailboats ranging from 70 to 85 feet. Keyworth enjoyed tremendous success as sailing master and crew boss aboard *Nirvana*, an 81-foot maxi sailboat owned by Marvin Green.

Under Keyworth's direction, *Nirvana* set elapsed time records for the Newport-to-Bermuda Race, South China Sea Race and Fastnet Race. During a remarkable period from 1982 through 1987, *Nirvana* won multiple major regattas in Maxi Class A and was first to finish in the Sydney-Hobart Race.

“Michael is one of the most accomplished, most experienced and most respected boat captains in the United States,” Wilbur Keyworth said of his younger brother. “He’s been around the world and has truly seen and done it all.”

Willy Keyworth, a longtime professional with North Sails, is a grizzled veteran of offshore sailboat racing himself. He has served as watch captain and crew boss aboard the maxi sled Donnybrook for multiple editions of the Annapolis-to-Newport Race. However, the elder Keyworth is admittedly awestruck by the ability and skill of his brother.

“We did the Marion-Bermuda Race together on one of my customer’s boats and ran into the remnants of Hurricane Bill at the edge of the Gulf Stream. It was blowing 45-50 knots and all sorts of stuff broke,” Willy said. “Michael troubleshoot and fixed everything. I’m not sure we would have finished the race without his expertise.”

Michael Keyworth received international recognition for designing a drogue system that allowed him to easily steer his Swan 44 without a rudder. His video titled “How to Steer a Drogue” has been viewed thousands of times and is considered must viewing for anyone going offshore.

Most major offshore races require that a boat’s crew must be aware of multiple methods of steering a vessel with the rudder disabled. Keyworth said crews should also know how to cut away a rig that has come down, repair a broken water maker and be capable of performing celestial navigation among other things. He has been a presenter for US Sailing Safety-at-Sea seminars for 15 years and an inspector for the Newport-Bermuda Race for roughly the same amount of time.

“There are certain tools an offshore racing team needs in its box in order to complete a race,” Keyworth said. “It’s incumbent on the skipper to know how to prepare his boat and to select a capable group of sailors for the crew.”

Keyworth’s presentation, which is being held on Friday (4-6 p.m.) during the U.S. Sailboat Show, is the first of a series of seminars designed to assist skippers planning to participate in the 70th anniversary Annapolis-to-Newport Race. Seminar 1 will be held in the Skipjack Lounge of AYC’s interim clubhouse, located at 12 Dock Street and adjacent to the Boat Show.

Willy Keyworth is coordinating the seminars and said future editions will address such topics as provisioning, electronics, navigation, weather routing, budgeting, sail inventory and rigging. Experts will conduct lectures on various themes, panel discussions will be held and printed materials will be distributed.

“We’re trying to provide sailors with all the information they could possibly need in order to do the Annapolis-to-Newport Race. By attending these seminars, skippers can make things a lot easier on themselves and their crews,” Willy Keyworth said. “Once they finish this adventure they will have the tools and knowledge to cruise to the Bahamas or cross the Atlantic Ocean. Our primary message is that ocean racing is not as threatening as people think, provided they are properly prepared.”

Future seminars for the 2017 Annapolis-to-Newport Race will be announced as topics, speakers and dates become available. Space is limited for the Keyworth presentation so interested sailors should reserve a spot by contacting the AYC Front Desk at 410-263-9279. For more information on next year’s A2N, contact Regatta Manager Linda Ambrose by emailing info@annapolisnewportrace.com.

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