



Rolex Big Boat Series

Farr 30 World Championship Helps Punctuate Action

San Francisco (September 7, 2011) – Some intriguing class battles promise to highlight this year’s Rolex Big Boat Series, which starts tomorrow and slates four full days of racing action on the San Francisco waterfront that is now home to the America’s Cup. Adding spice to what’s cooking for 81 entered teams is a class stocked with TP52s; one conceived especially for “fast forties”; another harboring no less than 21 fiercely competitive one-design teams and yet another devoted to determining a new world champion. (A total of eight classes—four for IRC and four for one-design--will be sailing.)

“This is the first time for all of us sailing in San Francisco,” said Jan Bruening, the bowman aboard his father’s German entrant, *Topas*, in the Farr 30 class, which is holding its 2011 World Championship concurrent with the Rolex Big Boat Series. “The thing we’ve enjoyed is, really, that every day there are stable winds.”

The *Topas* crew, which finished second in the Farr 30 European Championship earlier this year, just finished the Pre-Worlds here in third, while teams steered by American John Demourkas (*Groovederci*) and Canadian Andrew Hamilton (*Through*) finished first and second, respectively. Bruening says his team will be watching these two teams closely as well as fourth-place finisher Deneen Demourkas, wife of John and president of the Farr 30 class who skippers a second entry named *Groovederci*. “It was always close with us,” said Bruening, adding that *Barking Mad* (skipped by Jim Richardson, who is a three-time Farr 40 world champion and finished third in the recent Farr 30 North Americans) only sailed one race in the Pre-Worlds, but his reputation precedes him. “He is not an unknown—he is well prepared, we *know*.”

In IRC A class, five TP52s (Mayhem, PowerPlay, Rebel Yell, Rio and Vesper) will make for a good show against an R/P 45 (Criminal Mischief) and two larger boats—a turbo sled 78 (AKELA) and a Tanton 73 (Velos)—with similar ratings.

“We’ve raced against AKELA in the Transpac,” said *Velos* skipper Kjeld Hestehave (Temecula, Calif.), “but the TP52s are normally not in our class.” He explained that his boat is longer but his rig is not taller than a TP52’s. “We have the same sail area, but they are 25-30 percent of my weight. They will be really tough to beat, and I’ll be the only boat that won’t plane; we’ll be doing 12-15 knots downwind when they hit 20.”

Hestehave added that his team will “be in the mix” for the first half of the first beat and then the TP52s should pull away. “But the rating system should work; it’s non political, a number with no emotions attached to it,” said Hestehave.

The largest class here—the J/105s—have “dialed up their programs” for the Rolex Big Boat Series, said Stuart Johnstone (Newport, R.I.), who is on the defending boat *Arbitrage*, owned by Bruce Stone. “It’s always tough; the top six or so teams are extremely good and all capable of winning a North American championship. In fact, San Francisco teams are typically known to dominate this class’s North American championships.” Johnstone, whose family is responsible for manufacturing J boats all over the world, including the J/120, which is also competing in a one-design class here, says there are approximately 875 J/105s worldwide, and that 40-45 of those are in San Francisco. “With 21 entered, that’s a good number.”

Johnstone pointed out that in IRC C, there are four J/125s that are part of the “fast forties” sport boat contingent. “They are also specially geared up for this regatta, and they corroborated on their ratings (by using same sail selections, etc.) to stay close. There is only one boat (Andy Costello’s *Double Trouble*) that is local. They are gonna have a ball, since the race committee, I’m sure, will send them on courses that criss-cross all over the place.”

Johnstone said it was anyone’s guess how the new Farr 400 *Team Premier* will fare with Dee Smith (Annapolis, Md.) at the helm, and there are also two Farr 36s and an ID 35 thrown into the mix.

Seven of the RBBS’s eight classes are scheduled to sail seven races (two each day except Sunday, where one is scheduled), switching out morning and afternoon racing on “North” and “City” courses that traditionally give each class at least one colorful finish within shouting distance of the St. Francis Yacht Club, where members and press crowd the balconies for viewing. (The eighth class, for Farr 30s, is scheduled for eleven races and will stick to the North Course at all times.)

For more information and results, go to www.rolexbigboatseries.com, where nightly shows by T2p.tv will be aired by 9 p.m. (PDT). Also, join in facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Francis-Yacht-Club-Racing/106175099461351>

More about the Rolex Big Boat Series

From the glory days of SORC, IOR and IMS to today’s Grand Prix and One Design classes, the Rolex Big Boat Series has continued to be the West Coast’s premier regatta where the best-of-the-best from all corners of the continent and abroad meet for four days of challenging racing. The event annually attracts world-caliber sailors, all of whom are eager to win one of the six specially engraved Rolex timepieces given to winners of the St. Francis Yacht Club’s Perpetual Trophies.

The Rolex Big Boat Series is also be the focal point of a newly created four-regatta series for IRC 52s and 40s and is the second race of the series, which started with the Aldo Alessio Ocean Race (August 26-28). The following two events are the new West Coast Shootout (September 24-25) and the Great Pumpkin Regatta (October 29-30), which is considered a San Francisco classic.

About Rolex Watch U.S.A.

Since Rolex Watch U.S.A. first presented timepieces to America's Cup defenders in 1958, the company has consistently recognized and encouraged excellence in every important arena of competitive sailing, including elite athlete preparation, US SAILING championships, disabled sailing, and offshore, one-design and women's events.

The Rolex Big Boat Series joins other prestigious Rolex-sponsored events in 2011 including the Block Island Race Week presented by Rolex, New York Yacht Club Invitational Cup presented by Rolex, Rolex Miami OCR, Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, Rolex Fastnet Race, Rolex Farr 40 World Championship, Rolex International Women's Keelboat Championship, Rolex Osprey Cup and the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

About the St. Francis Yacht Club

The St. Francis Yacht Club was founded in 1927 and has been host to many of the most prestigious national and international championships in sailing. With over 40 regattas on its calendar annually, and as home to the West Coast's premier regatta, the Rolex Big Boat Series, the St. Francis Yacht Club is widely regarded as having the top racing program and race management in the country.

Event website: <http://www.rolexbigboatseries.com>

St. Francis Yacht Club website: www.stfyc.com

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