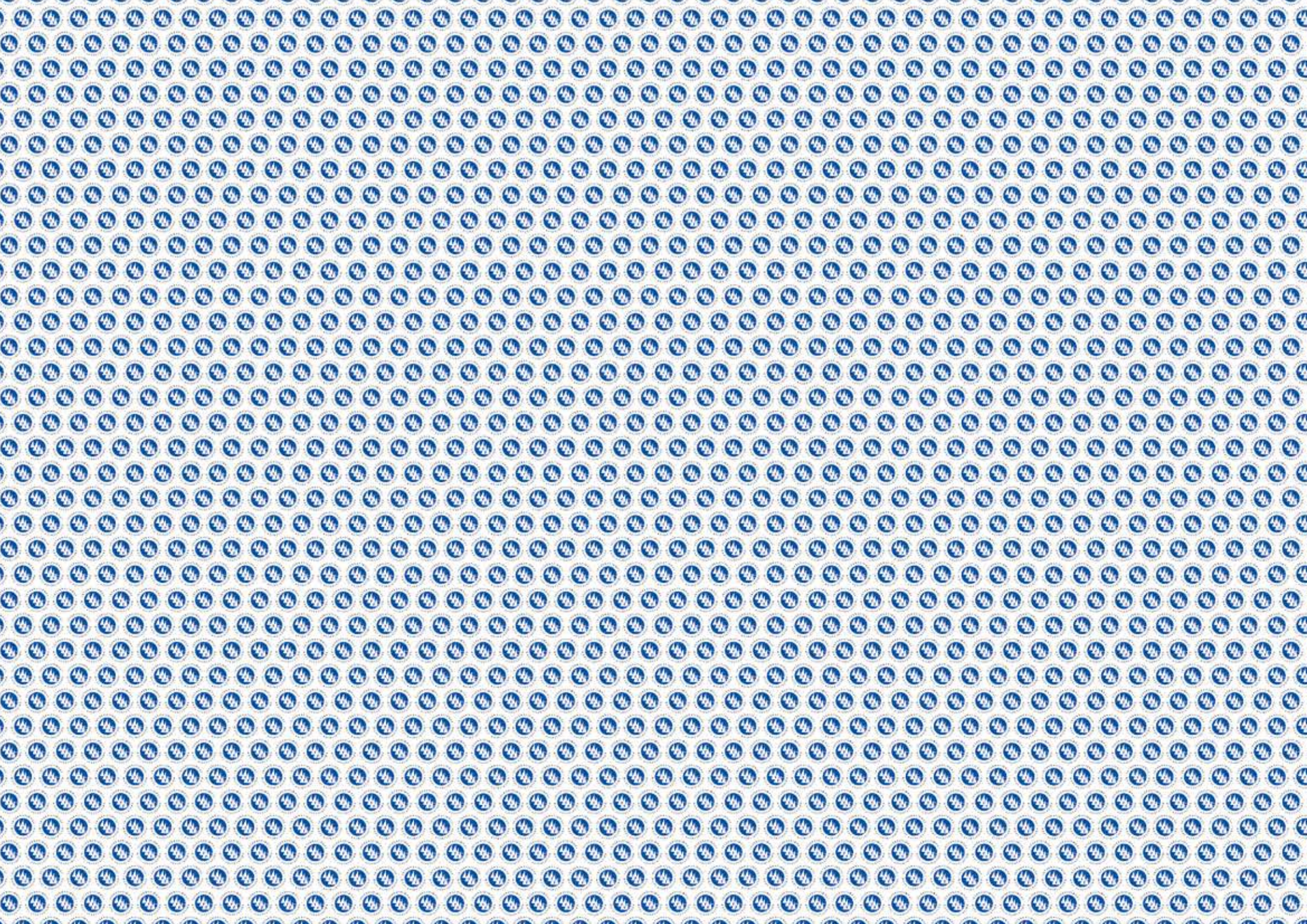
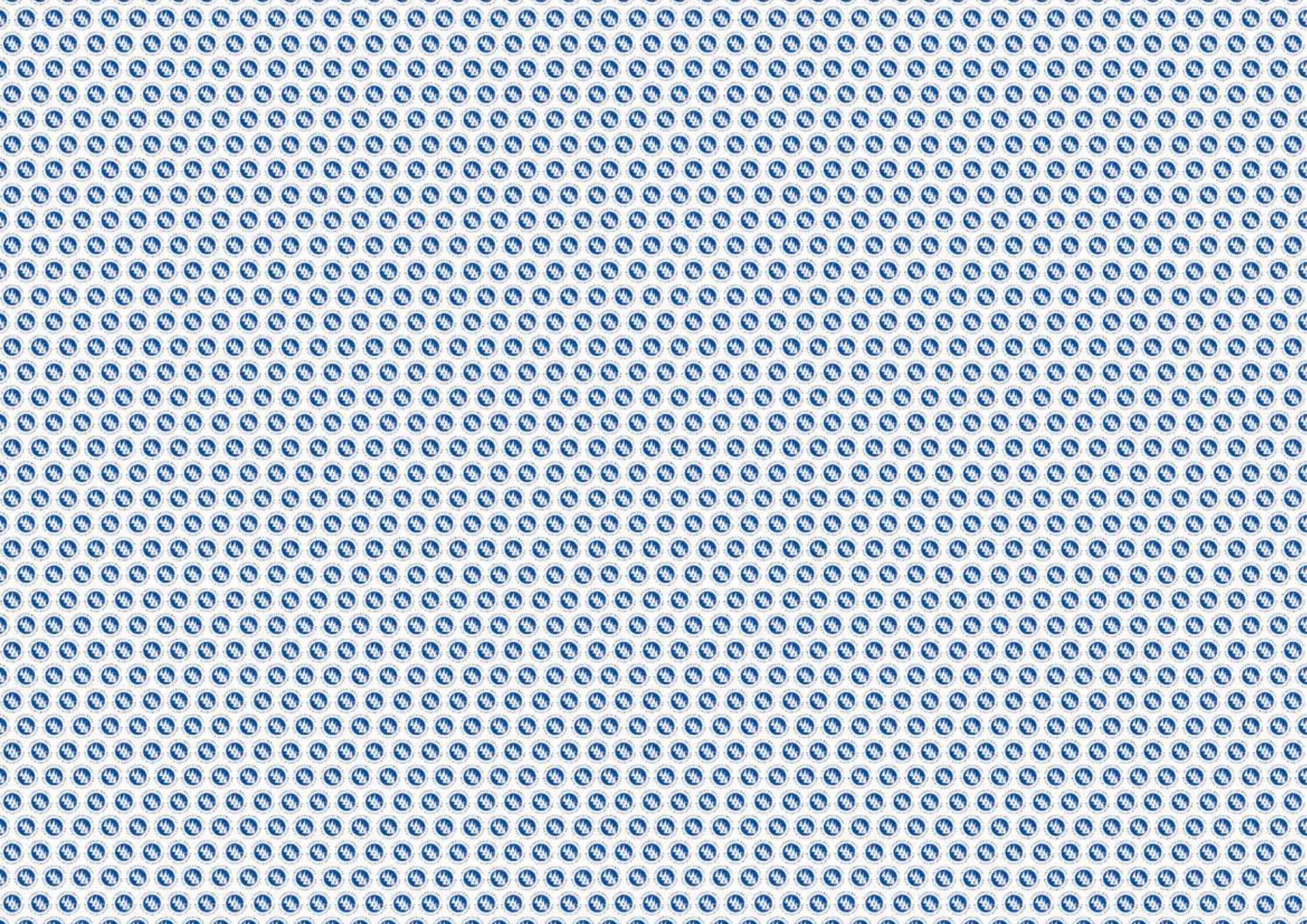


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WHAT ARE THEY?

At SailGP, the competitors are not pilots. Although they know a thing or two about taming gravity using just the power of the wind. They're not scientists, although they're quite familiar with the intricate mathematics of speed, the unforgiving physics of the elements, and the onboard chemistry that is the mark of all outstanding crews.

They're not pioneers, although they keep field-testing the finest instruments craftsmanship can provide and continue pushing the limits of an art that has taken 6,000 years to perfect. They're not dreamers, either. Except, maybe, for their profound belief that those who don't fall can fly. **Welcome to the SailGP global championship.**

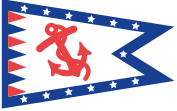
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FOUNDER MEMBERS

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John B. Kilroy

Baron Edmond de Rothschild

William Whitehouse-Vaux

IMA HONORARY MEMBERS



HONORARY MEMBERS

His Highness the Aga Khan

His Majesty Juan Carlos I of Spain

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Patrizio Bertelli

Peter Bowker

François Carn

George S. Coumantaros

Harold Cudmore

John B. Kilroy

William I. Koch

Robert Ian Oatley

*Sir Peter Ogden's Jethou and Lord Irvine Laidlaw's Highland Fling XI head out of the start at the IMA Maxi Europeans.
Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi*

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IMA OFFICERS

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Hap Fauth
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Roberto Lacorte
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Alberto Roemmers

George Lindemann

Claus-Peter Offen

Thomas Bscher



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Andrew McIrvine
Secretary General

Retired surgeon, Andrew McIrvine is a former Commodore and Admiral of the Royal Ocean Racing Club (RORC) as well as being a keen yachtsman. He was appointed Secretary General in September 2013. He is responsible for the development and administration of the Association. Based in London, he maintains contact with members, and represents the IMA to international bodies and event organisers.

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Maria Luisa Farris
Communications and PR

A trained journalist, Maria Luisa Farris is the longest serving staff member of the IMA. She is in charge of the Association's internal and external communications and PR, and social events. From her office in Sardinia she is responsible for media relations, updating the IMA website and assisting the Secretary General with the day-to-day activities of the Association.

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James Dadd
Association Technical Office

Former RORC Rating Office Director and VO65 Class Manager, James Dadd oversees the Association Technical Office (ATO). This reviews and approves all the IMA's rating certificates, recommending class splits, conducting measurement checks and liaising with the ORC and IRC rating offices. It also ensures compliance with IMA Class Rules and provides technical services to IMA event organisers.

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Monica Recchia
Race Secretariat

Monica Recchia comes from a race management and logistics background on professional yacht racing circuits, including the TP52s and America's Cup. Based in Ibiza, she joined the IMA in 2016. Her role is to maintain contact with members and skippers, working with the race organisers on rules and with the ATO on ratings, scoring and results.

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Rob Weiland
Association and Event Rules

Following a lengthy career overseeing race boat projects Rob Weiland moved across to class management, running the TP52 and then the Maxi 72 classes, also advising other IMA class associations on class and event rules. Rob's wealth of experience as sailor, boat captain, project manager, class manager and regatta organiser places him well to help create rules that serve all.

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Donatella Gianni
Accountancy and Administration

Based in Olbia, Donatella Gianni is the long-term financial administrator of the Association. She looks after the day-to-day administration and accounts of the IMA, as well as keeping track of and handling membership and entry fees.

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James Boyd
Media

During his 35+ years as a yachting journalist, James Boyd has been sailing correspondent for the Daily Telegraph newspaper, Assistant Editor of Yachting World magazine and owner/editor of the thedailysail.com website. He looks after press release writing and event reporting for the Association and is editor of its publications.

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Jack Murray
Social Media

Brought on in 2020, Jack is the Director of SBC Marketing Group and joins the IMA team to build the Association's social media presence, both in terms of following and engagement, and to help further publicise our news and event reporting online.

media@internationalmaxiassociation.com



2022-2023 IMA MEDITERRANEAN MAXI OFFSHORE CHALLENGE EVENTS

2022

22 October

Rolex Middle Sea Race

Valletta to Valletta, Malta, anticlockwise around Sicily via the Strait of Messina, Stromboli, Favignana, Pantelleria and Lampedusa

14 June

Rolex Giraglia (offshore)

Saint-Tropez, France to Genoa, Italy via Giraglia rock

7 July

Aegean 600

Sounio to Sounio, Greece, via Milos, Santorini caldera, Kassos, Rhodes, Kandeliousa, Kos, Farmakonisi, Agathonisi, Patmos and Mykonos

22 August

Palermo-Montecarlo

Palermo, Sicily to Montecarlo via YCCS gate off Porto Cervo

2023

29 April

La Larga

(offshore race of PalmaVela)
Palma to Palma via Dragonera, Ibiza, Formentera and Cabrera

12 May

Regata dei Tre Golfi

(part of the IMA Maxi Europeans and Tre Golfi Sailing Week)
Naples to Sorrento, Italy via Ponza, Li Galli and Capri

1 June

151 Miglia-Trofeo Cetilar

Livorno to Punta Ala, Italy via Marina di Pisa, Giraglia rock and Formiche di Grosseto

To be eligible for the annual MMOC trophy, yachts must compete in at least three of these events.



2023 IMA MEDITERRANEAN MAXI INSHORE CHALLENGE EVENTS

2023

3-7 May

PalmaVela

Palma, Mallorca

15-18 May

IMA Maxi European Championship

inshores (also part of the Tre Golfi Sailing Week) Sorrento, Italy

11-13 June

Rolex Giraglia inshores

Saint-Tropez, France

29 July-5 August

Copa del Rey MAPFRE

Palma, Mallorca

3-9 September

Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup

Porto Cervo, Sardinia

30 September-

6 October

Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez

Saint-Tropez, France

To be eligible for the annual MMIC trophy, yachts must compete in at least three of these events including the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, which will carry a higher scoring co-efficient.



2023/24 IMA CARIBBEAN MAXI CHALLENGE EVENTS

2023/2024

20 February 2023/
19 February 2024 **RORC Caribbean 600**
Antigua to Antigua via Barbuda,
St Kitts and Nevis, Saba,
St Barth, St Maarten, Tintamarre,
Guadeloupe, La Désirade
and Redonda

2-5 March 2023/
29 February -
3 March 2024 **St Maarten Heineken Regatta**
St Maarten

16-22 April 2023/
14-20 April 2024 **Les Voiles de St Barth**
Richard Mille
St Barth

**Open to all maxi yachts (not just IMA members), to
be eligible for the annual CMC trophy, yachts must
compete in at least two of these events.**

IMA AFFILIATED EVENTS

8 January **RORC-IMA Transatlantic Race**
29 April-5 May **Antigua Sailing Week**
22 July **50th Rolex Fastnet Race**
8 October **Barcolana**
14 October **Venice Hospitality Challenge**
26 December **Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race**

Lanzarote - Grenada
Antigua
Cowes, UK - Cherbourg, France
Trieste, Italy
Venice, Italy
Sydney - Hobart, Australia

OTHER MAXI EVENTS IN 2023

5 April **Rolex China Sea Race**
28 April **75th Newport-Ensenada**
9-11 June **NYYC Annual Regatta**
24 June-5 July **Trophée Bailli de Suffren**
1 July **Transpac**
2 July **Gotland Runt**
22 July **Chicago-Mackinac**
29 July **Noakes Sydney-Gold Coast Yacht Race**
19-26 August **Hamilton Island Race Week**
25 October **Hong Kong-Vietnam**
1-5 December **Australian Maxi Championship**
1 December **Cabbage Tree Island Race**
5 December **SOLAS Big Boat Challenge**

Hong Kong - Subic Bay, Philippines
Newport Beach, USA - Ensenada, Mexico
Newport, RI, USA
Saint-Tropez - Bonifacio - Trapani - Malta
Los Angeles - Hawaii, USA
Stockholm - Sandhamn, Sweden
Chicago - Mackinac, USA
Sydney - Main Beach, Gold Coast, Australia
Hamilton Island, Australia
Hong Kong - Nha Trang, Vietnam
Sydney, Australia
Sydney - Cabbage Tree Island - Sydney, Australia
Sydney, Australia

AND BEYOND

2024

7 January **RORC-IMA Transatlantic Race**
21 June **Newport Bermuda Race**
15 July **Pacific Cup**
27 July **RORC Baltic Sea Race**

Lanzarote - Grenada
Newport, RI, USA - Bermuda
San Francisco - Hawaii, USA
Helsinki - Helsinki, Finland

2025

TBC **Transatlantic Race**
TBC **RORC Centenary Rolex Fastnet Race**

Newport, RI, USA - UK



Dear members, partners and friends,
Welcome to our 2023 IMA Yearbook.

In 2022 it was a great relief to see the world in general, and in particular the sailing world, return to 'normal' after two difficult years due to the pandemic. Thanks to the efforts of all our yacht club partners, plus the commitment of our members and

other maxi owners, entry numbers at our events last year seemed to bounce back close to pre-pandemic levels.

Speaking personally, it was a delight to get out on the water and to sail with my team on *Wallyñõ* again. After two years without sailing, it took us a while to blow away the cobwebs, but thankfully not too long!

With every year that passes it is encouraging to see how our Association's relationships with our yacht club partners mature and develop. One of the IMA's principal roles is to improve the quality of racing for maxi owners across the board, as well as to represent the interests of maxi owners to yacht clubs and race organisers. This process is much easier thanks to the trust that has developed between the IMA's staff and the yacht clubs, which strengthens every year.

I have tried to advance this by introducing our annual Presidents' Forum, which we held last December for a second time at the Yacht Club de Monaco. At this, leading yacht club figures and race organisers, along with myself and our whole IMA team, swap ideas and discuss issues or concerns highlighted to us over the past season, from social to technical matters. As a group we aim not just to establish 'best practice' for events, but to try and make this uniform between events too.

In 2022, the Association extended its reach across the Atlantic with the first edition of its Caribbean Maxi Challenge. I raced in the RORC Caribbean 600, not on a maxi but with friends on a Class40, which was fun, if uncomfortable, on such a brutal

racing machine. I would urge anyone who has not competed in the RORC Caribbean 600 to do so – with a great course and conditions, the race is perfect for maxi yachts and takes place at an ideal time of year when Europe is still emerging from winter.

Two months later I returned for Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille, where it was a great honour to be one of the event ambassadors, as well as to represent the Association. I was lucky enough to spend a day racing aboard *Deep Blue* with Wendy Schmidt and her team; it was quite the experience to compete on board a state-of-the-art maxi. I picked the right day too as we won.

Overall, both the Association and our sport seem to be on the ascent. IMA membership continues to grow, showing our work is valued increasingly by maxi owners. It is also great news that several of our members have ambitious new yachts under construction.

As usual, I would like to thank the IMA's dedicated and highly skilled team, led by Secretary General Andrew McIrvine. It is the team's hard work that keeps the wheels of this Association running smoothly.

I would also like to thank, on behalf of the Association and our members, the long-term and continued support of our partner Rolex. Your contribution is greatly appreciated by us all.

I wish you all good luck for 2023 and look forward to seeing you on the water.

Benoît de Froidmont

*Benoît de Froidmont at the helm of his Wally 60 Wallyñõ.
Photos: IMA/Studio Borlenghi*





▲ IMA/Studio Borlenghi



▲ IMA/James Boyd



▲ IMA/Studio Borlenghi



▼ IMA/James Boyd

▲ IMA/James Boyd



▲ Martin Messmer/YCM



▼ IMA/James Boyd





2023 promises to be another successful season of maxi racing.

In 2022 our programme expanded to include our new Caribbean Maxi Series, but sadly this year, with so much global uncertainty, we anticipate less enthusiasm for travel across the Atlantic.

The Mediterranean however, looks much more reliable with, for example, the maxi entry for the earliest regatta, PalmaVela in Mallorca, looking stronger than it has been for many years. The addition of a preceding offshore race to the inshore series has no doubt added to the interest.

Our second edition of the IMA Maxi Europeans, held with the help of the CRVI in Naples, also starts with an offshore race, one of the Mediterranean

classics, the Regata dei Tre Golfi. The inshore component will then again be run from Sorrento. Already, entries in this are strong.

Our IMA team have been involved in assisting with the planning and evolution of all the regattas in our Maxi Mediterranean Inshore and Offshore series, and they will be on hand to assist at all these events, which continue to grow from strength to strength. Two years on from the pandemic and numbers attending maxi regattas are looking stronger, most notably the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup and Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez. Against this background we expect to see an encouraging growth of participation in maxi racing, as well as welcoming new boats and new members to the IMA.

Also new this year will be the implementation of class division of the maxis according to performance, rather than length. The rather unsuitable term 'Mini Maxi' will therefore disappear. The break points between classes will also remain constant throughout the season.

These changes were agreed at our AGM but, as not all maxi owners are members of the Association, it can be slow to get these changes understood more widely. What has helped enormously has been our annual Presidents' Forum in December, where we bring together our President and the commodores from all the yacht clubs with whom we work. Having the opportunity to share ideas, best practice, what has worked well and what has not, is immensely useful for all. Gradually we are gaining wider acceptance for some of our policies, such as our owner-driver rule and the rating allowance for reduced crew size.

Those of us who sail in different parts of the world are deeply aware that climate change is a reality. As you may notice reading the race review pages of this yearbook, regional weather patterns are less typical while extremes, with too little or too much wind, are increasingly common. The sailing world, despite these direct examples, has perhaps been slow to react in terms of reducing our environmental impact. We should be considering far more carefully the non-recyclable elements of our sport, while analysing our energy consumption on the water; for example, should we be constantly running diesel engines to power the onboard systems required to sail? I believe that we, as a very high-profile part of our sport, should be leading the change of attitudes and practices, and invite you all to consider how we can do this.

Our IMA team put in considerable work throughout the season and I thank them all for their continued enthusiasm and efforts which have seen the IMA grow in size and influence. I am also most grateful for the guidance and help freely given to us by the President and Officers of the Association. Our mutual passion for racing these beautiful yachts is what drives us all.

Finally, I must thank Rolex for their continuing generous support, without which we would never be able to achieve so much. It is remarkable to remember that just ten years ago our only real regatta involvement was with the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup in Porto Cervo – still our flagship regatta with the YCCS our closest partner. Today we hopefully have a positive influence over a much wider area.

I look forward to seeing you during the season.

Andrew McIrvine

WHAT IS THE INTERNATIONAL MAXI ASSOCIATION?

When titans of the IOR maxi racing world, including John Kilroy, Baron Edmond de Rothschild and Raul Gardini, gathered during Cowes Week in 1979 to found the International Class A Yacht Association (ICAYA, latterly the IMA), it would have been inconceivable, even to these prescient businessmen, that maxi races might one day have fifty boats on their start line.

Maxi racing was on the ascent through the 1970s, partly thanks to the advent of the IOR rule. Under this, the largest yachts could have a 'rated length' of

60-70ft and would compete in the IOR's 'Class A' (although in reality the biggest were 80+ft long). The most competitive owners naturally erred towards Class A's maximum limit, hence their nickname 'maxi', a term which has stuck to this day.

While a few owners, such as Americans Huey Long with his *Ondine* maxis and Jim Kilroy with his *Kialoas*, had been racing since the late 1950s, the new IOR attracted more maxis to be built during the 1970s. These included Robert Johnson's *Windward*

Passage, conductor Herbert von Karajan's *Helisara*, Dr Enrico Recchi's *Benbow*, Bob Bell's *Condor of Bermuda*, William Whitehouse-Vaux's *Mistress Quickly* and Raul Gardini's *Il Moro di Venezia* maxis.

By the late 1970s the IOR Class A fleet was gaining critical mass and the main players felt that establishing an association could improve maxi racing in multiple ways. As a result By-Laws were written for the ICAYA which have remained largely unchanged more than four decades.



High octane Maxi class competition off the Costa Smeralda.
Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi

The Association's purpose was to encourage maxi yachting under both its own Class Rules and those of sailing's governing body, the IYRU (known today as World Sailing). Maxi events would be organised between the Association and 'recognised' yacht clubs.

The Association would also represent the interests of maxi owners to yacht clubs and maxi race organisers, to official organisations handling ratings, rules and safety matters and sailing's governing bodies both at national and at international levels. It

would also oversee measurement and handicap rules for the maxis and develop appropriate regulations for maxi events. Lastly the Association was there to promote social activities between its members, a rule with which many crews sought to comply, occasionally 'in extremis'.

In practice the ICAYA also provided a forum for maxi owners to agree their future race calendar, mixing participation at multi-class regattas with their own exclusive, maxi-only events, while avoiding

conflict with established races such as the Fastnet, Newport-Bermuda and Sydney-Hobart. Another rule central to the Association's psyche, which remains today, makes it mandatory for owners to drive their boats, even if their crew are often otherwise entirely professional.

While for the first two years of the ICAYA's existence its Secretary General was the Yacht Club de France's François Carn, in 1981 the most influential figure in the Association's history would take charge. Retired





◀ George S. Coumantaros' Boomerang.

▲ Maxi One Design racing in the 1990s.

▲ Sayonara's Larry Ellison.



▲ Ondine VII, Il Moro di Venezia III and Matador at the 1988 Kenwood Cup series.

▲ One of the first Luca Bassani Wallys - the 77ft Genie of the Lamp, launched in 1995.

▼ Il Moro di Venezia's Raul Gardini.

▼ Syd Fischer's Frers-designed Ragamuffin (ex Bumblebee IV) in the Sydney Hobart Race.



WHAT IS THE INTERNATIONAL MAXI ASSOCIATION?

Italian Navy Admiral Gianfranco Alberini was at the time Secretary General of the Yacht Club Costa Smeralda in Porto Cervo (and latterly its Commodore) and was therefore already known to many of the maxi owners who had raced out of His Highness the Aga Khan's magnificent Yacht Club Costa Smeralda, founded in 1976. During the ICAYA's first season in 1980 a Maxi World Cup event was also held out of the club.

The union between the fledgling ICAYA and the Aga Khan's exceptional set-up - the club, the brand-new Porto Cervo Marina and the breathtaking race area around La Maddalena Archipelago - was one made in heaven. Along with His Majesty King Juan Carlos of Spain, His Highness the Aga Khan was also an honorary member of the Association. Porto Cervo's position with the maxi owners was further galvanised as the YCCS began regularly hosting maxi events: In the late 1980s, the Maxi Yacht World Cup was rechristened the Maxi Yacht World Championship (even today the event is still referred to as the 'Maxi Worlds'). Due to this and Commandant Alberini's position, Porto Cervo and the YCCS became the official headquarters of the ICAYA.

The ICAYA's involvement with Rolex began in the 1990s when the Swiss timepiece manufacturer initially offered a trophy for the YCCS's maxi event. They subsequently secured naming rights, rechristening it the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup. The event became an annual, rather than biennial, fixture in 2000, anchored to its regular slot in the first week of September, where it remains today.

After the demise of the IOR, during the 1990s and 2000s the maxi class raced under the IMS with

several specialist maxis designed and built to its 'level rating' ILC Maxi rules. Over this period several new influential owners joined the fleet including Jim Dolan with *Sagamore*, Alberto Roemmers' *Alexia*, Hasso Plattner's *Morning Glory*, Riccardo Bonadeo's *Rose Selavy*, Vittorio Moretti's *Viriella*, Harry Macklowe's *Unfurled* and future America's Cup winner Larry Ellison with *Sayonara*.

In 2001 the ICAYA was rechristened the International Maxi Association, an acknowledgment of IOR and Class A's demise.

The IRC rating system was eventually adopted by the IMA in 2008, with the minimum length limit for a maxi set at 60ft. Operated by the Royal Ocean Racing Club and the L'Union Nationale pour la Course au Large, technically any monohull can be rated under IRC, but it is a 'secret' rule so the maths behind it is not publicly available. The aim of this is to minimise boats becoming type-formed, putting off overzealous yacht designers whose bread and butter is trying to exploit loopholes in published rules. In reality, while secret and continually upgraded, most yacht designers have enough experience of IRC to understand what it 'likes' and 'doesn't like'.

The Association enjoyed two major milestones in the early 2010s. In 2010 World Sailing formally recognised the IMA as an International Class, thus legitimising its remit to look after maxi yacht racing internationally. Significantly the arrangement also permits the IMA to hold two World Championships annually. To date these have been held for Mini Maxis and Maxi 72s, as part of the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, while under this arrangement the J Class also held its first World Championship, jointly organised between

the J Class Association, the IMA and the New York Yacht Club and held in Newport, RI in 2017.

In 2013, shortly before Gianfranco Alberini's untimely death, former Royal Ocean Racing Club Commodore and Admiral Andrew McLrvine took over as IMA Secretary General.

Under Andrew McLrvine, the IMA has expanded rapidly. Prior to 2012 the IMA's only direct involvement with events was via the YCCS as co-organiser of the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup and Volcano Race (now no more). Since then the IMA has nurtured its relations with other yacht clubs and organisations holding maxi events. This has helped the IMA to introduce three race series aimed at encouraging more maxi owners out onto the race course. The first two - the Mediterranean Maxi Offshore Challenge (MMOC) and its inshore equivalent (MMIC) - grouped together the area's top maxi events into annual championships, as does the third and most recent, the Caribbean Maxi Challenge, introduced in 2022. The winner of each is awarded a prestigious silver perpetual trophy. In addition, the Association presents a 'Yacht of the Year' trophy.

These relations have also helped the IMA to achieve one of its primary responsibilities – improving the quality of racing for its members. To do this, the Association works closely with yacht clubs and regatta organisers over issues including race documentation and the technical aspects of race management. The IMA employs specialist staff to support maxi racing at events worldwide, even providing expert race officials for some events. The ultimate aim is that if an event appears on the IMA

WHAT IS THE INTERNATIONAL MAXI ASSOCIATION?



Above: Wendy Schmidt's Deep Blue starting to weather of the fleet.
Right: Moored up in Porto Cervo at the 2022 Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup.
Photos: IMA/Studio Borlenghi

calendar, maxi owners can be assured it will be held to a minimum standard.

Without doubt the hardest jobs within the IMA are often those of the Association Technical Office (ATO), currently run by former Director of the RORC Rating Office James Dadd. The IMA is a recognised member of the IRC Congress and is also a Rule Authority for ORC, enabling it to administer the ORCi Rule. The ATO works with the IRC and ORC rating offices to ensure the fairness of maxi racing and to improve measurement and safety checks at events.

Typically the ATO works with the IMA Secretary General on one of the most sensitive areas of maxi racing - class splits. This constantly evolves: In an attempt to improve, recent seasons have seen class names changed, removing hard to define, subjective terms such as 'Racer', 'Racer-Cruiser', 'Cruiser-Racer' etc. For some while the IMA's fundamental definitions of maxi have been: Mini Maxi 60-80ft (18.29-24.08m), Maxi 80-100ft (24.09-30.50m) and Super Maxi 100+ft (30.51+m). From 2023, the Mini Maxi class will become part of the Maxi class and class splits will be determined by IRC rating number (TCC) alone. This will result in yachts of similar performance racing against one another, creating the closest competition.

Another aim is to create 'standard' practice, so that class splits are repeatable between events. Here, as elsewhere, for the IMA to take such steps forward it is, in practice, reliant upon as the ability and willingness of its yacht club partners to move in tandem. To improve the likelihood of this, IMA President Benoît de Froidmont instigated an annual meeting where such matters get discussed: The







Presidents' Forum was held for the first time in December 2021 at the Yacht Club de Monaco and was well attended by Presidents and top management from most of the major yacht clubs that run maxi racing.

The work of the ATO is made no easier by the maxi fleet constantly evolving. Global recessions typically result in fewer new boats being built, while in boom times there are more. Changing between rating rules strongly affects design. The end result is a fleet far larger and more diverse than it has ever been.

*NorthStar chases Jethou at the 2022 IMA Maxi Europeans.
Photo: IMA/James Boyd*

Today, maxi yachts span the full range between grand prix racers and cruisers. The former are fully built in carbon fibre, including masts, sails and rigging, all with the same precision as a Formula 1 car. All are optimised for their intended race programme: inshore, offshore, oceanic - any or all. Among this group there are at present some especially competitive sizes, notably 100ft (partly due to this traditionally being the maximum size limit for events like the Rolex Sydney Hobart) and the racer group that evolved out of the Mini Maxi class – the Maxi 72s, which all still race, but have evolved beyond their original box rule, with several having been lengthened and keels deepened.

Cruiser-racer or racer-cruiser maxis come in all flavours of comfort v performance. This has been the biggest growth area in the fleet in recent decades, especially in the smaller sizes, largely thanks to production and semi-production builders such as Vismara, Mylius, CNB, Grand Soleil, and Southern Wind. Special mention must be made of Nautor Swan. The Italian-owned Finnish builder has been building maxis since even before the IMA was founded, with their famous Swan 65 to today's ClubSwan 80 and 125 racers, plus numerous others from their extensive range. So too Wally Yachts - since the 1990s Luca Bassani and Wally have revolutionised maxi racer-cruising, combining state-of-the-art race boat technology and performance with ease of handling and pure Italian style. Today they are still producing groundbreaking new creations.

There is also a huge size range between maxi yachts. While giant racing machines were around in the 19th century, never have there been more than

today. Size had previously been limited by whatever is the maximum size of yacht to which 'off the shelf' hardware could be fitted. Once upon a time this was 100ft; today it is closer to 125ft. While these superyachts typically compete in their own events to their own rules, Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup still caters for some of the world's largest yachts such as the 66.9m long all-carbon fibre ketch *Hetairos*.

There is also a massive span of ages across the maxi fleet, some, surprisingly, still very competitive under IRC: from the 100-year-old J Class, to the 50-year-old Swan 65s and Alessandro Del Bono's 25-year-old ILC Maxi *Capricorno*, winner of the IMA's 2022 Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge.

The IMA even caters for the extreme: Racing for the first time in 2022 was the IRC's highest-rated yacht of all time – Roberto Lacorte's 60ft *FlyingNikka*, the first fully foiling maxi. In the pipeline is inviting privately-owned multihulls to join.

Today the IMA remains one of the world's most exclusive yacht owners' clubs. Typically it has 50-60 members, mostly in Europe but otherwise spanning the globe. Only owners or long-term charterers of all types of maxi yachts, ie of 60+ft (18.29+m) LOA, can become members. New members must be proposed and seconded before their application to the Association can be approved by the membership.

The IMA hosts social functions at many of its events, the highlight being the annual IMA Members' Dinner held at the YCCS during the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup. This doubles as a prize-giving, where the IMA Yacht of the Year's owner and the winner of the IMA Mediterranean Maxi Offshore Challenge are



presented with their trophies. There have been other highly memorable parties, notably in Saint-Tropez and on the terrace of the magnificent Hotel Caesar Augustus in Capri.

The IMA's structure is based around a committee comprising several Vice Presidents, each representing different sections of the maxi fleet, headed by a President, currently Benoît de Froidmont, owner of the silver Wally 60 *Wallyñõ*. Day-to-day running of the IMA is left to the Secretary General and his team.

The Association relies on its membership fees as well as generous support from its long-term sponsor Rolex, whose backing is provided 'to improve the quality of maxi yacht racing internationally.'

The pinnacle event in the IMA calendar remains the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, which typically attracts the strongest and largest fleet during the season, the record pre-pandemic being 53. However, the Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez's ever popular maxi yacht competition in early October, Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, attracts a similar number, despite some radical changes of format.

Most strongly in the ascent is the IMA Maxi European Championship, which was successfully run by the IMA in conjunction with the Circolo del Remo e della Vela Italia out of Sorrento, Italy for the first time in 2022.

While the largest fleet of maxi yachts race in the western Mediterranean, today maxis and IMA members compete all over the world, including Australia, Hong Kong, the US West and East Coasts, the Caribbean and the Baltic.



Top left: IMA cocktail party on the Grand Hotel Excelsior Vittoria terrace at the 2022 IMA Maxi Europeans in Sorrento.

Top right: Secretary General Andrew McIrvine presents Galateia owner David M. Leuschen with an IMA trophy. Photos: IMA/Studio Borlenghi

Below: IMA AGM with the staff and Sir Peter Ogden, Sir Lindsay Owen-Jones, Claus-Peter Offen, Hap Fauth and George Andreadis.

Photo: IMA/James Boyd

THE PRESIDENTS' FORUM 2022

For a second year, presidents and other top representatives of the yacht clubs and race organisers with whom the IMA regularly work, were invited by our President Benoît de Froidmont to the prestigious clubhouse of the Yacht Club de Monaco to attend the IMA Presidents' Forum in early December.

The IMA is tasked by the sport's governing body World Sailing to oversee maxi racing globally and, following this remit, the Forum aims to discuss, develop and establish both 'best practice' and 'common practice' between the Association's yacht club partners.

The intention is that the organisers of maxi events learn from each other, taking into account feedback from the maxi owners which is channelled back to them via the IMA. This is then compiled into a proposed charter, which race organisers are

encouraged to implement. The aim is for maxi owners to be able to sign up to events which, if they have been 'IMA' endorsed in this way, means they can rest assured it will be held to certain minimum standards.

Many presentations were made following an introduction from President Benoît de Froidmont and a summary of the season by Secretary General Andrew McIrvine.

One of the main issues affecting race organisers is the schedule, simply fixing dates. The model is the Caribbean Sailing Association which has dates for all its Caribbean events scheduled five years in advance. Despite its schedule being several times busier, it is hoped that race organisers in the Mediterranean will emulate this, not just to avoid clashes between maxi events but also with other

circuits involving professional sailors such as the 52 Super Series, 44Cup, J Class, etc. Special events must also be taken into account, with, for example, 2024 set to be highly disrupted with both the Paris Olympic Games over 26 July-11 August and the America's Cup in Barcelona from August to October.

James Dadd, the Association's Technical Officer, explained the intricacies of running events under IRC, including the welcome development of teams being able to race with reduced crew (and reflected in their IRC TCC). The IMA intends to use ORCmh for multihulls and will continue to use ORCsy for the Super Maxi class. He also spoke about the importance of the ATO and race organisers being vigilant with boat inspections with regard to checking safety equipment and rule observance.

A key feature of IMA racing is the requirement of most classes within it to race with their owners steering, however there are numerous complexities to this. Andrew McIrvine explained how, over the years, the IMA owner-driver rule has evolved and been refined. He also updated the Forum on how the IMA intends to split fleets in the future, removing the term 'Mini Maxi', instead basing it upon performance, not length (ie purely on IRC TCC).

James Boyd unveiled the latest on how the IMA is introducing new catamaran and trimaran multihull classes and how in the future these might integrate with foilers. Meanwhile Monica Recchia shared with the Forum her role looking after team and member logistics, and the regular issues they present her with.

The President's Forum concluded with lunch at the YCM's Aquarama Bar overlooking Monaco's harbour.



Yacht Club de Monaco Secretary General Bernard d'Alessandri addresses the IMA Presidents' Forum.
Photos: Martin Messmer/YCM



Participants at the 2022 IMA Presidents' Forum. From left to right: Stuart Childerley (PRO Maxi Europeans; Secretary, J Class), Achille D'Avanzo, (President, YC Capri), Hugo Ramon (RCNP), Pierre Roinson (President, SNST), George Procopiou (Commodore, YC Greece), Philippe Héral (President, YC de France), Fanny Brouchoud (YC de Monaco), Alessandro Mulas (VP, SVBG/Barcolana), Philippe Serenon (President prop IRC, UNCL), James Neville (Commodore, RORC), Agostino Randazzo (CVS), Maria Luisa Farris (IMA), Benoît de Froidmont (President, IMA), Bernard D'Alessandri, (Secretary General, YCM), James Boyd (IMA), Monica Recchia (IMA), Jean Dufour (VP, YCI), Andrew McIrvine (Secretary General, IMA), Gerolamo Bianchi (President, YCI), Roberto Lacorte (President, YCRMP/151 Miglia), Ioannis Maragkoudakis (Commodore, HORC/Aegean 600), James Dadd (ATO, IMA).



Photos: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi



In maxi racing there are many successful campaigns run by families, who get to enjoy the team aspect of racing as a bonding experience. There are also examples where this family pastime spans many decades, even generations. Of this type of sailing dynasty, one of the most significant in Italy is that of the Del Bonos and their numerous *Capricorno* yachts.

Rinaldo Del Bono became renowned in business circles for the pharmaceuticals company Mediolanum he established in 1972; today headquartered in Milan and run by his son Alessandro, with interests in a dozen companies internationally. But over the last five decades the Del Bonos have also earned their place in Italian sailing history books.

Rinaldo began racing Quarter and Half Tonners in the 1970s and during the 1980s progressed into the bigger IOR classes. The first of his boats to bear the now famous *Capricorno* name was a Dubois One Tonner, launched in 1985, which was also successful, winning them the Mediterranean championship two years in a row, and the Giraglia Race overall in 1986. It was followed by a Vallicelli Two Tonner in 1989, on which Paul Cayard was occasional helmsman.

The *Capricorno* name began to get international recognition in 1991 when Rinaldo had a Briand design built, which he would campaign for three seasons on the highly competitive IOR50 circuit (the 52 Super Series of the day).

The *Capricorno* IOR50's first season was one of highs and lows. At her first regatta in Key West a monumental collision, coming into a top mark rounding, caused the first 4ft of her bow to open up like a shark's mouth. She returned to her builders, Goetz, to be fixed hurriedly, as that summer she had been recruited to be the 'big boat' within France's Corum Sailing Team competing in the Admiral's Cup. Rechristened *Corum Saphir* and with Rinaldo on board, she played a vital role in the team, culminating in France's one and only victory in the Royal Ocean Racing Club's event, which at this time was one of the pinnacles of yacht racing, with the Fastnet Race as its centrepiece.

During the 1990s, Rinaldo's son Alessandro began to take an active involvement in *Capricorno*'s campaigns. The IOR50 circuit died with the demise of IOR and was replaced by the IMS and ILC box rule classes. The next *Capricorno* in 1994 was a

Left: *Capricorno* - still a winning machine after 25 years. Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi

Above: Three generations of Del Bonos - Alessandro left with his father Rinaldo senior and son Rinaldo junior.

Photos: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi



ALESSANDRO DEL BONO - CAPRICORNO PROFILE

Ceccarelli-designed ILC40, followed by a Farr-designed ILC46 the following year. In 1995 the Del Bonos joined the Italian team for the Champagne Mumm Admiral's Cup. Up until then Italy had mounted a series of highly competitive campaigns, spearheaded by Pasquale Landolfi's *Brava Q8*, but none were successful. On this occasion, Landolfi's latest *Brava Q8* was an ILC40, joined by the Mumm 36 *Mumm a'Mia*, while the Del Bonos' ILC46 filled the big boat slot.

Along with Rinaldo and his 30-year-old son, among *Capricorno's* crew were helmsman Flavio Favini, while their tactician was double Olympic medallist Rod Davis, at the time helmsman of the America's Cup challenger *oneAustralia*. Going into the final race, the Fastnet, the US team led, but as the boats arrived in Plymouth the results showed that Italy had at last done enough to win the famous gold trophy, the only time in the event's history they would do so. Closer to home, Del Bono's team followed this, again representing Italy, by winning the 1996 Sardinia Cup racing a chartered Corel 45.

During the late 1990s Rinaldo began cruising more aboard his Nauta 72 *Tropic of Capricorn*, leaving Alessandro to continue the family racing tradition. By this time Alessandro had fully caught the 'bug' and was first in Italy to buy a Mumm 30, *Capricorno Junior*, which he campaigned for three years. He also mounted his own Admiral's Cup team with Italy in 1999, aboard the Mumm 36 *Breeze*.

In 2003, the Del Bonos appeared to have graduated up, acquiring Hasso Plattner's first, and the most successful, of his three *Morning Glory* maxi yachts. Launched in 1995, this Reichel/Pugh-designed 78

was built by McConaghy in Australia, one of the first race boats to be built in prepreg carbon fibre. She was designed to the IMS rule as an ILC maxi, like many famous maxis of this period such as *Sagamore*, *Alexia*, *Boomerang* and Larry Ellison's three-time World Championship-winner *Sayonara*.

Under Plattner she had a formidable career, albeit breaking her mast with alarming frequency. Fresh 'out of the box' she won the Cape Town to Rio in 1996, breaking the course record. Later that year she won the Sydney-Hobart, shattering *Kialoa III's* 21-year-old race record with an all-star crew including both Russell Coutts and Torben Grael. Then in 1997 she won the Fastnet Race overall under IMS, before going on to win the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup.

Perhaps surprisingly, the Del Bonos didn't buy *Morning Glory* to race. Instead her purpose was to be for blue water cruising. Thus she was refitted and transformed from being a stripped-out racer into a fast cruiser, the work carried out at Indiana Yachting in Scarlino. Her mast and rigging were replaced with a revised, more modern sail plan, while systems, new engine and a generator were fitted.

Meanwhile, thanks to the work of Nauta Design, her spartan race boat interior was fully fitted-out as a modern, well-appointed cruising yacht, complete with an owner's suite and two guest cabins, crew accommodation and all modcons such as air conditioning. Conveniently, prior to this she had been carrying three tonnes of lead in her bilge which was removed, making for only a marginal net increase to her 26-tonne displacement after her transformation.

Left: Capricorno was both IMA Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge winner and IMA Yacht of the Year in 2022. ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi



In this configuration the Del Bonos competed in the 2006 Rolex Giraglia offshore race, albeit outgunned by the latest racing hardware, and then entered the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers, where they not only won line honours (against a Swan 100) but demolished the course record, setting a time which would stand for seven years.

After this *Capricorno* went on a massive, three-year, round the world family cruise that saw the Del Bonos and their faithful yacht visit Patagonia and pass Cape Horn 'the wrong way' westbound. They sailed up to the Galapagos, through Polynesia and the Pacific, all the way to Australia and Indonesia, although in Bali, with piracy scares in Malacca Strait and the Indian Ocean, it was decided to ship, rather than sail her home.

Returned to Italy, *Capricorno* was still used for cruising, but was replaced in 2015 when Rinaldo bought the 35.65m CNB *Hamilton II* from Charles Dunstone. Meanwhile the maxi remained laid-up until 2019, when Alessandro decided it was time to race her again. She was fully refitted and given a

Top left: Recruited by the French team, the Capricorno IOR 50 won the Admiral's Cup in 1991. Photo: Barry Pickthall/PPL
Above: The ILC46 was their second Admiral's Cup winner. Photo: PPL
Left: Rinaldo Del Bono bought the former Morning Glory not for racing, but for a three-year round the world cruise.

new suit of racing sails, with her rigging and hardware beefed up to take the resulting extra loads.

Unfortunately, the timing of her return to the race course was bad, falling within the middle of the pandemic, and while *Capricorno* was entered in the 2020 Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, the event sadly had to be cancelled at the last moment due to a recent COVID-19 outbreak. Then, when *Capricorno* did finally get to compete at Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, in a fleet that was highly depleted due to the

pandemic, she tore her mainsail shortly after the start of the first race.

It was only in 2021 that the Del Bonos and their maxi started to show a return to the form they had both shown, albeit independently, beforehand. The white and blue maxi immediately won the first event of the season, the Yacht Club Italiano's Regate di Primavera in Portofino. While her relatively narrow, cigar-shaped design perhaps looked dated, the boat was otherwise immaculate.

On receiving his trophy in Portofino, Alessandro Del Bono paid tribute to his crew, many of whom had been part of the family's winning Admiral's Cup effort more than 25 years previously, proud once again to be racing in the *Capricorno* colours. They included such luminaries of Italian and international sailing as Flavio Favini, Stefano Rizzi, Tiziano Nava, Matteo Plazzi and Oscar Tonoli, among others who had since gone on to greater things in the America's Cup and Volvo Ocean Race. His shore manager





Vittorio Volontè has been with him since the IOR50! The only downside of this is a slightly ancient crew. As Alessandro explained: “The average age on board is 55...and that includes my son who is 18.” And that was in 2021.

A significant reason for rejuvenating *Capricorno* was to show the ropes and share the moments with his own son, also called Rinaldo, as his father had done for him some 30 years beforehand. “I am so happy about that and I hope he continues the tradition of the family,” a clearly proud Alessandro acknowledged. “Now it’s his turn - he still has a lot of experiences ahead of him.”

Rinaldo (junior) was also relishing the experience. “I am starting to understand the boat better and getting to know the positions better,” he said after *Capricorno* finished fifth in the IRC 1 class in the Rolex Giraglia in 2021. “I am liking it a lot.”

Capricorno truly began to show her old form later in 2021 when, at the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, she comfortably won Mini Maxi 2, beating otherwise highly successful boats such as *Twin Soul B*, *Lorina 1895* and *Wallyño*. “The boat is very fast upwind with 15 knots and more,” explained Alessandro at the time. “She’s an old boat and is still fast downwind, but not as fast as the newer boats. We are really happy with the performance we get.”

Compared to modern day racing maxis, *Capricorno* is heavy. Even at launch she was 25 tonnes compared to the 10ft longer *Rambler 88* which is around 23. With 5.4m beam she is also narrow; shorter Maxi 72s, for example, are around 5.7. While *Capricorno* has always performed well in the light, for the 2022 season, in attempt fill in a few gaps in her performance - especially reaching, some weight was added to her bulb, increasing her

stability. Naturally enough, in 2022 the races were lighter than usual. As tactician Flavio Favini later observed: “We have done well overall and in the light stuff. We haven’t had so many chances to race in stronger breeze, so we don’t really know, but we have a good team and a good boat so we are happy.”

The *Capricorno* team kicked off their 2022 season competing in the inaugural IMA Maxi European Championship. In this they were a promising second to *NorthStar* on corrected time in the Regata dei Tre Golfi. Then, competing in Class 2 in the inshores for the Maxi Yacht Sorrento Trophy, they finished second to *Lyra* - the overall IMA Maxi European champion, but ended up fifth overall in the combined IMA Maxi Europeans scoring.

They went on to win their class in the inshores at the Rolex Giraglia, repeating this at the Maxi Yacht

Left: Capricorno's experienced, faithful crew. Several won the 1995 Admiral's Cup with the Del Bonos. Photo: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi
Above: In the 1990s, Alessandro raced with his father and then mounted his own Mumm 30 and Admiral's Cup campaigns.
Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi





Rolex Cup – a significant event, being the 25th anniversary of when their yacht, as *Morning Glory*, achieved this in Porto Cervo. They rounded off the season with another second place to *Lyra*, this time at Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, victory slipping through their fingers when they were called OCS on the penultimate day. Nonetheless they had done enough to claim the 2022 IMA Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge from *Magic Carpet Cubed*.

“I am really very happy about this,” said Alessandro. “This victory is a great reward for both the crew, most of whom have been with us for 25 years, and for my father and my son - we have three generations of the family on board.” Both Rinaldos - his father, now 83, and his son - raced regularly on board since *Capricorno* began competing again.

“I am so impressed with the performance of the boat – even in the light air. Without our OCS, we would have won Saint-Tropez,” said Alessandro. “A 27-year-old boat which goes so fast is amazing. She is a very ‘solid’ boat and has never had any structural problems. She is good upwind and downwind and only suffers a bit when reaching.

“But the crew is the first thing: They are fantastic and I really love them.”

As to the highlights of his 2022 season, Alessandro says: “I remember one episode during Rolex Giraglia. We had been stuck for more than two hours in no wind, sailing extremely slowly to Genoa under a boiling sun. It was all a bit depressing and it was incredibly hot. But at one point Stefano Rizzi began to tell some jokes and then all the others started pitching in too! This helped a lot.”



So where now for *Capricorno*? At present their beloved Reichel/Pugh 78 is up for sale, and, with such a superb pedigree, is unlikely to remain on the market for long. Alessandro says that in 2023 they won't race, but hope to make their grand return in 2024. “We are still working on the project and I cannot give any precise details, but in 2024 we will probably be there.” And with his faithful crew too: “They will be with us in the future.”

Watch this space.

Left: Preparing to hoist at the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup.

Right: Alessandro Del Bono with the IMA Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge trophy.

Photos: IMA/Studio Borlenghi



*Pier Luigi Loro Piana's brand new ClubSwan 80 My Song chases the 100-footers at the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup.
Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi*



2022 Season Round-up

For two seasons the IMA had been attempting to translate the success of the Mediterranean Maxi Offshore and Inshore Challenges to the Caribbean. Sadly, the global pandemic, with its lockdowns and travel restrictions, thwarted this, and it was only in 2022 that the first IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge (CMC) finally took place.

The Caribbean has long been a favourite with maxis. Back in the IOR heyday of the IMA, maxis raced in St Thomas, from Miami to Jamaica in the Pineapple Cup and in the Caribbean's famous race weeks. Since 2009, maxi participation in the Caribbean has enjoyed a renaissance, thanks largely to the RORC's Caribbean 600. This has proved a favourite with maxi owners, who frequently win not just line honours, but the race overall under IRC.

Unlike its Mediterranean counterparts, the CMC includes inshore and offshore events and is open to all maxi owners, not just IMA members. In 2022 it comprised the RORC Caribbean 600, St Maarten Heineken Regatta, Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille and Antigua Sailing Week.



The 2022 RORC Caribbean 600 was to be another exceptional event for maxis, comprising 18 of the 74 starters, plus five 60+ft multihulls. The race for line honours was another clash of the titans: the giant ClubSwan 125 *Skorpios* versus the VPLP-Verdier 100 *Comanche*, a shorter, more optimised, thoroughbred racer. By coincidence, both were skippered by Tornado Olympic medallists – Spain's Fernando Echavarri on *Skorpios* and Australian Mitch Booth on *Comanche*.

Comanche was on a roll, having scored 'the triple' (line honours, IRC overall and race record) first in the Rolex Middle Sea Race and then the RORC-IMA Transatlantic Race, claiming the IMA Trophy for line honours. *Skorpios* was delivered straight to Antigua following a brief refit, including work on her keel and rudders.

Prior to the start Echavarri was looking forward to a heavyweight bout in typical northeasterly 12-17 knot trade winds: "I think in 14+ knots *Comanche* is faster, more so in 20+. If it is 12-16 it will be a big, super-interesting battle. VMG upwind I think we are very similar. They have very efficient foils. Downwind VMG in up to 16 knots we should be a bit faster and a bit lower, but not much. In less than 10 knots we will be faster." Lining up with them was the Farr 100 *Leopard 3*, the 2009/2013 line honours winner.

They were followed by six VO70s and three VO65s. Some of the VO70s are now out of class, notably the VO70 *L4 Trifork* (ex-*Ericsson 4*), skippered by Dane Jens Dolmer and with a crew including Volvo Ocean Race legend Bouwe Bekking. She has been fully turboed with an extra set of lateral foils (originally from an Emirates Team New Zealand

foiling catamaran) to provide lift to leeward in addition to her original vertical boards. This gives her a top speed of 45 knots, but also a 70 point IRC TCC hike.

Among other maxis racing in IRC Super Zero was the Mills 68 *Prospector* (ex-*Alegre*). Lower-rated maxis included the Swan 60 *Lee Overlay Partners II* and Jean-Pierre Dreau's Mylius 60 *Lady First III*, among whose crew were French Figaro aces Christopher Pratt and Xavier Macaire.

Despite having different foil configurations, the trio of former MOD70s had an exceptional race with numerous lead changes. Approaching Redonda, Giovanni Soldini's *Maserati* was three miles ahead but snagged a buoy, allowing American Jason Carroll's *Argo* to close to half a mile. An intense tacking duel ensued and, just 20 minutes from the line, *Argo* edged ahead to claim line honours by just two minutes 13 seconds, the Italians winning overall under MOCRA handicap.

"I am sorry for *Maserati* because they sailed a great race," said Carroll. "Before the awesome finish, the closest match racing we had was in the lee of Nevis and St Kitts. We traded the lead, two-sail reaching, doing 35 knots! At that pace, everything happens so fast, you have to plan in advance, but it is exciting for sure."

Argo set a new multihull race record of 29 hours 38 minutes 44 seconds. Peter Cunningham's *PowerPlay* was third to finish. The first monohulls home crossed the line in the early hours the following morning.

To the gasps of spectators gathered up on Shirley Heights, *Comanche* had got off to a blazing start. On her first tack, she bravely crossed ahead of her larger

Left: Jason Carroll's *Argo* en route to setting a new RORC Caribbean 600 race record.

Right: Brave. *Comanche* port tacks *Skorpios* out of the start.

Photos: RORC/Tim Wright/photoaction.com



rival on port, only for *Skorpios* to edge forward upon their next meeting. For the rest of the race *Skorpios* remained ahead, although *Comanche* repeatedly came back into her. It was only once around St Maarten that the larger maxi pulled four miles ahead en route to the meteorological minefield of Guadeloupe's lee. Here *Skorpios* faltered offshore as *Comanche* headed inshore, *Skorpios* covering to regain her lost ground. The 'elastic' between them then expanded to 10 miles before the last leg into the finish where *Comanche* again made gains.

At the finish *Skorpios* was 5.5 miles (or 42 minutes 27 seconds) ahead, but her time of 1 day 16 hours 39 minutes 51 seconds left *Rambler 88's* monohull race record from 2018, of 1 day 13 hours 41 minutes 45 seconds, intact.

Comanche was the clear IRC Super Zero winner. "We were very pleased with the way the boat performed and how the guys pushed really hard the whole way," observed Mitch Booth. "We squeezed everything we could out of it: Our manoeuvres were good, sail changes were good, the transition zone [off Guadeloupe] - Will [Oxley, navigator] did a great job as normal, picking the way through the dead spots. To stay within 10 miles for the whole race...we couldn't expect anything more."

The smaller boat benefitted from better manoeuvrability on the winding course through the islands during which Booth reckoned they made 37 sail changes. Navigator Will Oxley said they had been prepared to cut corners more readily, *Comanche* 'only' drawing 6.8m compared to *Skorpios*' 7.4m.

In IRC Overall, *Comanche* finished second to the IRC 52 *Warrior Won*, with *Groovederci* Racing-Sailing

Poland fourth, winning the unofficial VOR boat battle. *Groovederci* had been chartered by Deneen Demourkas, a well known three-time Farr 30 World Champion, and was racing with several A-listers on board, including Marc Lagesse and Taylor Canfield.

For Demourkas, racing the RORC Caribbean 600 on a VO65 was on her bucket list. "I tried for years to get sponsorship for the Volvo Ocean Race, but it never happened. So this was my Volvo Ocean Race!" Unfortunately, on the first day she slipped, injuring her ribs, but "it was fine. I enjoyed it and the routine. We got into our watch system and it was great."



Deneen Demourkas' *Groovederci* Racing-Sailing *Poland* was second overall in IRC Super Zero.
Photo: RORC/Tim Wright/photoaction.com

They did a fine job fending off the Polish National Foundation's VO70 *I Love Poland* after *L4 Trifork* retired with a broken spreader. *I Love Poland* had taken the lead among the former Volvo boats, even hanging onto *Leopard 3* until the bigger boat finally left them en route to St Barth. *Groovederci* finally wriggled ahead in the lee of Guadeloupe, finishing 21 minutes ahead of *I Love Poland*.

Leopard 3 may have been outpaced by the faster, newer, giant maxis, but she kept in contact under IRC until Redonda, when the wind gods stopped smiling on them. It was the first RORC Caribbean 600 for *Leopard 3's* owner: "It was an interesting race because we started with the expectation of not having a lot of wind, but we got into some big squalls around the islands. In the beginning we thought we were doing okay, but then the other boats behind at Guadeloupe caught us up very rapidly. We expected they would punch through much quicker, but they didn't."

The smaller maxis were less fortunate, finishing in dying breeze. *Lady First III* took an hour to cover the last four miles, but owner Jean-Pierre Dreau still enjoyed his first Caribbean 600: "Every moment was good, day and night. The arrival was interesting because it was exactly the same as when you arrive at the end of the Rolex Giraglia - with no wind at all. Here, I thought we would have more wind."

Secretary General Andrew McIrvine summarised the event: "This was an epic edition of the RORC Caribbean 600, a now classic offshore race. The maxi involvement increases year on year and we are grateful to the RORC to allow us to include their race in our new series."



▲ Jean-Pierre Dreau's Lady First III was racing with several French Figaro/IMOCA stars.

▼ The Farr 100 Leopard 3 approaches the imposing island of Redonda.



▲ RORC Commodore James Neville at the prize-giving with Skorprios skipper Fernando Echavari.

Photos: RORC/Tim Wright/photoaction.com



ST MAARTEN HEINEKEN REGATTA

After Antigua Sailing Week, St Maarten Heineken Regatta is one of the oldest of the Caribbean race weeks. It was first held in 1980, the famous Dutch brewery becoming its title sponsor three years later.

Famous for its strong social programme ashore and top racing out on the water, around the Franco-Dutch island's coast or between it and St Barth, St Maarten Heineken Regatta is already popular with maxi yachts and therefore a natural choice as the second event in the IMA's Caribbean Maxi Challenge.

Ten maxis took part in CSA 1. All eyes were on the clash between the Farr 100 *Leopard 3*, fresh from

the RORC Caribbean 600 and lying fifth in the IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge, and, newly-arrived in the Caribbean, Wendy Schmidt's 85ft *Deep Blue*, looking to get her first points on the board.

Schmidt and her crew have been regulars in St Maarten on their Swan 80 *Selene*, winning the Maxi 1 class in 2019, but this would be their first time aboard their new Botin Partners 85 racer. Tactician and project manager Rob MacMillan explained: "St Maarten Heineken Regatta has always been the perfect combination of a great party; great sailing; great breeze; great water; and great atmosphere in the group here. It is a cool mix

of maxis, cruiser racers and bareboats. It is a wild scene out on the water."

Competition between former Volvo Ocean Race boats was especially strong, with four VO65s and four VO70s racing in CSA 1. Remarkably, four were Polish, including *Sailing Poland*, back after their Caribbean 600 charter to Deneen Demourkas, with owners Marcin Sutkowski and Robert Gwóźdz on board along with round the world race veterans Bouwe Bekking and Jens Dolmer. Also fresh from the Caribbean 600 was the Polish National Foundation's successful VO70 *I Love Poland*, skippered by Grzegorz Baranowski.



Caribbean regattas may be renowned for their balmy conditions and stiff breeze, but this event was “strong, verging on brutal”, although competitors still came ashore beaming broadly, bragging about how they “survived it”.

The four days of racing culminated in an ultra-lively final day racing around marks, starting off Simpson’s Bay. As Chris Sherlock, *Leopard 3*’s skipper described it: “We had 35 knots at the start. It was probably the hairiest start in my 27 years being involved with the Leopard programme, and probably the hairiest day’s sailing for an inshore regatta...but we loved it!” Quite an admission for a skipper who, since his yacht was launched in 2007, has campaigned her relentlessly around the planet.

“It was great fun. 25-26 knots of boat speed downwind. It couldn’t have been better,” he recounted of the day. More importantly, *Leopard 3*’s Dutch owner also relished it. “He just loved it. Driving a 100ft maxi downwind in 25-30 knots, matching wind speed - you don’t get it much better than that in t-shirts and shorts.”

Naturally the former Volvo Ocean Race yachts were in their element, filling the CSA 1 podium: *Sailing Poland* claimed Saturday and Sunday’s races to win on countback from *Janssen de Jong – DutchSail*. Bouwe Bekking commented: “It has been a very good week and a lot of fun, because it has been a very competitive class with all the VO65s and VO70s, plus *Leopard 3* and *Deep Blue*. We were very rusty in the beginning, but we had a fantastic week and winning is always nice, especially for the owners and their guests.”



For Wendy Schmidt and her crew, it was their first time racing *Deep Blue* in such strong conditions. On the final day they suffered some hydraulic issues, preventing them from trimming and forcing them to retire. Nonetheless the team enjoyed racing their new steed at one of their favourite regattas: “I think more maxis should come across to race in the

Caribbean. It is one of the best places on earth to sail,” concluded Rob MacMillan. “It is great the maxi class [IMA] has come together so that we can all be in the same place at the same time and have great racing. The level of racing is really high in the maxi class. We are really pleased to be part of it.”

Left: Chased here by *Leopard 3*, Wendy Schmidt’s *Deep Blue* started her Caribbean campaign in St Maarten.

Photo: Laurens Morel

Right: Nightly jump up at St Maarten Heineken Regatta. Photo: Souleyman T Photography

LES VOILES DE ST BARTH RICHARD MILLE

Mid-April, the IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge resumed with its third event - Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille. The French Caribbean island of Saint Barthélemy regularly attracts the cream of the maxi and superyacht fleets, drawn by the island's laid-back, bohemian culture - like Saint-Tropez with palm trees. Set up in 2010 by François Toledé and famous French sailor Luc Poupon, the regatta suffered a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, but bounced back with a near record fleet of 68.

Nine maxis were divided between a Maxi class and CSA 3. Among them were the cream of the US fleet, including George David's 2015 winner *Rambler 88*, highest-rated ahead of Wendy Schmidt's Botin Partners 85 *Deep Blue* in the Maxi class. Alongside them were the two former Maxi 72s - Hap Fauth's

Bella Mente, newly-lengthened to 74ft, and Jim Swartz's *Vesper* - plus the Mills 68 *Prospector*.

In CSA 3 were the CNB 66 *Espace* of Karl Volker Frank, Mikan Markovic's Bordeaux 60 *Nina, Dumia* of Germany's Hans-Peter Howaldt, and Shahid Hamid's Swan 58 *OMIII*. Meanwhile hot competition was anticipated between Italian Luigi Sala's *Vismara 62 Yoru* and the Swan 601 *Stark Raving Mad VII* of American Jim Madden.

Madden is a St Barth regular: "It is a very civilised island. It's in the Caribbean, but doesn't really feel like it and the level of competition is fantastic."

The event got off to a lively start with a building 20+ knot easterly and Atlantic swell, so Race Director Luc Poupon set courses in St Barth's lee.

From the outset *Vesper* set the trend, winning the expected tight match with *Bella Mente*. "It was really great fun - very shifty and gusty, tactically very challenging. Gavin [Brady, tactician] was having fun," recounted Jim Swartz. But there were cobwebs; *Vesper* trawled her spinnaker, breaking several stanchions, while a halyard came out of the mast on *Bella Mente*.

The CSA 3 maxis raced a shorter course, rounding Ile Fourchue. Coming in race fit from St Thomas International Regatta, *Stark Raving Mad VII* prevailed after a day locked in competition with *Yoru*.

The 20+ knot conditions continued on day two with similar courses of 28 and 24 miles for the Maxi class and CSA 3 respectively, winding around the islands in the St Barth Channel and Nature Reserve. The



Above: St Barth's Gustavia Harbour. Photo: IMA/James Boyd

Right: Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille saw a perpetual match race between *Vesper* and *Bella Mente*.

Photo: Christophe Jouany





Above: Wendy Schmidt's Botin Partners 85 Deep Blue blending in with the Caribbean seas.
 Opposite: George David helms Rambler 88 in the brisk conditions for which his boat was made.
 Photos: Christophe Jouany

match racing continued in both classes, *Vesper* against *Bella Mente* and *Stark Raving Mad VII* against *Yoru*, with a repeat of the outcome. Higher-rated under IRC, *Bella Mente* beat her rival on the water by applying aggressive tactics, as *Vesper's* Gavin Brady observed: "We are definitely entertaining the owners, but it's got to the point where it is better for us if they are just in front of us."

"They set a trap today. I knew something was unfolding so we avoided them, but I had to grab the wheel! Both boats slowed down to three knots from a reach..." With four or five lead changes, *Bella Mente's* co-helmsman and crew boss Mike Sanderson observed: "It is amazing - it almost feels like since the class has opened up, the racing has got closer." The two-time Volvo Ocean Race winner was in his element "[we were] jumping off waves and hitting 23-24 knots...The [bilge] pumps are working hard, especially on very inshore-orientated boats like ours, with far too many holes in the deck."

Once again *Rambler 88* was third under IRC corrected time, ahead of *Deep Blue*.

It was déjà vu in CSA 3 with *Stark Raving Mad VII* first again, albeit by a smaller margin of two and a half minutes under IRC over *Yoru*, which showed her off the wind potential. At one point Madden's Swan 601 hit 19 knots. Victory came despite breaking a sheet and a halyard that caused the jib to drop twice during the windiest, waviest part of the race.

Conditions eased for day three, when the Maxi class was sent off on a long 47 mile course to windward of St Barth, with a long reach across to Tintamarre and back towards the regatta base in St Barth's capital, Gustavia.

For a third day the former Maxi 72s were at each other's throats - inevitable given both were stacked with America's Cup legends. On *Vesper* main trimmer Warwick Fleury was reunited for the first time in 12 years with headsail trimmer Simon Daubney - both part of Team New Zealand's famed crew that won the 1995 America's Cup, defended it in 2000 and then repeated this again with Alinghi.

The Maxi 72 match race came to a head approaching Tintamarre, according to Daubney: "We had a gybing

duel: We were coming at them on starboard, they gybed on top of us, we gybed back and then we came back in, they thought they could cross us and then they couldn't." *Bella Mente* carried out a penalty turn, but recovered on the subsequent reaching leg, before they both turned upwind when it was *Vesper's* turn again - the older generation boat more in her element in the big conditions.

In CSA 3 there were start line incidents - *Stark Raving Mad VII* was barged out, while *Yoru* was

scored OCS. Despite *Stark Raving Mad VII* starting a minute late, tactician Anthony Kotoun somehow found pressure, putting them into the lead which they retained, aided by *Yoru* suffering a spinnaker wrap.

Thursday was the famous layday when all crews decamped for some well-deserved recuperation at Nikki Beach on the opposite side of the island, particularly required as it followed the Coachella crew party, held on a beach just outside Gustavia the previous night.





To clear the hangovers on the Friday, there was a 35 mile course for the Maxi class, while CSA 3 sailed two races - the first, 12 miles long, finishing off St Jean on St Barth's north coast, from where an 18 mile second race was started.

Conditions were lighter with just 10 knots and finally produced new winners, with *Deep Blue* prevailing in the Maxi class by 12 seconds under IRC from *Vesper*. Tactician and project manager Rob MacMillan explained of *Deep Blue's* second ever race win: "There was a little bit less breeze and we changed a few set-up things so we could sheet the

main harder. We have been working on our downwind modes and that paid dividends."

Deep Blue also coped better with a squall off St Jean, where she was able to carry her kite for longer. IMA President Benoît de Froidmont certainly picked the right day to race on board *Deep Blue*, as they picked up their best result of the regatta.

George David's *Rambler 88* had also looked strong. "It was going well for us right up until the end," mused tactician Brad Butterworth. "The big shifts were good on the long run - we rounded the bottom

mark in very good shape and the beat went well, but we couldn't carry the breeze to the finish."

The former Maxi 72s still enjoyed exhilarating racing, especially when *Bella Mente* (under kite) rolled *Vesper* (under jib) to leeward...until, a few minutes later, her kite blew up in a squall.

In CSA 3 *Stark Raving Mad VII's* scoreline finally received a blemish, not from *Yoru* but the Swan 58 *OMIII*. Nevertheless, their competition with *Yoru* remained intense, with the latter finishing just three seconds behind.

Above: Jim Madden's Swan 601 *Stark Raving Mad VII* achieved a near perfect scoreline in CSA 3.

Middle: Luigi Sala enjoyed racing *Yoru* in St Barth for the first time.

Opposite right: Victory well deserved - Jim Swartz, Gavin Brady and the *Vesper* crew celebrate.

Photos: Christophe Jouany



For the final day conditions were again moderate - 12-15 knots from the ENE, but building. The Maxi class sailed a 36 mile clockwise lap of St Barth, with a long leeward-windward dogleg northeast of the island, while CSA 3 sailed a similar 29 mile course.

Jim Swartz, Gavin Brady and the *Vesper* crew sealed the deal, beating *Bella Mente* under IRC by five and a half minutes. Brady commented: "We had a good high-speed run down on the front edge of a rain cloud. That caught everyone out as we all had down-range sails on. We were looking over our shoulder going 'we need a heavy weather

jib...'*Bella Mente* changed, but we just hung on with our light jib and rolled them." *Bella Mente* then blew up another spinnaker while approaching the finish.

"I don't think I've ever seen so many lead changes in maxi racing," Brady summarised about racing off St Barth. "You don't see that elsewhere - maybe it's the waves? They create huge opportunities: Two good waves can gain you 100m."

Vesper finished the regatta on six points to *Bella Mente's* 12, while *Deep Blue* claimed third overall

on tiebreak from *Rambler 88*. *Stark Raving Mad VII* claimed CSA 3.

International Maxi Association President Benoît de Froimont was also an event ambassador. He commented: "It was a fantastic week. Everything was there to make it a great success – lots of boats, great weather and the race committee and organisation as perfect as usual. Everyone seems very happy. The quality of the racing has been very high here – as high as we see in the Mediterranean. It shows that the top maxi teams are very enthusiastic to have our IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge."



IMA CARIBBEAN MAXI CHALLENGE'S FIRST WINNER

To be eligible for the IMA's first Caribbean Maxi Challenge, yachts had to enter two of its four events. Sadly this negated much of the crème of the IMA fleet, which, in this first season post-pandemic, focussed solely on Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille. Nonetheless, participation was still respectable and ultimately the VO70 *I Love Poland* beat the Farr 100 *Leopard 3* into second place by two points, both having competed in the RORC Caribbean 600 and St Maarten Heineken Regatta.

While most IMA maxis are privately owned, the eye-catching red and white *I Love Poland* is set up differently: it is an educational and sporting project funded by the Polish National Foundation, an organisation backed by many of Poland's largest companies to promote their nation. In its first season in 2018, their VO70 (formerly Puma Ocean Racing's *Mar Mostro*, which finished third in the 2011-12 Volvo Ocean Race) was used as a floating billboard before its remit changed. Since 2019, the boat has been used to train up young Polish sailors wishing to further their sailing careers by participating aboard a modern race yacht in the world's most important and prestigious regattas, perhaps ultimately with the aim of their becoming professional sailors.

Quietly, Poland, with its 400km of Baltic coastline, is a strong sailing nation with its fair share of elite sailors. These range from Mateusz Kusznierewicz, the two-time Finn Olympic medallist, to Match Racing World Champion and America's Cup helmsman Karol Jablonski, long-term tactician on Claus-Peter Offen's *γ3k* maxis. Skipper of *I Love Poland* is Grzegorz Baranowski, a long-term sailing partner of Jablonski's, dating back to the 1990s when

they competed on board Roman Paszke's *MK Café* in the Admiral's Cup. Given Baranowski's calibre and that the crew frequently include members of Poland's Olympic sailing squad, it is evident that this is not another ex-Volvo Ocean Race charter boat, but a much more high calibre affair.

I Love Poland has received more than 1000 crew applicants, the requirement being that they are under the age of 30 and already have racing experience. Typically the team puts an appeal out on social media, receives 500 CVs and then has to reduce this to 40. These are then interviewed and the final 15 get to try out on the VO70. After that perhaps three or four are selected to stay with the team for half, or a whole, season, although, Baranowski explains, not all last. "Maybe after one or two months they say 'it is not for me. I would prefer to concentrate on match racing or I want to be at home more,'" explains Baranowski.

The lucky few get to become part of *I Love Poland's* extensive programme that has taken her from her home port of Gdynia to the UK, on through the Mediterranean, across to the Caribbean and up the US' eastern seaboard to New York. Over the last three years they have put 80,000 miles on the clock and have also been achieving good results - winning line honours in the 2020 Rolex Middle Sea Race and coming home fifth in the 2021 Rolex Fastnet Race's highly competitive maxi fleet (when for a brief period, 24 hours into the race, she led the entire IRC fleet) and now winning the IMA's inaugural Caribbean Maxi Challenge.

On board *I Love Poland* they typically have a permanent crew of five or six. Above this Baranowski

has to juggle maintaining a regular crew, who can race together and grow into a cohesive unit, while also rotating crew in to introduce more sailors to the programme. To do this they operate a squad so that should a crew be unable to compete in one event, they can be easily replaced.

2022 was *I Love Poland's* third visit to the Caribbean. Obviously a VO70's natural environment is offshore and in the RORC Caribbean 600's IRC Super Zero class they finished third behind the 100ft *Comanche* and another Polish former Volvo Ocean Race boat, the VO60 *Sailing Poland*, chartered on this occasion to Deneen Demourkas and her Groovederci Racing team.

"It is a good race," says Baranowski. "We get better and better at it every year, at the meteo and knowing the islands. So we know there is nothing behind Guadeloupe, but it is still no easier..."

In fact a VO70 was ideal for 2022's big wind St Maarten Heineken Regatta. "That is a good regatta because the races are just three or four hours long and they're not just windward-leeward. It is a nice race for the crew to do after the Caribbean 600 because it speeds them up and they have to think quickly."

At the time of writing *I Love Poland* had just returned to the Caribbean, winning the IMA Transatlantic Race Trophy for line honours in January's RORC-IMA Transatlantic Race. "We would like to defend our title," says Baranowski of the IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge. "We have some new people on the boat, so of course it will be something new but we will try."

Left: The VO70 I Love Poland during the RORC Caribbean 600. Photo: RORC/Tim Wright/photoaction.com

Inset: Skipper Grzegorz Baranowski receives the Caribbean Maxi Challenge trophy from IMA President Benoît de Froidmont.

Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi



THE FIRST IMA MAXI EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP

In 2022, the first ever IMA Maxi European Championship took place as part of Tre Golfi Sailing Week, based out of Sorrento on the Italian mainland. Its Regata dei Tre Golfi, followed by four days of inshore racing for the Maxi Yacht Sorrento Trophy, together comprised this latest event in the maxi calendar. The event was organised by the Circolo del Remo e della Vela Italia (CRVI) and the IMA, under the patronage of the FIV and in cooperation with Yacht Club Italiano and the Reale Yacht Club Canottieri Savoia, and supported by Rolex as Official Timepiece.

The Regata dei Tre Golfi was once famous for its midnight start, but today sets sail early evening from off Naples' magnificent Castel dell'Ovo, next to the CRVI clubhouse in the Santa Lucia Marina.

Its 155 mile course first heads northwest through the bays of Naples, Salerno and Gaeta, before rounding Ponza and returning southeast past Ischia, leaving Capri to port or starboard, to round the Li Galli islands off the Amalfi coast, continuing clockwise around Capri to the finish off Marina Grande.

This 67th edition of the race carried a 1.25x weighting in the IMA Maxi Europeans scoring.

While the Regata dei Tre Golfi is typically light, this year it was especially so. Indeed, in addition to its 25 maxis were two 70ft trimarans, Giovanni Soldini's *Maserati* and Riccardo Pavoncelli's *Mana*, and despite starting 30 minutes before the maxis, they still struggled, allowing Furio Benussi's 100ft scratch monohull *Arca SGR* to beat *Maserati*'s elapsed time by 13 minutes.

Over the winter *Arca SGR* had undergone a six-month refit in Trieste. This included increasing her

mast height by 5m; replacing spars, sails, hydraulics; adding 1.5 tonnes to her bulb, plus structural upgrades. Of their race, Benussi said: "We were in front of the trimarans until Capri. The boat is going really well in light winds, despite using an old mainsail and jib. The race is really nice for the maxis." Their win came despite breaking their canting keel's massive hydraulic ram 20 miles from the finish.

The two judel/vrolijk former Maxi 72s, Peter Dubens' *NorthStar* and Sir Peter Ogden's 77ft *Jethou*, enjoyed their own intense race, frequently swapping the lead. It was the lower-rated *NorthStar* which ultimately won the Maxi division by 1 hour 45 minutes under IRC. "It really came down to a couple of key points," tactician Nick Rogers explained. "Wouter Verbraak [navigator] did a stellar job of understanding the weather and where we were going. We had a moment where we flew a Code Zero, which was critical." This was en route to Ponza in 3-4 knots, a decision which enabled her to recover two kilometres from *Jethou*. Returning from Ponza *NorthStar* stayed closer to the land and, a couple of gybes later, rolled *Jethou*, but then got stuck off Capri. Later *NorthStar* and *Jethou* stayed in breeze, while those astern did not, finishing first and third overall under IRC respectively.

Separating the two former Maxi 72s was Alessandro Del Bono's immaculate ILC maxi *Capricorno*, which also won Class 2 from Terry Hui's Wally 77 *Lyra* by 3 hours 12 minutes under IRC.

IMA President Benoît de Froidmont sailed a spectacular race on his Wally 60 *Wallyño*, finishing fourth and winning Class 3 by over three hours from Vincenzo Addressi's Mylius 18E35 *Fra' Diavolo*. "It



Left: The IMA Maxi Europeans fleet sets sail from Naples on the Regata dei Tre Golfi. Photos: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi

Top: Flag raising ceremony at the Circolo del Remo e della Vela Italia in Naples. Above: Giovanni Soldini's Maserati approaches the Capri finish.

was my first Regata dei Tre Golfi and it was as I expected – beautiful, but complicated too,” said de Froidmont, whose yacht was becalmed for three hours short of the finish. “From a tactical point of view the race was quite difficult.”

Following this were four days of inshore racing for the IMA Maxi European Championship, with six windward-leewards and coastal races scheduled on

the Gulf of Naples against the magnificent backdrops of Capri, the Sorrentine peninsula and Mount Vesuvius. The 21 maxis were divided into four classes.

On the opening day, with a light but building southerly, the 28 mile long course was set, with an upwind leg to Punta Campanella at the tip of the Sorrento peninsula, followed by a long leg to a mark off Naples, before returning to finish off Sorrento.

At the front it was tight between *Jethou*, *NorthStar* and Lord Irvine Laidlaw’s Reichel/Pugh 82 *Highland Fling XI*. *Highland Fling XI* stole a march on her rivals at the top mark when she performed a bear away set into clean air with the current, while the former Maxi 72s gybe-set and headed back into the coast in search of more pressure, but finding more traffic.

Setting off across the Bay of Naples, the front runners saw a 40° header that brought out their reaching gear. As *Highland Fling XI* disappeared off ahead, *Jethou* was extending away from her shorter rival until her reaching kite tore and she was forced to continue bare-headed until her crew raised a replacement. *NorthStar* was just able to draw level by the time *Jethou* got going, but the damage was done and *NorthStar* went on to win by just over a minute from *Jethou*, with *Highland Fling XI* fourth overall.

Lyra was back on form, winning Class 2 and finishing third across the whole fleet, aided by Mitch Booth and Dane Nicolai Sehested in the afterguard. Across the classes the biggest winning margin was that of Giuseppe Puttini’s Swan 65 *Shirlaf* in Class 4, almost seven minutes ahead of Luca Scoppa’s Dehler 60 *Blue Oyster*, while the smallest was in Class 3 where Vincenzo Addressi’s Mylius 60 *Fra’ Diavolo* beat Riccardo de Michele’s Vallicelli 78 *H2O* by a mere 10 seconds, despite *Fra’ Diavolo* having been rammed rounding the top mark by Philippe Ligier’s Wally 80 *Ryokan II*.

On day two, two windward-leewards were scheduled. After a delay waiting for the wind, a tricky 8-12 knot westerly filled in, but with plenty of holes.



Upwind heading into the Sorrento shoreline. Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi
Twilight off Capri’s famous Faraglioni rocks. Photo: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi





Top left: Matteo Fossati's Starkel 64 Stella Maris. Photo: IMA/James Boyd

Top right: IMA Maxi Europeans fleet in Sorrento's Marina Piccola. Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi

Bottom left: IMA cocktail party on the terrace of the Grand Hotel Vittoria Excelsior. Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi

Bottom right: Maurits Van Oranje's Mylius 60 SUD. Photo: IMA/James Boyd

In this *Highland Fling XI*, *Jethou* and *NorthStar* remained in close contact at the front, but *Highland Fling XI* was able to gain the lead, despite not being a 'windward-leeward boat' and having a 2% penalty due to her owner being unable to attend. In Class 2 *Lyra* again did well, even after blowing up a spinnaker when it snagged on a spreader tip.

In Class 4, *Shirlaf* scored her second bullet, while in Class 3 it was the turn of Riccardo de Michele's striking silver Vallicelli 78 *H2O* to beat *Wallyño* by two and a half minutes, although *Wallyño* continued to hold onto fourth overall. According to *H2O*'s tactician Lorenzo Bodini, they did well on the first upwind leg by avoiding traffic and finding clear lanes, while on the second beat they had chosen the favoured right – a good result for a boat that prefers more breeze.

Unfortunately the wind had built and veered too far right to lay a fair course for a second race.

The trickiest racing was on day three as competitors contended with significant shifts and occasional shut-downs. The fleet was sent off on a WSW-ENE coastal course with a leeward mark deep into the Bay of Naples under the foot of Mount Vesuvius.

On the start line there was contact between *Shirlaf* and Matteo Fossati's Starkel 64 *Stella Maris*, causing both to retire. The lead trio, *Highland Fling XI*, *Jethou* and *NorthStar*, arrived at the leeward mark as the wind died. *Highland Fling XI* managed to escape and was a dot on the horizon when the new breeze arrived, by which time lower-rated yachts like *Lyra* and *Capricorno* had caught up.

The final leg back to the finish line off Sorrento appeared routine until, again, the wind died at the

finish line. *Highland Fling XI* parked up just metres short, while *Jethou* came steaming in from offshore until she too stopped dead.

As the wind continued to fade, and with the fleet looking like it would be unable to complete the course, the race was abandoned. As some boats had finished and many felt they were about to finish at the time of the abandonment, the decision was taken to the International Jury. The chosen solution was to give the six boats which had completed the full course top places and score the rest of the fleet as if they had finished the race at the previous mark.

As expected, the day's overall winner was *Highland Fling XI*, but only by 26 seconds from *Jethou*, with *Capricorno* third - the resounding leader in Class 2.

"It was only difficult at the end," acknowledged *Jethou*'s Sir Peter Ogden. "The rest of it wasn't that bad. The end was interesting; we got trapped so we had to run to the other side and crab it forward until we got around the buoy!" Rolling - not something you do every day aboard a 72ft yacht!

Wallyño was the runaway leader in Class 3, winning by 3 minutes 17 seconds from Riccardo de Michele's *H2O*, finishing the day fourth and holding this same position overall.

The race course many had been waiting for – around Capri – came on the last day. This race started in a light southerly with an upwind leg into the channel between the Sorrentine peninsula and Capri, before continuing on a clockwise lap around the island, past the Faraglioni rocks, the Green Grotto and the imposing lighthouse at Punta Carena.

Right: *Jethou* chases *Highland Fling XI* downwind.
Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi



Among the leaders, *NorthStar* managed to overhaul *Highland Fling XI* and *Jethou* approaching the Faraglioni rocks, where the wind went light. Enough wind remained to get the fleet around the island but reaching the finish line back in the Bay of Naples was not easy, a giant wind hole forcing boats to remote corners of the course to stay in pressure. Worst affected by this were *Jethou* and Alessandro Del Bono's ILC maxi *Capricorno*.

Finally the breeze filled in on the left for *Highland Fling XI* ahead of *NorthStar*, however the park-up had allowed the smaller boats to spy where the larger

boats were parked in wind holes and avoid them. As a result, third home on the water was *Lyra*, followed by Guido Paolo Gamucci's canting keel Mylius 60 *Cippa Lippa X*, both in Class 2. With *Lyra* having a substantially lower rating, she won the day's race overall by more than five minutes from *Cippa Lippa X*.

Despite being second across the line, *NorthStar* finished a disappointing 11th under IRC while it was a devastating 19th place for parked-up *Jethou*, causing the pair to drop to second and third place on the Maxi Europeans podium. This made way for Terry Hui's Wally 77 *Lyra* to claim this first edition

of the IMA Maxi European Championship by just 0.75 points.

"It was an interesting day," said Hui. For a second time at this event, *Lyra* had blown up a kite, but with speedy crew work they recovered quickly and went on to win. "The wind was very inconsistent. And just before the last gybe to the finish, we found wind but then the kite ripped. And it was like – do we change it or not? We changed it. So it was a bit unlucky – to find wind and then your kite is gone."

NorthStar's owner Peter Dubens mused: "The conditions were challenging - a bit like Saint-Tropez.





During the week the IMA hosted an owners' cocktail party at the Grand Hotel Vittoria Excelsior in Sorrento. Meanwhile on the Friday night there was a prize-giving for owners on the ultra-exclusive Li Galli island, coinciding with a crew party at the Piano di Sorrento.

De Froidmont added: "This event has been extremely successful and extremely competitive. Looking at the starts, you can see all the boats are here to compete, which is good to see. The organisers did a fantastic job as it is quite difficult to hold a regatta in a new place. We are pleased – the collaboration with the CRVI was good."

In addition to the IMA European Championship scoring, results from the Regata dei Tre Golfi counted towards the IMA's 2021-22 Mediterranean Maxi Offshore Challenge, while the inshore race formed the second event in the Association's 2022 Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge.

Today was perfect until we sailed into a hole. We got it right around the island, right off the start, but we should have kept going left [at the end]. It was a bit tricky. The boat is going well - better than last year. The IMA Maxi European Championship is a lovely idea."

IMA President Benoît de Froidmont sailed a solid week, scoring a fourth for *Wallyño* on the last day to secure his silver Wally 60 Class 3 by 1.25 points from *Fra' Diavolo*, and fourth overall too. "When we started the regatta we never expected to do well," admitted de Froidmont. "Over the week it was getting closer, so I am extremely happy to do the 'double' between the offshore and the inshores."



Left: Highland Fling XI had an exceptional Europeans, comfortably winning the inshores in Class 1.
Top: Lyra's Terry and Olivia Hui at the IMA Maxi Europeans prize-giving.
Right: Lyra won the Championship in the last metres of the final race.
 Photos: IMA/Studio Borlenghi



Furio Benussi's 100ft maxi Arca SGR speeds towards the Punta Ala finish line.
Photo: Studio Taccola



Usually a light race, the 151 Miglia-Trofeo Cetilar, fourth event in the IMA's Mediterranean Maxi Offshore Challenge, will be remembered for its 13th edition having unusual, varied weather conditions, ranging from flat calms to 25+ knots upwind.

Created by IMA Vice President Roberto Lacorte and backed by Cetilar®, a brand of his pharmaceutical company PharmaNutra S.p.A., the 151 Miglia-Trofeo Cetilar is organised by Yacht Club Repubblica Marinara di Pisa, Yacht Club Punta Ala and Yacht Club Livorno. It has TAG Heuer as its Official Timekeeper and partners with Benetti Yachts, Port of Livorno 2000, Plastimo and PROtect Tapes.

Traditionally, after a build-up in Livorno, competitors set off to round a turning mark off Marina di Pisa before heading on to a moderate reach across to the Giraglia rock, followed by a challenging night hunting breeze amid calms off Corsica and Elba. However, on this occasion the 204-boat fleet, including its 14 maxis, experienced a light start, with the breeze only filling in mid-evening when the maxis were most of the way to Giraglia. It then built until some competitors saw 23-25 knots while passing the rock, the strongest winds of the race, although short-lived. Unfortunately this breeze was southeasterly, putting them on the wind for the race's longest leg, past Elba towards the southerly turning mark at Formiche di Grosseto.

It proved to be a race that favoured the fastest and it came as little surprise that, at 08:45 on the morning after the start, Furio Benussi's 100ft *Arca SGR* cruised across the Punta Ala finish line to collect her second consecutive 151 Miglia-Trofeo Cetilar line honours victory. Her elapsed time of 18 hours 40 minutes 45

seconds was well outside the race record of 13 hours 50 minutes 43 seconds, set by George David's *Rambler 88* in 2019, and even outside her own best time, set the year before, of 15 hours 42 minutes.

But the news got better for the Trieste-based maxi, as those astern slowed and stopped before Formiche di Grosseto, thereafter struggling on the final leg to the finish. Ultimately this handed *Arca SGR* the IRC corrected time prize for the maxi division too.

"I am really happy! We missed only the record, but that is not a problem - maybe I'll get that next year!" enthused Furio Benussi.

"At the beginning there was light wind, a maximum of five knots. When we arrived at Capraia [island between Pisa and Giraglia], we gybed back two miles to try and find the new pressure. We had 15-16 knots until Giraglia and arrived there really fast - at 19 knots. After Giraglia there was 22-23 knots, gusting to 25, and we were upwind, but Lorenzo Bressani [navigator] did a really nice job and we got all of the shifts." Unusually for a 151 Miglia, the least wind *Arca SGR* saw was 4-5 knots and she was never fully becalmed. "The boat is nice, especially in light conditions. Up to 8 knots, she is very fast."

But the key reason for *Arca SGR*'s victory came from being 18.5 miles ahead on the water of second-placed *Spirit of Lorina*, Frenchman Jean-Pierre Barjon's Botin Partners 65, at the last turning mark. "When we arrived at Formiche there were 7 knots and then we got the land breeze of 14 knots which we held until the finish," continued Benussi. As *Arca SGR* crossed the finish, those astern still had more than 26 miles to go in substantially less wind.



The shoreside finish party at Yacht Club Punta Ala is lavish, with a sit-down dinner for 1500.
Photo: Studio Taccola

For this last phase of the race Aldo Parisotto, owner of the Mylius 65 FD *Oscar3*, could do little but watch. While his friend and colleague, Mylius Yachts CEO Luciano Gandini (Parisotto is the Mylius range's interior designer), won the outright victory in 2021, he was sadly unavailable to defend his title, this mantle instead falling to Parisotto, competing in the race for a third time. Approaching Formiche di Grosseto, *Oscar3* had been leading the maxi class under IRC corrected time, but then, as Parisotto explained: "We stopped for maybe 1 hour 20 minutes. The last part was very difficult. We led coming into Formiche, but everyone behind caught up. We thought *Arca SGR* would pay because of their [huge] rating difference, but in the end they only went through two transitions, not three..."

Until then *Oscar3*'s race had been going well – fortunate in the first transition, into the new breeze en route to Giraglia where they saw 27 knots at the rock. "That was amazing! The boat was perfect and we didn't break anything." Then upwind to Elba, as conditions abated, they had hoped to be lifted around the island, but in the end went through another, albeit shorter, transition. "It was like elastic, this race: we'd get away then those behind would catch up," summarised Parisotto. *Oscar3* ended up second overall, her time correcting out to 38 minutes behind *Arca SGR*, with Giancarlo Gianni's Carroll Marine 60 *Durlindana 3* third.

In only his second race with his newly-acquired *Spirit of Lorina*, Jean-Pierre Barjon was pleased to have finished second on the water, albeit five hours 36 minutes behind *Arca SGR*, and fifth under IRC behind Guido Paolo Gamucci's canting keel Mylius 60 *Cippa Lippa X*.



"For most of the night we were very happy. The sailing was incredible, because we had good wind and the boat performed very well," said Barjon. "But at around 03:00-04:00 we had no wind and everyone caught us up. It was frustrating! This is an incredible boat and we have a chance to win if there is more wind."

Race founder Roberto Lacorte, who sailed on board *Arca SGR*, concluded: "This is the first edition of the 151 Miglia which was upwind, with no reaching

conditions. Fortunately *Arca SGR* is good upwind - she's a very narrow boat - but this was not a normal situation. It was a fantastic experience - she is not difficult to steer. The bigger the boat, the more stable it is - the power is impressive.

"I am happy because this is the first 151 Miglia post-pandemic. This is very important - to have all the events around this regatta totally open. It is very important to come back."

Aside from the race itself, the 151 Miglia-Trofeo Cetilar is renowned for its excellent parties. These included a Crew Party the night before the start in the spectacular location of the Fortezza Vecchia in Livorno, while the event was rounded out with a giant Dinner Party held in the magnificent grounds of the Yacht Club Punta Ala. This featured a sit-down buffet dinner for 1,500 people plus fireworks and top quality bands and a DJ playing deep into the night.

Top left: Aldo Parisotto's Oscar3 finished a worthy second in the maxi class.

Top right: Arca SGR's crew celebrate scoring 'the double' - line honours and overall IRC maxi class victory.

Photos: Studio Taccola

Light weather continued for the offshore race of Rolex Giraglia, the fifth event in the IMA's Mediterranean Maxi Offshore Challenge. This 69th edition saw a welcome return to Saint-Tropez for the start, after pandemic restrictions in 2021 meant it was an all-Italian race, starting from Sanremo and finishing in Genoa. However, given an ultra-light forecast the race committee, comprising staff from the Yacht Club Italiano, the Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez and the International Maxi Association, announced the course would be shortened, with the first turning mark at La Formigue removed, reducing the course from 241 miles to 200.

Among the 141 entries were 20 maxis. Back to defend her line honours title was Furio Benussi's 100ft *Arca SGR*, fresh from winning the 151 Miglia-Trofeo Cetilar. Among others were the 72ft Sam Manuard-designed *Black Legend 6*, Jean-Pierre Dreau's Mylius 60 *Lady First III*, Jean-Michel Caye's Vismara 80 *Luce Guida*, Mylius Yachts President Luciano Gandini on his successful Mylius 80 *Twin Soul B* and the glorious 33.5m Herreshoff gaff schooner *Mariette of 1915*.

The hot competition was among the 100-footers. As scratch boat, *Arca SGR* was up against a powerful contingent, including Charif Souki's Wallycento *Tango*, Jean-Luc Petithuguenin's Wally 107 *Spirit of Malouen X* and Andrea Recordati's 93 *Bullitt*, while the most serious contender was Sir Lindsay Owen-Jones' Wallycento *Magic Carpet Cubed*. The former CEO and Chairman of L'Oréal has entered his various Wallys in more Rolex Giraglias than any other team. His present Wallycento alone claimed line honours in 2013 and won outright under IRC in 2015. And this

year's light conditions, with large 'holes' in the breeze, would favour those chasing.

Fortunately, at the midday start the light ESEerly breeze was adequate for the maxis to ghost out of the Golfe de Saint-Tropez, the towering maxi rigs able to find breeze high aloft. Strategy was there from the outset with some, such as *Tango*, staying high (ie south) while others, like *Arca SGR* and *Spirit of Malouen X*, departed from the rhumb line, heading north.

On *Magic Carpet Cubed*, navigation guru and Giraglia specialist Marcel van Triest said the crew had been alert, ready to adapt to the changing conditions. "From Saint-Tropez to the Rock, initially we played the north – there was more pressure and we saw this massive cloud over the mainland sucking wind in, so there was more pressure to leeward, where *Spirit of Malouen X* and *Arca SGR* were. We stuck to them, accepting that they had a little bit more breeze and were making some really nice gains on the boats to weather. Then, once the clouds stopped developing, there was a shift in the plan and we went further south because we knew it was going to die to leeward. So that worked and we gained." Sailing closer to the Corsican coast on the way into the Giraglia, *Magic Carpet Cubed* benefitted further and arrived overlapped with *Arca SGR*.


The subsequent leg from Giraglia to Genoa was more of a lottery, as van Triest recalled later: "You wanted to go east or west? I could show you a model that agreed with you!"

Among *Magic Carpet Cubed's* crew were many notable sailors, including three-time Olympic gold medallist Jochen Schüman, Volvo Ocean Race skipper Neal McDonald and Volvo Ocean Race

Magic Carpet Cubed ghosts to line honours victory in Genoa, pipping *Arca SGR* to the post.
Photo: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi







winner and two-time Olympic silver medallist Ian Walker. According to Walker, on the leg to the Genoa finish they gambled greatly: “We got stuck far west and were losing to all the boats inshore, so we took everyone’s transom and dug in, hoping there would be more sea breeze inshore from 50 miles out. We were a long way behind after we did that. We weren’t certain it would work, but we were certain if we followed the quicker boat, we weren’t going to beat them. In fact, there was a slight difference in pressure near the mainland.”

As a result, Owen-Jones’ ‘cruising boat’ beat *Arca SGR* by 26 minutes on the water, and more under IRC corrected time. Owen-Jones was delighted: “We were surprised to beat the scratch boat. We made some very good navigational choices. Marcel [van Triest] has been with us for many years and we are very confident with his choices. That was very important today because we came in on a much better angle than our competition who had to come down in dying air...”

Given the conditions, the race was understandably slow – *Esimit Europa 2*’s record of just under 15 hours was in no danger given *Magic Carpet Cubed* took 34 hours 7 minutes to cover 200 miles, compared to the usual 240. But it was also not Owen-Jones’ slowest: “The longest, lightest race was in 1998, when it took three days and only five boats finished. But I was confident because, although *Magic Carpet Cubed* has a traditional rig and is quite heavy, it is a very good light air boat, because it has a very high mast and finds wind up there that others don’t.”

48 minutes after *Arca SGR*, third home was *Tango*. How did owner Charif Souki find it? “It went okay,

The start was ultra-light, the scratch boat Arca SGR edging ahead.
Photos: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi



Charif Souki's Wallycento Tango - back in action again post-pandemic.



*Spirit of Lorina rounds the Giraglia rock.
Photo: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi*

not so okay, very okay and then not okay! It was a wonderful race. *Magic Carpet Cubed* did a fantastic job. They never lost their cool. It was miraculous. With COVID, I have been stuck in the US for two and a half years so I am delighted to be back travelling, back on my boat."

Fourth home was Andrea Recordati's Wally 93 *Bullitt*. This was the third Rolex Giraglia for Recordati, having sailed it previously in his 80-footer, then on his Wally 101 *Indio* and this year aboard his most recent acquisition, the former *Nahita*. The wind had shut down for them 20 miles from the finish. "It was a very light race, so quite challenging. It was difficult to make any strategic calls, because the models were all over the place, so we did very well to keep up with the fleet. 15 miles out, when *Magic Carpet Cubed* went into the shore, they were the same distance to the finish line as we were, but then they caught the breeze... We finished not far away from *Tango*."

Once again, this year's race favoured not just the small maxis but one in particular - the exact same one that won in 2021: Adriano Calvini's *Itacentodue*, the Yacht Club Italiano's club boat. The Felci 61 was 13th boat home, her elapsed time of 41 hours 41 minutes 24 seconds causing her to win IRC 0 and finish second in overall IRC results to the Ker 46 *Lisa R*.

While last year *Itacentodue's* offshore sailing academy crew included accomplished sailors like Tommaso Chieffi and Ambrogio Beccaria, this year there were no pros aboard. Her crew was led by the owner's 28-year-old grandson Giovanni Chiappano, with Mario Rabo on strategy, Manuel Polo navigating and Roberto Martinez as helmsman.



“We knew it was going to be long,” explained Chiappano. “We like a bit more wind and also prefer downwind, so everything was against us, but our strategy paid off: We went ‘straight’ the whole time - mainly because we thought the wind would be best that way and if there was no wind it would be best to go the shortest way.” They made the greatest progress on their way into the finish. “We changed sails maybe 30 times, from the Code Zero to the gennaker and back. It was tough, but the crew was great.”

Second maxi overall under IRC (and sixth overall) was Benoît de Froidmont’s Wally 60 *Wallyño*,

*It was a slow race for the Herreshoff schooner Mariette of 1915.
Photo: IMA/james Boyd*

which finished 1 hour 20 minutes behind *Itacentodue*. “That was long!” admitted the IMA President. “At the end, we were a mile away from *Itacentodue*, but then they finished more than an hour ahead of us. That is ‘typical’ of the Giraglia. We did more gybes over the last two hours than the whole rest of the race.”

Canting keel yachts aren’t supposed to like light conditions, so it came as some surprise that the third maxi under IRC was Guido Paolo Gamucci’s canting keel Mylius 60 *Cippa Lippa X*. Aside from expending much effort constantly trimming the

boat and the canting keel, tactician Paolo Cian said that approaching the finish they had found better rotation of the wind to the east (as *Magic Carpet Cubed* had).

Bringing up the rear in the maxi class was the giant classic *Mariette of 1915*. The 46m long Nathanael G. Herreshoff-designed schooner is not well suited to racing in light conditions, but her crew very much enjoyed it. As Vendée Globe skipper Miranda Merron reported from on board: “The advantage of no wind for much of the day was the wildlife fest - whales, dolphins, turtles, sunfish, mahi-mahi, tuna, bonito...”



MMOC 2021-22 WINNER - SPIRIT OF LORINA

Having in 2019 lost the first edition of the IMA's Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge (MMIC) on the last race of the final event, Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, Jean-Pierre Barjon turned this around to win the 2021-22 IMA Mediterranean Maxi Offshore Challenge (MMOC).

The seven-event series began, as usual, with the 2021 Rolex Middle Sea Race and culminated in August's Palermo-Montecarlo, enabling IMA President Benoît de Froidmont to present the MMOC winner's silver trophy at the Association's annual Members' Dinner during September's Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup.

The French team's MMOC victory was surprising as Barjon only purchased his superb Botin Partners-designed 65ft (20m) racer-cruiser two weeks prior to the start of his first MMOC event - May's Regata dei Tre Golfi.

Although from Lyon in central France, Barjon took to the water in various ways from an early age. Sailing was a passion he shared with his father, with whom he first sailed on a Tornado catamaran in 1972, the same year he first went racing aboard a 420 dinghy in La Baule. In the mid-1970s he and his father built an Endurance 35 yacht and Jean-Pierre also began windsurfing when the sport was still in its infancy. He personally got his first boat, a Jeanneau Sun Legend, in 1983. It should be remembered that at this time, thanks to the extraordinary exploits of Eric Tabarly, sailing in France was going supernova, with big brands backing top sailors, propelling some to be among France's most highly paid sportsmen. They set the young Barjon's imagination alight, although he put sailing on hold to start a family.



Left: Spirit of Lorina is a 65-footer from leading racing yacht designers Botin Partners.

Right: Spirit of Lorina's Jean-Pierre Barjon is presented with the 2021-22 MMOC winner's silver trophy by IMA President Benoît de Froidmont.

Photos: IMA/Studio Borlenghi

MMOC 2021-22 WINNER - SPIRIT OF LORINA

Professionally, Barjon embraced corporate France, rising up through the ranks first at Canon, then PC manufacturer Goupil where he was a Director, before becoming Managing Director of a former subsidiary of the giant Alstom. During the 1990s his entrepreneurial spirit took hold and he discovered Lorina, a small artisan lemonade maker based in Munster, close to the German border. The company had been founded in 1895 and gained its name post-WWII, after an English steamer that had evacuated soldiers from the beaches of Dunkirk in 1940, before later being sunk by the German Air Force. The company's family owners wished to sell the company and so Barjon acquired it in 1996, initially as a sideline, running it during evenings and weekends for the first two years. When Barjon sold it 22 years later to the Danish company Royal Unibrew, not only had Lorina's turnover multiplied 253 times and its EBIDA by 1000, but it was also being sold in 40 countries from the USA to South Korea.

By this time Barjon was already dabbling in sailing again. Lorina backed a Diam 24 trimaran team that won both the 2016, 2017 and 2018 editions of the Tour de France à la Voile, with a crew including two rising stars, Olympic sailors Quentin Delapierre and Kevin Peponnet. Both have since graduated up to France's SailGP team and will represent France in the next America's Cup as part of the French Orient Express Team challenge. Barjon has enjoyed following their careers through Tokyo 2020 and beyond "...and now they have won a SailGP event [referring to September's event in Cadiz] I am very, very happy for them."

While Barjon has had boats in the interim, such as a catamaran for cruising with his family, along with a Tofinou modern classic which he kept in La Baule, it

was finally in 2014 that he bought his first major race boat. According to Barjon his life has been spent achieving goals, whether as a successful entrepreneur, a helicopter pilot, sailor or championship winning horse breeder. Buying a Swan was another: "All my life I dreamed of owning a Swan. Every step of my life had brought me closer to my dream."

It was North Sails France's Tony Brochet who convinced him to pursue a Swan 601, telling him it was a good IRC boat that offered value. The next day Barjon flew to Miami for a meeting, during which he was distracted, googling 'Swan 601'. He found two for sale – one in Australia, the other in Newport, RI – and just three hours later he was on a flight to see the latter. However, after some hard negotiations, Barjon ended up buying the Australian boat sight unseen and had it shipped back. This didn't go according to plan and delays with shipping to Europe, compounded by crew issues, culminated in *Lorina 1895* not making the Rolex Swan Cup in Porto Cervo. Barjon finally made it to Sardinia for the Rolex Swan Cup in 2016, along with the Diam 24 crew who had just won the Tour de France, followed by the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup the following year.

The catalyst to getting *Lorina 1895* out on the race course successfully was Barjon meeting with Benjamin Enon, now his boat captain and project manager. "He is very professional and was able to create a good team," says Barjon. "I wouldn't stay on this circuit if I didn't enjoy it or have good results." And that comes down to Enon. It was he who welcomed Delapierre and Peponnet for their first maxi event and rounded up others. At their first event they blew up numerous old spinnakers - as Barjon puts it "we didn't win, but it was a great pleasure

*Spirit of Lorina's first race with Barjon's team was the 2022 IMA Maxi European Championship.
Photo: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi*

because there was a sense of youth and motivation as well as transmission.”

It was also Enon who recommended three years ago that Barjon get a Dragon keelboat on which to practice.

Over the seasons *Lorina 1895* was heavily campaigned, producing ever-improving results, evidenced in their neck and neck race with *Wallyño* going into the grand finale of the IMA's MMIC in 2019. But at the end of 2021 Barjon wanted a more modern replacement, without having to build new. “I wasn't ready to start a project from scratch, because it is expensive and takes a long time,” he explained. “Once we sold the Swan, we had two ways to go – stay in the Dragon or go bigger! We looked around and discovered *High Spirit*, which was a very beautiful boat. We weren't sure how she would work under IRC, but we took the risk.”

Spirit of Lorina is a Botin Partners 65; a sistership of Max Klink's *Caro*. She was built by King Marine in 2015 with a no-expense-spared, fully carbon fibre, construction, and fitted-out with state-of-the-art race gear, while on the ‘cruising’ side she has a lifting keel and a lightweight luxury interior. Original Russian owner Igor Katalevskiy had raced *High Spirit*, as she was first called, in the 2016 Rolex Giraglia but had used her little since then.

Barjon acquired *Spirit of Lorina* principally to race her more offshore. “For the last 50 years I have read and read about it, but not done it,” he admits. “I remember when I was 16 and Oliver de Kersauson presented this film and explained his first round the world race...” For 2023 part of this will be fulfilled by *Spirit of Lorina* competing in the 50th Rolex

Fastnet Race. Otherwise he plans to stay on the IMA circuit through which, Barjon says, he has discovered new places. These have included the British Virgin Islands, Porto Cervo and Capri. “And in 2022 we discovered the 151 Miglia and the Giraglia. Giraglia is a long story for me: I was supposed to do the race in 1983 for the first regatta but I had an accident one week before and I couldn't go. I said ‘I'll come back’ and I returned in 2018 with the Swan, but one hour before the start I received a call about an issue at the factory, so I drove to the factory and the boat sailed on without me. Then in the next race we had a problem at the last minute with the mast track and, with strong winds forecast, the crew said they were not confident... So it took three goes for me to get to the start line!”

Conveniently *Spirit of Lorina* was bought set up for racing offshore – her original owner had planned a worldwide regatta tour for her and so, for example, she has a stainless steel rail to protect the helmsman. *Spirit of Lorina* came from the same moulds as *Caro* but has 120mm less freeboard. However she is more performance-orientated than the Swan, with an IRC TCC of 1.473 which is more than the Wally 80 *Ryokan 2* and (just three points) short of the Mylius 80 *Twin Soul B*.

Unexpectedly perhaps, if you google Jean-Pierre Barjon, some of the highest entries will refer not to sailing or his business, but to his other long-standing passion: horses. Over the years he has become one of the top breeders; one of his horses won the sport's top event, the Grand Prix d'Amérique in 2009. Since 2020 Barjon has been President of LeTrot, which runs trotting races (known as ‘harness racing’ in the



US) and oversees the breeding of horses for this side of the sport.

To win the 2021-22 MMOC, *Spirit of Lorina* entered the Regata dei Tre Golfi, the 151 Miglia-Trofeo Cetilar and the Rolex Giraglia, the best result of her opening season being a fifth place in the 151 Miglia.

“Our plan was to discover the boat and handle her the way she deserves,” says Barjon. “We were unlucky because in all of the races we've done there has been no wind and this boat needs wind – so we might have to buy our Swan 601 back for that!” Despite this, they managed to win the Rolex Middle Sea Race 2022 in IRC 0, coming second overall.

The big event in 2023 will be the Rolex Fastnet Race. “I've not done it before but I have to do this. It is a good boat for it. Then we will prepare to go quickly to Porto Cervo.” At some point he wants to race in the Caribbean and may go in 2024 or 2025. Personally, Barjon would very much like to make an attempt on the west to east transatlantic record. His story seems far from over.

Barjon and crew celebrate winning the 2018 Rolex Giraglia inshores.
Photo: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi

ROLEX MIDDLE SEA RACE

The classic 600 mile offshore race with certainly the most exotic course – mid-October’s Rolex Middle Sea Race launched the 2022-23 edition of the IMA’s Mediterranean Maxi Offshore Challenge. This series continues on into the 2023 season with seven events, culminating in next August’s Palermo-Montecarlo. The silver perpetual trophy for the MMOC’s winner is presented at the IMA Annual Dinner during September’s Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup.

Organised by the Royal Malta Yacht Club in collaboration with the Royal Ocean Racing Club, the Rolex Middle Sea Race is dramatic in almost every way. The start takes place to howitzer cannon fire within Grand Harbour of the Maltese capital Valletta, famous for its towering ancient ramparts and centuries-old forts. The race’s anticlockwise lap of Sicily passes two active volcanos, Etna and Stromboli, the latter of which erupted violently shortly before the start. From the Egadi Islands, west of Sicily, the course heads south to the island of Pantelleria, 40 miles off the Tunisian coast, and on to Lampedusa, a turning mark from where the boats return through the Comino Channel to finish at the entrance to Valletta’s Marsamxett Harbour.

Maxi participation in the race has been strong ever since the first race in 1968 was won by Dutch plywood pioneer Kees Bruynzeel and his 74ft ketch *Stormvogel*. The 2022 edition saw 124 starters from 24 nations, including 19 maxis and an impressive line-up of five former MOD70 trimarans. After a wild race in 2021 when both the monohull and multihull records were demolished respectively by *Comanche* and *Argo*, the 2022 edition was conversely one of the lightest on record.

*Light wind Maxi start from Valletta’s spectacular Grand Harbour.
Photo: ROLEX/Kurt Arrigo*







The trimaran line-up was the biggest since when the MOD70s raced as a one-design class a decade ago. Most familiar with the course was Giovanni Soldini's *Maserati*, a former line honours winner and race record holder. However Riccardo Pavoncelli's *Mana* had been a close third behind *Maserati* in 2021. For the three others it was a first, all having changed hands earlier in the year: Eric Defert's *Axciss* (ex-*Race For Water*); French GC32 skipper Erik Maris with *Zoulou* (ex-*Powerplay*); and Frank Slootman with *Snowflake* (ex-*Beau Geste*), a previous winner of the Transpac aboard a Pac 52.

The scratch monohull was the Farr 100 *Leopard 3*, line honours winner in 2009 under previous owner Mike Slade. *Leopard 3*'s nearest competition was the immaculate Wally 93 *Bullitt*, campaigned by Italian Andrea Recordati. Nipping at her heels would be the VO70s *I Love Poland*, winner of the IMA's 2022 Caribbean Maxi Challenge, the Dutch-owned *HYPR* and the VO65 *Sailing Poland*. Also gunning hard under IRC corrected time would be France's Jean-Pierre Barjon and his Botin Partners 65 *Spirit of Lorina*, winner of the IMA's MMOC 2021-22. Rolex Middle Sea Race veterans included Andreas Verder and Arco Van Nieuwland with their Marten 72 *Aragon*, but none had more experience than Márton Józsa and his Hungarian crew on the DSS-equipped canting keel Reichel/Pugh 60 *Wild Joe*, sailing their 11th race.

"It is a beautiful race and a beautiful course, with always very challenging weather conditions," explained Józsa. "It is different every time, with different weather systems in different parts of the race. The geography is interesting. We love this

place because they are very warm friendly people. With *Wild Joe*, this is our most important race."

Then there was Jean-Philippe Blanpain's Vismara Mills 62 *Leaps & Bounds 2*, Jean-Pierre Dreau's Mylius 60 *Lady First III* and *Hagar V*, the Scuderia 65 of Gregor Stimpfl. All had travelled extensively this season - *Lady First III* crossed the Atlantic to compete in the RORC Caribbean 600; *Hagar V* and *Leaps & Bounds 2* finished first and third respectively in the Aegean 600.

Given the light conditions it was a drawn-out departure from Valletta's Grand Harbour, after which the race proved a game of snakes and ladders as records were set of the wrong type. While *Argo* had set the course record at 1 day 9 hour 29 minutes 28 seconds, multihull line honours this time went to Riccardo Pavoncelli's *Mana*, the least 'out of class' of the former MOD70s, in a time of 2 days 13 hours 32 minutes 38 seconds. But while their race was at times extremely slow, there were brutal moments too, such as beating into 20 knots heading south from Sicily. The racing was also supremely close, *Mana* finishing with *Zoulou* just 54 seconds behind and *Maserati* just 10 minutes later.

Mana (ex-*Spindrift racing*) gained the lead entering the Strait of Messina and, despite the close finish, never relinquished it. This was good training for French Vendée Globe skipper Alexia Barrier who was racing on board (and was looking to acquire the boat to use for training her all-female Jules Verne Trophy campaign 'the Famous Project'). Also on board *Mana* was 'the fastest sailor in the world' Paul Larsen as well as another former Vendée Globe skipper Jonny Malbon.



Left: Paolo Guido Gamucci's canting keel Mylius 60 *Cippa Lippa X* rounds the active volcano on Stromboli.

Right: The exit from Grand Harbour was slow even for the five former MOD70 trimarans.

Photos: ROLEX/Kurt Arrigo



Above: The Dutch-owned Farr 100 Leopard 3 claimed monohull line honours from Bullitt.
Photos: ROLEX/Kurt Arrigo

In the monohull race, there was a fight for line honours between *Leopard 3* and *Bullitt*, the lead changing between them five times. Once away from Malta, *Bullitt* gained the lead, but *Leopard 3* recovered it heading into the Strait of Messina. Here - one of the few windy moments of the race with the wind getting up to 20+ knots - *Bullitt* again edged ahead and once out of the Strait her lead grew to six miles, aided by *Leopard 3* getting entangled with a fishing net.

The glass-out en route to Stromboli the next morning benefitted the maxi duo, the pair even overtaking the two trailing MOD70s. Along the north of Sicily it remained very light with *Leopard 3* recovering her lost ground and finally at Capo San Vito overtaking her rival. As *Leopard 3* skipper Chris Sherlock described it: "That was the decisive moment, where we gybed offshore and they went inshore and we got a jump and never let it go." *Bullitt's* navigator Marcel Van Triest admitted that he had taken a roll of the dice there. "I got greedy - at one point we were 50m from the new wind - could almost touch it - but it receded way. They gybed away, got around it and gained three miles."

The snakes and ladders continued, but ultimately *Leopard 3* claimed line honours, although with an elapsed time of 70 hours 34 minutes 29 seconds, never threatening *Comanche's* race record of 40 hours 17 minutes 50 seconds. Finishing less than an hour later, the shorter *Bullitt* beat her rival on IRC corrected time. "It was a great yacht race," concluded Chris Sherlock. "Andrea Recordati [*Bullitt's* owner] came over as soon as they docked and the owners congratulated each other, which was wonderful to see."



A similar battle royale was taking place between the three surprisingly dissimilar yachts in IRC One's next wave: *Wild Joe*, *Spirit of Lorina* and the VO70 *I Love Poland*. Halfway between Stromboli and Palermo *Wild Joe* extended away in the light conditions only

Above: Márton Józsa's *Wild Joe* is perhaps the race's most capped maxi.

to be caught again in the stronger upwind conditions on the leg south to Pantelleria. Here *I Love Poland* overtook them, extending their lead down to Lampedusa, an advantage she then retained until the finish. At the finish line in Valletta's Grand Harbour, *I*

Love Poland was 1 hour 42 minutes ahead of *Wild Joe*, in turn 33 minutes in front of *Spirit of Lorina*. On corrected time, this translated into *Spirit of Lorina* claiming IRC One and finishing second in IRC Overall, with *Wild Joe* second in IRC One and third in IRC Overall. Overall victory in this lethargic race was eventually taken by Eric de Turckheim's NMYD 54 *Teasing Machine*.

Spirit of Lorina's crew were delighted with their continued success, especially as light conditions don't suit their beamy Botin Partners 65, which Jean-Pierre Barjon had only taken delivery of six months previously.

Of their race, navigator and former Figaro champion Fabien Delahaye, said that they had made some of the biggest gains during the numerous transition zones. "It wasn't easy, but we gained a lot in those, passing the [wind] shadow of each point."

Their technique seemed to defy traditional light wind conventions: "We weren't afraid to make a lot of manoeuvres and sail changes, going from the Code Zero to the A1, A1.5 to the jib, etc. Most of this crew have sailed together for a long time and we lost nothing in the manoeuvres. That was very good for me as navigator." It also no doubt helped that they were constantly trying to push themselves to keep up with two 'faster' boats.

Spirit of Lorina was superb, said Delahaye, for whom this was only his second race on board. "Benjamin [Enon], the boat captain, did a good job to have a boat working so well. We broke nothing. That is an important performance factor for sure. And having the same crew for every race."



The maxi line-up at the Real Club Náutico de Palma's PalmaVela was the strongest it had been for years with seven among the 84 boat fleet, the four largest being 100-footers.

Since the 1970s heyday of IOR, Palma has been popular among maxi owners, who relish the Bay of Palma, the Majorcan coastline and the city itself. In 2004, the Real Club Náutico de Palma introduced

Maxi Race Week to start the Mediterranean maxi season. Now known as PalmaVela, it today also features several smaller one-design and handicap classes, but the event continues to launch the IMA's annual Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge.

PalmaVela has long been a regular fixture for the Wally class. In 2022 three of the original four Wallycentos were entered: the two Reichel/Pugh

designs - Sir Lindsay Owen-Jones' *Magic Carpet Cubed* and David M. Leuschen's *Galateia* - plus the judel/vrolijk design originally launched as *Hamilton*, then lengthened to 107ft as *Open Season* and most recently acquired by 52 Super Series campaigner Jean-Luc Petithuguenin and rechristened *Paprec Recyclage (Spirit of Malouen X)*. They would line up with the Farr 100 *Leopard 3* and her enthusiastic Dutch owner. Surprisingly, given her global race programme since she was launched in 2007, *Leopard 3* had never before competed at PalmaVela.

Then there was Paul Berger's Swan 80 *Kallima* and the sole Spanish maxi, Andrés Varela Entercanales' Vismara Mills 68 *Pelotari.Project*, which the previous weekend had won line honours and her class in PalmaVela's offshore race, La Larga. However all eyes were on *Bullitt*, the Wally 93 competing in her first event since being acquired by Italian Andrea Recordati.

Majorca showed why it remains one of yacht racing's most popular venues, providing competitors with a 'compete test' as conditions ranged from a solid 20-22 knots gusting to mid-20s on the opening day, to lighter sea breeze over the weekend.

Sadly, due to work commitments, *Galateia*'s owner David M. Leuschen was unable to steer his white Wallycento, handing over the wheel to his tactician, Kiwi pro sailor Kelvin Harrap. *Galateia* went on win all six races - two windward-leewards held on Friday and Saturday, with coastals on the first and final days.

On the opening day *Galateia* won over *Leopard 3* by a huge 15 minute 32 second margin. The fleet subsequently closed up on day two with *Magic*

Above: PalmaVela was the first race for the new owners and crews on *Bullitt* and *Spirit of Malouen X*. Photo: Nico Martinez/PalmaVela
Right: Despite being 'push button', a small army is still required to race large maxis like the Wallycento *Galateia*. Photo: @María Muña by SailingShots.es





Paul Berger's Swan 80 Kallima fully powered up.
Photo: @María Muiña by SailingShots.es

Carpet Cubed second by just 14 seconds. Ostensibly 'making the difference' was *Galateia's* pro helm, but in fact there were many additional factors: principally having had work carried out over the winter, and having the supreme tactical duo of former Alinghi teammates, six-time America's Cup winner Murray Jones and Olympic 470 gold medallist Jordi Calafat, who also provided local knowledge.

"We had a great week," commented Harrap. "Sometimes you get a bit of momentum and confidence. It was tricky, but with the changes we made over the winter the boat seems to be going better: It is mainly sails and the way we are sailing the boat. The crew work was pretty good and the starts were going well. Sometimes you have a regatta where everything goes right." *Galateia* also won the prize for the best-placed IMA Member.

Competition was close for the remainder of the IMA maxi podium with four of the six yachts coming home second or third over the four days. This race was principally between *Magic Carpet Cubed* and *Bullitt*. Two second-placed finishes in the last two races granted the new Italian team second by a point.

Although launched in 2018 as *Nahita*, the 93ft *Bullitt* is one of the most recently launched Wallys. A judel/vrolijk design, she was conceived to race, albeit within the usual Wally aesthetic, but her original owner had put her on the market soon after her launch. Last winter she was acquired by Andrea Recordati, making her his third Wally. Recordati stopped racing nine years ago due to family and work commitments, but the latter eased recently. "I was at the last Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup and met up with some of my old team. I looked at all the racers





and I said 'it is time to get back into the game'. I knew *Nahita*, so I looked her up, she was available and here I am!"

Coming second was beyond Recordati's expectations: "It is great to be back racing - I am extremely happy with how this week went. We've seen exponential improvement in how we sail the boat. We have a lot of ideas on how to improve the boat and get her even faster..." *Bullitt's* all-star crew, led by Francesco Bruni, includes several of Recordati's original race team.

Unfortunately, *Magic Carpet Cubed* had a difficult end to *PalmaVela*, her final race compounded by a broken luff cable and a blown-out spinnaker. She ended up third overall.

The race for fourth was also tight between *Leopard 3* and Paul Berger's Swan 80 *Kallima*, which finished tied on points, with *Leopard 3* prevailing on countback. *Leopard 3's* owner commented: "It was a great, very well organised event and it was nice that we had seven boats in our class which meant it was competitive racing. The boat is going well. We have new sails and the boat has got lighter, so we are still trying to figure things out."

This was the first event too for the Wally 107 *Spirit of Malouen X*, with her new owner and new crew, making the substantial step up from their TP52, a boat not even half as long as their new giant. Crew boss, Volvo Ocean Race winner Laurent Pagès, commented: "We managed to get around the course, not dump the kite in the water, do proper manoeuvres... On this boat it is very easy for things not to happen as planned. So communication and timing is absolutely vital, but that doesn't come immediately."



Top: *Spirit of Malouen X's* crew were pleased to get around the course.
 Left: Costly blown spinnaker on *Magic Carpet Cubed*. Photos: @María Muiña by SailingShots.es
 Above: Andrea Recordati and the crew of *Bullitt* celebrate their early success.
 Photo: Nico Martnez/PalmaVela

ROLEX GIRAGLIA - INSHORES

Originally the Giraglia was created as a symbolic offshore race, designed to help thaw relations between France and Italy following World War II.

In 1998 Rolex became the event's title partner, and since 2002 its offshore race has consolidated around a course between Saint-Tropez and Genoa, via the famous rock off northern Corsica. Meanwhile the race has not just grown in size of participation, but also as an event itself, with the addition of an increasingly competitive inshore series held out of Saint-Tropez prior to the start of the offshore race. Today there is even a feeder race to the inshores from Sanremo.

Once a warm-up for the offshore, today the three days of inshore races are an event in their own right and as such are the third event of the IMA's annual Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge. As ever the Rolex Giraglia is organised by the Yacht Club Italiano with the collaboration of the Yacht Club Sanremo and the Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez, with the support of: Yacht Club de France, Union Nationale pour la Course au Large (UNCL), the IMA, City of Saint-Tropez, City of Genoa and City of Sanremo.

For the 2022 Rolex Giraglia inshores the maxi fleet was divided into three classes. Seven, including the 100-footers and former Maxi 72s raced in Maxi 1, while six Mini Maxis ranging from 60-footers, such as IMA President Benoît de Froidmont's *Wallyño* to the Rogers 80 *Aegir*, were in Maxi 2, plus three more competing in ORC 0.

Racing for the maxis took place in the bay off Saint-Tropez's famous Pampelonne Beach where the race committee included Ariane Mainemare and Alfredo

Ricci from the IMA. The maxis started by sailing two windward-leewards on the opening day in a 10-12 knot southerly. For the following day's coastal race the wind had backed into the east and dropped to 8-10 knots.

The inshore racing concluded on the Tuesday, the day before the start of the offshore race, with a further windward-leeward, albeit shortened, again on the Baie de Pampelonne. This was well received by the competitors, many of whom believed racing would be impossible on this day due to the lack of wind. America's Cup legend Brad Butterworth, tactician on *Jethou*, praised the organisation: "The race committee did a great job. Today was looking like not being a good day to race, but they managed to fit one in."

Usually maxi yacht racing is close, but uniquely at this event there were yachts that posted perfect scorelines across all three maxi classes: Sir Peter Ogden's judel/vrolijk 77 *Jethou* won all four races in Maxi 1 to finish four points ahead of Peter Dubens' Maxi 72 *NorthStar*. In third Sir Lindsay Owen-Jones' *Magic Carpet Cubed* was a further two back, winning her intense battle with fellow Wallycento Charif Souki's *Tango*, despite not sailing on the final day.

Meanwhile in the smaller Maxi 2 class, Alessandro Del Bono's *Capricorno* also scored four bullets. The 79ft Reichel/Pugh designed ILC maxi beat IMA President Benoît de Froidmont's Wally 60 *Wallyño* by four points, in turn squeaking in one ahead of Adriano Salvini's Felci 61 *Itacentodue*, with neither boat finishing a race off the podium.

Despite the rather conclusive results, competition was nevertheless tight over the four races,

Turquoise is fast! Spirit of Lorina trails Capricorno, which achieved a perfect scoreline.
Photo: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi





particularly between *Jethou* and her former Maxi 72 rival Peter Dubens' *NorthStar*. "It is always close. We are a bit faster than them, but we rate higher. The two of us were going well," explained Brad Butterworth. "The big boats - when there was a bit of breeze, they were competitive, but when it got light, they struggled." This was especially true of the final day's racing, when Sir Peter Ogden was especially delighted that due to the light conditions, his all-black *Jethou* came home ahead of all of the 100-footers, not just under IRC corrected time but on the water too.

Among the 100-footers, the all-black Wallycento *Tango* was competing in her first race in three years. Sailing with a largely French crew, her afterguard included François Brenac on tactics and Jean-François Cuzon navigating, while French 470 Olympic gold and bronze medallist Thierry Peponnet was strategist. Peponnet explained: "We twice did four days of practice in La Ciotat, but no racing with others around, so it was good to have that opportunity to figure out our routines on board, starting, manoeuvres, etc. We have some new people also, so it was good. In light air we are pretty happy." While they had no new sails, they still had some on board, unused from when they last raced in 2019. Compared with the immaculate *Magic Carpet Cubed*, Peponnet reckons *Tango* perhaps has a small advantage in light conditions.

Despite the two giant Wallycentos and the extended former Wallycento (the 107ft *Spirit of Malouen X*), the biggest boat competing in the Rolex Giraglia inshores was the Dubois-designed, New Zealand-built, 111ft *Silvertip*, belonging to Swiss entrepreneur

Left: Kite drop on the Felci 61 Itacentodue.
Right: *Tango* leads *Spirit of Malouen X*.
Photos: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi





and philanthropist Bernard Sabrier. Sabrier is a Kiwi-ophile and supports the New Zealand Millennium Cup superyacht regatta. Unsurprisingly then, *Silvertip's* crew includes several legends of New Zealand sailing such as Tom Dodson, more regularly tactician on the J Class *Velsheda*; former America's Cup and round the world race sailor Matt Mason; and America's Cup legend, designer and one-time Team New Zealand syndicate head Tom Schnackenberg, who navigates. According to Schnackenberg, typically *Silvertip* competes with this crew at the Millennium Cup, but on this occasion Sabrier called them for Rolex Giraglia duty.

"It has been pretty good," said Schnackenberg of the inshores. "Everything is well explained and the courses well set up. We slip on round and enjoy ourselves while trying to work out what sail to use in the light conditions!"

Despite being 27 years old, *Capricorno* is a prime example of how a well equipped, well optimised and well sailed yacht can be a winner under the IRC rating rule, regardless of age and having been designed to the IMS as an ILC maxi in the 1990s. Ignoring her aged design, the boat otherwise looks immaculate and her crew are among some of the most faithful, many having sailed with Alessandro's father Rinaldo on board their ILC 46 *Capricorno*, when they won the Admiral's Cup for Italy in 1995.

"We had some good sailing," explained *Capricorno's* tactician Flavio Favini of the Rolex Giraglia inshores. "I think we have been sailing okay, although we are still learning the boat a little bit." Apart from one day when there was around 15 knots, the otherwise light conditions weren't what Del Bono and the



Capricorno crew had hoped for this week. "Last year we were fine in the light, but now the boat should be better in medium conditions. We have been working on the stability - improving the bulb and sailing with more crew."

Both *Jethou* and *Capricorno* were subsequently awarded with IMA trophies for the best-placed owner-driver IMA members at the Rolex Giraglia prize-giving, following the offshore race, at the Yacht Club Italiano in Genoa.

*Left: Peter Dubens' NorthStar had a strong regatta, but was unable touch the four bullets of Sir Peter Ogden's Jethou.
Right: The magnificent Mark Mills-designed Wallycento Tango.
Photos: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi*

MAXI YACHT ROLEX CUP

Rebounding strongly from the pandemic, the 2022 Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup saw a near record fleet of 50 yachts gather in the marina outside the Yacht Club Costa Smeralda for the pinnacle event of the maxi yachting calendar. Of these, 46 were competing. As has been the case since it was first held in 1980, the event was organised by the YCCS and the IMA. Racing was held on five days, punctuated by Thursday as the scheduled layday/reserve day.

It was also the penultimate event in the IMA's Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge. At this stage in the series, defending champion IMA President Benoît de Froidmont and his Wally 60 *Wallyño* were leading, but by just one point from Alessandro Del Bono's ILC maxi *Capricorno*, with Peter Dubens' *NorthStar* and Sir Peter Ogden's *Jethou* chasing hard for the third step of the podium.

In the 30.51+m Super Maxi class was once again Christian Oldendorff's Spirit 111 *AC Geist*, up against Jean-Luc Petithuguenin's Wally 107 *Spirit of Malouen X*, plus two Swan 115s - *Shamanna* and *Moat 1*, owner Juan Ball having traded up from his Swan 90 *Nefertiti* to the ex-*Highland Fling XV*. However the longest yachts were the Js, this year racing in their own class. The fleet was back up to four with regulars *Velsheda* and *Topaz* joined by the 'Super J' *Ranger*, now with a new American owner, and *Svea*, campaigned by a trio of Swedes: Filip Engelbert, Hjalmar Winbladh and two-time Rolex Mini Maxi World Champion Niklas Zennström.

For a second year the Maxi class had a phenomenal line-up with five Wallys, including the 100-footers - Sir Lindsay Owen Jones' *Magic Carpet Cubed*, Claus-Peter Offen's *y3k*, David M. Leuschen's

Galateia and Charif Souki's *Tango* plus Andrea Recordati's 93-footer *Bullitt*. They were up against the Farr 100 *Leopard 3*, while Lord Irvine Laidlaw was hoping to right the wrong of 2021 when his Reichel/Pugh 82 *Highland Fling XI* was leading strongly only for her forestay to break. This year they were joined by the racers: *Rambler 88*, now campaigned by Bryon Ehrhart, and Wendy Schmidt's Botin Partners 85 *Deep Blue*, plus a trio of Southern Winds - the 90 *AllSmoke*, Canadian Will Apold's 96 *Sorceress* and Massimiliano Florio's 82 *Grande Orazio*, the 2018 winner.

There was another strong turnout of six former Maxi 72s, favourite being Dario Ferrari's *Cannonball*, winner of the last two editions and now extended to 75ft, while there were high expectations for Hap Fauth's *Bella Mente*, now 74ft. They were up against *Jethou*, plus the less modified *Vesper* of Jim Swartz, George Sakellaris' *Proteus* and Peter Dubens' *NorthStar*, now racing with powered winches.

The Mini Maxi 2 podium from 2021 returned with Alessandro Del Bono's *Capricorno*, Luciano Gandini's Mylius 80 *Twin Soul B* and Jean-Pierre Barjon with his Botin Partners 65 *Spirit of Lorina*. They were joined by Carlo A. Puri Negri's *Atalanta II* and the two Wally 80s, *Rose* of Sven Wackerhagen and Jean Philippe Blanpain's *Ryokan II*, alongside the Vismara 80 *MoMi* of Angelomario Moratti and Nicola Minardi de Michetti.

Wallyño was in the ten-boat Mini Maxi 3 + 4 class, up against repeat winner Riccardo de Michele's Vallicelli 78 *H2O*, plus Luca Scoppa's Dehler 60 *Blue Oyster*, Luigi Sala's Vismara Mills 62 *Yoru* and Aldo Parisotto's Mylius 65FD *Oscar3*. This class'

Despite now being one of the shortest former Maxi 72s, Jim Swartz's Vesper convincingly won the Mini Maxi 1 class.
Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi





MAXI YACHT ROLEX CUP

other half comprised Swans, including two original 65s, Anthony Ball's *Six Jaguar* and Giuseppe Puttini's *Shirlaf*, plus the 651 *Lunz Am Meer* campaigned by Marietta Strasoldo and the more modern 601s, Gerard Logel's *@robas* and *Les Amis* of Valter Pizzoli.

However all eyes were on both Roberto Lacorte's new 60ft AC75-style foiler *FlyingNikka*, sailing alone in Mini Maxi 0 with the stratospheric IRC rating of 3.866, and Pier Luigi Loro Piana's *My Song*, the first example of Nautor's new ClubSwan 80, racing in the Maxi class.

The opening part of the regatta threw up plenty of surprises from the wind, unusually moderate and from the southeast rather than the prevailing northwest. Eyebrows were raised too, looking at some of the results, as some of the new teams came out on top in the Js and also in the Super Maxi class, while the less 'pimped' former Maxi 72s were showing the way to the lengthened favourites in Mini Maxi 1. All sailed coastal courses on the opening day before the Maxi 72s and Js were broken out to race two windward-leewards on day two, followed by the Maxis on the Wednesday.

In Wednesday's second windward-leeward, *Galateia* finally managed a race win, despite an exceptional upwind leg from *Bullitt* which led all the 100-footers around the top mark. Similarly among the Super Maxis, *Shamanna's* winning streak came to an end when Argentinean Juan Ball's *Moat 1* scored her first win, despite this only being the crew's second event with their new yacht. While ostensibly a sistership to *Shamanna*, sharing the same Swan 115 hull, *Moat 1*, at 65 tonnes, is almost 40 tonnes lighter

*Left: Vesper's foredeck hands receive a dowsing.
Right: Mini Maxi 3 and 4 start - H2O (to windward) managed a perfect scoreline.
Photos: IMA/Studio Borlenghi*







MAXI YACHT ROLEX CUP

than her more luxuriously appointed rival and so needed to sail at least 30 seconds/mile faster to beat them.

Thursday's layday was one of sorrow for the Anglo-Saxon competitors following the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II. On the penultimate day, out of respect for the late monarch, *NorthStar* and *Jethou* raced for precisely 96 seconds (one for every year of her life) before they dropped their sails, their crews standing, heads bowed, for a minute's silence. They then returned to port.

For the rest of the fleet, on the water conditions on Friday were exceptional and, with the wind forecast to build into the mid-20s, the race committee chose to start an hour earlier. All classes were sent off on relatively short coastal courses, briefly nosing into 'Bomb Alley' before heading south to round the islands of Mortorio and Soffi and then back to the Porto Cervo finish line.

Remarkably, in four of the seven classes the winner was decided by this point, with a day to spare. The Super Maxi class proved a war of attrition. The regatta did not go well for *Spirit of Malouen X* which retired with overwhelming technical problems on the Tuesday. On the breezy Friday Vittorio Moretti's Maxi Dolphin 118 *Viriella* didn't start, *Moat 1* retired with overhaul issues and *Geist* sailed most of the race bare-headed. Thus, with a 1-1-2-1 near perfect scoreline, *Shamanna* comfortably claimed the win - a fine result from the Swedish team and her pro-am crew.

"We have been training quite a lot and it came together very nicely this time with great crew work," said *Shamanna's* proud owner. "This is a great regatta with all these powerful boats and the scenery is



beautiful. I like the coastal races – a lot of things happen in them and there is a lot of interaction when the boats come together."

There was a near identical result for another Swedish boat in the Js where *Svea* finished second to *Velsheda* in Wednesday's race, but otherwise posted a perfect scoreline, leading into the final day with an unassailable six points to second-placed *Ranger's* 13, bringing much delight to *Svea's* owners, all of whom were racing on board. It meant they continued their 100% success rate, winning two out of two regattas since launching their campaign.

The former Maxi 72s were supposed to be the most competitive maxi classes, but a third bullet on breezy Friday was adequate for *Vesper* to claim the title. In this class, this had only been achieved once before when Hap Fauth's *Bella Mente* won the Rolex

Maxi 72 World Championship in 2016. This left George Sakellaris' sistership *Proteus* (ex-*Rán 5*) second and *Bella Mente* third.

While *Vesper* had won Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille with an almost perfect scoreline, competition at the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup was more heated. "I did not imagine this at all," admitted a delighted owner, Jim Swartz. "Coming into the regatta we were worried about *Bella Mente* and *Cannonball*, with all their modifications, but we kept it simple and clean and the boys did an incredible job. *Vesper* likes breezy conditions and so do I."

Sadly, on *Cannonball* there had been an incident during Tuesday's race when four-time America's Cup winner and main sheet trimmer Kiwi Warwick Fleury had to be rushed to hospital having suffered an aortic aneurism. Fleury underwent open heart

All eyes were on these two brand new yachts.

Left: Pier Luigi Loro Piana's ClubSwan 80 My Song. Photo: ROLEX/Carlo Borlenghi

Right: Roberto Lacorte's fully foiling FlyingNikka. Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi



*She is soon to be replaced, but Claus-Peter Offen's Wally 100 y3k still scored two podium finishes during the week.
Photos: IMA/Studio Borlenghi*

surgery in hospital in Sassari on the Wednesday and out of respect *Cannonball* did not race that day. Fortunately Fleury has since staged a full recovery.

Going into the final day, Riccardo de Michele's *H2O* in Mini Maxi 3-4 was the only class leader still holding a perfect scoreline. One reason for *H2O*'s extraordinary performance is pure hard graft: Her persistent owner has entered *H2O* in every edition of the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup since 2008. De Michele's competitive touchpaper was lit when *H2O* finally won the last race of the 2014 Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup. Since then, the silver Vallicelli 78 has been a serial class winner here - in 2015, then 2017-2019 and now this year too, also finishing third in 2016, 2019 and 2021. "I am very proud of my team and of my boat," he commented. "This week was really lovely and very interesting from a sailing point of view."

Behind there was a tight fight for the remaining podium positions between *Oscar3*, *Blue Oyster* and *Shirlaf*, separated by just four points.

In the Maxi class there was celebration on Pier Luigi Loro Piana's new ClubSwan 80 *My Song*, which took their first ever race win. "Today was very nice with a lot of wind and everything went well. It felt very sensitive, very smooth and soft. Sometimes, when we were at 19-20 knots reaching, I could feel not too much heel and the boat was floating like a motor boat. There is a lot to learn, but already the fundamentals are there," said her proud owner.

Lord Irvine Laidlaw was keeping his fingers crossed that his team would make no unforced errors in the latter stages of the event. *Highland Fling XI* was

Right: Other stars of the show were unquestionably the four Js racing.





Above: Unmolested boats prevailed among the former Maxi 72 with George Sakellaris' *Proteus* coming second in Mini Maxi 1.
All photos: IMA/Studio Borlenghi

fourth on the penultimate day, leaving them seven points clear of *Galateia*, with the Wally 93 *Bullitt* a further four points adrift in third, but with *Grande Orazio*, *My Song*, and *y3k* all capable of reaching the podium too.

Fortunately his prayers were answered; a valiant effort was made to run racing on the final Saturday, even bringing the start time forward by two hours. However, as the gun went for the first start, so the AP flag was hoisted followed by the H. At the top of *Velsheda's* rig at the time they had seen a solid 25 knots, gusting to 30.

Of their Maxi class victory, Lord Laidlaw explained: "I decided to hold on to the boat for another year, just to finish with this wonderful boat on a high. This event has been really perfect - great competition, with fantastic racing. The Maxi fleet is very high quality - of all the years I have been coming to the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, this is the finest fleet, so it is especially good to win against them. As always, Porto Cervo has proved to be the best place in the world to race." In fact, if racing had occurred that final day, it might have proved difficult for *Highland Fling XI* as their J4 headsail tore during hoisting.

The closest finish was in Mini Maxi 2 where Alessandro Del Bono's *Capricorno* defended her title by just one point from the IMA's 2021 Yacht of the Year, *Twin Soul B*, with *Rose* three points behind, tied in turn with *Spirit of Lorina*.

"It has been very close with *Twin Soul B*, which sailed very well," admitted *Capricorno's* tactician Flavio Flavini. "It was a good competition - a bit of everything, light air and windy." *Capricorno's* victory



▲ Aldo Parisotto's Oscar3. ▼ Carlo A Puri Negri's Atalanta II.



▲ Anthony Ball's Swan 65 Six Jaguar.



▼ Shirlaf, Lunz Am Meer and H2O among the Mini Maxi 3 and 4 starters.



▲ Jethou's crew stands in silence remembering HM Queen Elizabeth II.



▲ Benoît de Froimont's Wally 60 Wallyño. ▼ Twin Soul B was second in Mini Maxi 2.



MAXI YACHT ROLEX CUP



▲ Riccardo de Michele and his Mini Maxi 3-winning H2O crew. ▼ Lord Irvine Laidlaw's Highland Fling XI claimed the Maxi class top prize.



▲ Svea's crew celebrates victory among the Js. ▼ Rolex timepieces and extensive silverware for the winners.



Photos: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi





winners.



▲ Shamanna - victorious in the Super Maxi class. ▼ Jim Swartz and the Vesper crew - Mini Maxi 1 winners.



marked the 25th anniversary of when, as Hasso Plattner's *Morning Glory*, she won her first Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup. As an ILC maxi, she lacks beam and a fuller hull shape, and thus reaching potential compared to her newer rivals. Given the number of coastal courses and reaching conditions which should not have favoured her, *Capricorno's* success was testament to her highly experienced crew, many of whom competed with Del Bono's father Rinaldo in the winning Italian Admiral's Cup team in 1995 (read the full *Capricorno* story on p24).

Saturday's prize-giving, held in the Piazza outside the YCCS's clubhouse in Porto Cervo, was as packed as it used to be in pre-pandemic years. Here class winners received their trophies and Rolex timepieces while the owner of the Wallycento *Galateia*, David M. Leuschen, was awarded the trophy for the best placed IMA member.

In summary IMA Secretary General Andrew McIrvine, commented: "This event, the pinnacle of the maxi year, continues to assemble the world's most impressive and varied collection of racing maxis. We have seen a near record level in numbers but have surpassed all previous records in terms of quality, including the very latest designs, like Nautor's ClubSwan 80, to the most extreme, as exemplified by *FlyingNikka*."

"Competitors keep returning for a range of reasons: Excellent race management; close racing within a testing range of courses, often in narrow channels between islands with spectacular scenery. Although we have strict owner-driver rules, these owners are supported by the world's very top sailors, tacticians, navigators and crews."



LES VOILES DE SAINT-TROPEZ

For a third year Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez continued its two-week format, with week one for the classics, giant schooners and smaller 'modern' boats, leaving the second exclusively for maxis. Organised by the Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez (SNST) in conjunction with the IMA, maxi racing was held over four days, sandwiching a layday.

Besides bringing in expertise to run the maxi racing, helping decide class splits, etc, the IMA also supplies its own race officer in Ariane Mainemare, helping to elevate the race management of the event - perhaps a factor contributing to the event now being viewed increasingly by teams as a serious, competitive regatta. Whether it is this, getting its own week or just the lure of the Côte d'Azur hotspot itself - something is attracting more maxis, with 46 racing in 2022, the same number as the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup.

The event was also the culmination of the IMA's Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge (MMIC), providing a last opportunity for members to get points on the scoreboard. Due to the pandemic, the MMIC was last held in 2019 when it went down to the wire, decided on the last leg of Les Voiles' last race, ultimately won by IMA President Benoît de Froidmont's *Wallyño*. Going into the event in 2022, Alessandro Del Bono's Reichel/Pugh 78 ILC maxi *Capricorno* led the MMIC by a single point from *Wallyño*, but sadly de Froidmont was forced to withdraw at the last minute for personal reasons. This left the Wallycentos *Galateia* and *Magic Carpet Cubed* as *Capricorno's* main competition for the MMIC title.

On a poignant note, the event was also special for American long-term maxi owner and IMA supporter

George David who, having turned 80, looks set to hang up his seaboots. His *Rambler 88*, winner of countless races, both line honours and on corrected time, and setter of numerous passage records, will be campaigned in the future by former Maxi 72 owner Bryon Ehrhart, and renamed *Lucky*.

Also on the race course was the 60ft *FlyingNikka*, still with an off-the-scale IRC rating of 3.866, astonishing when compared to *Rambler 88's* 1.891 or the lowest -rated maxi competing, the Swan 65 ketch *Cassiopeia*, at 1.079. However, unfortunately for owner Roberto Lacorte, the week's ultra-light conditions would prove less than optimal for his futuristic foiler.

While there were no Js entered, the nearest equivalent was the beautiful Truly Classic 108 *Nanuam*, recently sold to a British owner. Among the impressive array of other supermaxis racing in Maxi 1 were Jean-Luc Petithuguenin's Wally 107 *Spirit of Malouen X*, the Swan 115 Jasi (ex-*Odin*), Francesco de Santis's Southern Wind 100 *Morgana*, the McKeon/Vitters 108 *Pattoo* and Bernard Sabrier's Dubois 112 *Silvertip*, with a crew including several Team New Zealand legends such as Tom Dodson.

Maxi 2 contained three former Maxi 72s including Dario Ferrari's 75ft *Cannonball*, Sir Peter Ogden's 77ft *Jethou* and Peter Dubens' *NorthStar*. However they faced the crème of the maxi fleet including the Wallycentos: Charif Souki's *Tango*, David M. Leuschen's *Galateia* and Sir Lindsay Owen-Jones' *Magic Carpet Cubed*, defending champion after she pipped *Rambler 88* to the post in 2021. Also in this mix were the Farr 100 *Leopard 3* and Claus-Peter Offen's Wally 100 *y3k*. After winning the Maxi Yacht

Sir Lindsay Owen-Jones' Wallycento Magic Carpet Cubed powers past the familiar terracotta-coloured Cote d'Azur hotspot.
Photo: Gilles Martin-Raget/www.martin-raget.com



Rolex Cup, the Reichel/Pugh 82 *Highland Fling XI* had been sold, but was racing again with a new owner, rechristened *Django Unchained*.

Also fresh from her superb Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup win was the Del Bono family's *Capricorno*, but set to meet her match in Canadian Terry Hui's Wally 77 *Lyra*, class winner in 2021 and the IMA's first Maxi European Champion, plus Luciano Gandini's Mylius 80 *Twin Soul B* and Philippe Ligier's Wally 80 *Ryokan 2*, the 2020 Saint-Tropez winner. Then there was the heavily-campaigned Mylius 60, Jean-Pierre Dreau's *Lady First III*, and her sistership, Maurits Van Oranje's *Sud*. Meanwhile Philip Rann's Swan 80 *Umiko* and Paul Berger's Swan 82FD *Kallima* would resume their regular battle, together with the Southern Wind 82RS *Ammonite*, now under new ownership, plus *Black Legend 6*, a Sam Manuard-designed 72ft Black Pepper Code 3, newly launched in 2021.

Finally in Maxi 4 were two famous 12 Metres: regular competitor *French Kiss* plus another 1987 America's Cup challenger, *Kiwi Magic*. Also in this class were François Benais' Shipman 63 *Bambo*, the 2021 class winner, plus manufacturer boats including Nicolas Piguet's Swan 68 *Defiance*; the Swan 651 *Futuro*, entered in the 2024 Ocean Globe Race by former chantier Multiplast boss Dominique Dubois; plus the venerable 65s, Juerg Schneider's *Saida* and Yann Taillefer's ketch *Cassiopeia*. Six yachts were entered from CNB including Nicolas Piguet's CNB77 *Aloha*, which finished second to *Bambo* last year.

The challenge for the week, for both race committee and competitors alike, was light wind. In fact, it was generally agreed that the race committee, led by



Left: The Maxi 1 and 2 classes, including the Swan 115 *Jasi*, head off downwind.

Right: Dario Ferrari's *Cannonball* showed a clean pair of heels to the 100-footers in the light conditions.

Photos: Gilles Martin-Raget/www.martin-raget.com

PRO Georges Korhel from the SNST, had worked miracles to hold any racing at all. On the opening day for example, they managed to hold racing successfully in just a 5-7 knot easterly and in a similarly light northeasterly, after an hour's wait, on day two. Ultimately, they only lost one day, the final Saturday, but even then they successfully started a race.

On the opening day in Maxi 2 the runaway leader on the water for the majority of the race was *Cannonball*, defying the physics of a shorter waterline length, until she was finally overhauled by Sir Lindsay Owen-Jones' Wallycento *Magic Carpet Cubed* which won on the water by a mere 18 seconds. However the trio of former Maxi 72s would own the leaderboard, with *NorthStar* second and *Jethou* third; *NorthStar* and *Cannonball* were swapping positions on day two and the local heroes on *Magic Carpet Cubed* only displaced *Jethou* from the leaderboard in the third and final race.

Generally the ex-Maxi 72s handled the light conditions better. "It was light breeze and a very tricky race track," explained *Cannonball's* tactician Michele Ivaldi. "The starts were very important and we nailed all of them, even in front of very big boats, but even from there it wasn't easy. We only had a little bit of bad luck in the second race when we came second - we were leading by a lot, but then on the second beat we got into a very bad lane with very disturbed air; we lost *Jethou* and we lost a lot of time on *NorthStar*. Other than that, it was perfect. The boat was going very well in light breeze and all the crew did a fantastic job. It was a very needed bounce back from Porto Cervo and a good way to end the year for Dario [Ferrari, owner]."

Magic Carpet Cubed won the unofficial 'battle of the 100-footers', with *Galateia* coming home fifth overall. "We had a good week; we sailed the boat well and made some good choices," said Sir Lindsay Owen-Jones who lives in Saint-Tropez and has been racing here since the early 1980s. "*Cannonball* is a very difficult boat to beat - I think a couple of knots more and the power of the big boats comes in, but in the very light air they are much more manoeuvrable."

After *Pattoo* won Tuesday's opening race, two bullets for *Spirit of Malouen X* was enough to win her Maxi 1. However, unexpectedly, this was the closest class at this year's Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, with the French Wally 107 winning a three-way tie break on countback from *Pattoo* and *Jasi*. This was the first win for the French team, which only acquired the former *Hamilton* Wallycento, lengthened to 107ft when she was Thomas Bscher's *Open Season*, earlier in the season. "It is good for the project and for the team and the owner because we had some disappointment in Porto Cervo after we broke our forestay," said *Spirit of Malouen X's* project manager and mainsheet trimmer Stéphane Névé. "We had close racing with the Wallycentos during PalmaVela and Giraglia. This week was less difficult because we were not racing in the same group, but it was good."

Spirit of Malouen X differs from the other 100-footers in that most of her crew are experienced amateurs who are still on a steep learning curve, in the process of graduating up from their TP52.

The Wally 107's result might have been much clearer had they not scored a sixth on the opening

day. "I made really big mistakes and wrong calls," admitted tactician, Volvo Ocean Race winner Laurent Pagès. "Anyway, afterwards we were able to sail properly and make the right calls and we overcame those mistakes. Fortunately our helmsman, Cédric Chateau, was able to realise our plans and the boat is very slippery in these light conditions."

The smallest class had three different winners and three very different styles of maxis in each of the three races. In the opening race it was the Swan 65 *Saida*, followed by *Kiwi Magic* in the second and then Milan Markovic's CNB 60 *Nina* in the final race.

Kiwi Magic, Chris Dickson's legendary 'plastic fantastic' KZ-7, was last owned by Bill Koch but recently acquired in an immaculate state by Dane Johan Blach Petersen. A longstanding 12mR fan, Petersen had followed the boat since the 1987 America's Cup racing in Perth and now intends to campaign her in the expanding programme for these boats that is scheduled for the next two years in the Mediterranean.

During the week *Kiwi Magic* and *French Kiss* enjoyed match racing, but ultimately it was *Saida* that won with a superb 1-2-2 scoreline. Perhaps the lake-like conditions were familiar to her Swiss owner? "It was a great week. I am very pleased and very surprised we did so well," said a beaming Juerg Schneider. "Half of our team was new - that is why on the first day it was a little bit difficult, but we had good speed and we went the right way. I thought after the second day we couldn't win everything but in the end we did well. We always seemed to go the right way and had good tactics."

*For Rambler 88's American owner George David, this event was possibly his swan song after lengthy, highly successful decades of yacht racing.
Photo: Gilles Martin-Raget/www.martin-raget.com*





But the big results were in the Maxi 3 class. Here there had been upset on the opening day when instead of the favourites, it was Walter Pizzoli's Swan 601 *Les Amis* that beat all the big guns. Otherwise it was a two-way fight between Alessandro Del Bono's *Capricorno* and Terry Hui's usually unbeatable Wally 77 *Lyra*. After a third for *Capricorno* in the opening race and winning the second, all was going well until they were scored OCS in the third. At this event, yachts scoring OCS have no option to re-start and instead a mathematical penalty is automatically applied. Fortunately for *Capricorno*, they went on to win the race and only incurred a two-point penalty, leaving them just one point astern of *Lyra* overall. However, with no final race sailed, this was not enough to topple *Lyra*, whose consistent string of second places was enough for Terry Hui's Wally 77 to win Maxi 3 overall.

"This whole week has been different - it was the lightest wind I have ever raced in," observed Hui. "We didn't see over 7 knots. So it was difficult, but it was still exciting, although I prefer stronger winds like 15+ knot winds where you have to react to the wind much faster. But the racing was very close."

However, in coming second the *Capricorno* team had done enough to win the 2022 IMA Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge. "I am really very happy," said Del Bono on the final day. "Today we were winning the race [which was abandoned], so I was impressed with the performance of the boat, even in the light air. Without our OCS yesterday we would have won Saint-Tropez."

Andrew McIrvine, IMA Secretary General commented: "This has been one of our most

successful events this year, despite very difficult conditions. I would like to thank the Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez and their race team, including our own Ariane Mainemare, all of whom did a very effective job. We are pleased to be able to award our perpetual challenge trophy for the IMA Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge to Alessandro Del Bono and his stand-out *Capricorno*. We look forward to returning to Saint-Tropez with a flourishing maxi fleet next year for both for the Rolex Giraglia and Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez."



Left: Sitting out might seem futile on a 100ft maxi like *Galateia*, but every little helps...
 Right: Magic Carpet Cubed's Sir Lindsay Owen-Jones.
 Far right: The crews of *Spirit of Malouen X* and Terry Hui's *Lyra* celebrate their class victories.
 Photos: Gilles Martin-Raget/www.martin-raget.com



*IRC strives to rate fairly yachts of differing sizes, performances, sail configurations and ages.
It manages this via a single number that is simple to understand and apply.
Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi*

Throughout 2022 we received a great deal of feedback from our members focussing on what and how we race, with many ideas and suggestions on ways to improve. This was no doubt boosted by a welcome return to a full season of racing.

Of the main developments this year, much has been driven by the way that our fleet is evolving. It was not too long ago that conventional wisdom stated a boat over 100ft being capable of racing and manoeuvring around a tight race course was limited by sail and rig technology, as well as the ability of powered winch systems to meet the line speeds necessary. Yet today we are seeing larger and more complex yachts consign this theory to the past. This has two known effects on our fleets.

Firstly, the difference in performance abilities across the size range has reduced. It used to be that the Mini Maxi fleet was more nimble than anything above 80ft, and as such the racing style varied considerably. That is no longer the case, and we see the Wallycentos and similar are as truly capable of inshore racing on short courses as the Maxi 72s are. As such, the decision has been made to remove the artificial division between Mini Maxi (60 to 80ft) and Maxi (80 to 100ft). If a 79ft yacht is as fast as an 82ft yacht, and they are both capable of tight and fast manoeuvring, they can now enjoy racing against each other on the water. From 2023 classes will be split based on performance (taken from the IRC TCC) so that competition is less of a time trial and more 'hand-to-hand combat'. On the water, more competing boats in the same part of the course will add to the tactical level of the competition and hopefully increase the enjoyment for all competitors.

The second aspect of these developments is that the evolution of race-capable yachts not only extends above 80ft, but above 100ft. Here we see yachts such as the extended Wallycento *Spirit of Malouen X* or the ClubSwan 125 *Skorpios*, exhibiting the same characteristics as their slightly smaller brethren. However, the focus of the Super Maxi division remains on larger, more cruising-orientated designs to enjoy safe competition. Courses and start procedures are determined with the limited manoeuvrability of these designs in mind. As such, we are giving these yachts a choice of either continuing to race in the Super Maxi class on more open and less technical courses, with reduced restrictions (such as our owner-driver rules), or to join their friends in the more race-orientated Maxi fleet. We will remain as flexible as possible in this aspect, and encourage competitors to try it out and see how it fits with their programmes. If at the end of the week the smiles are bigger, the option was worth taking. We will see!

Multiple scoring

Also discussed recently has been the use of wind limits. Through the years I have done a great deal of research into the benefits and pitfalls of using multiple scoring systems and of using single number systems. It is clear that in individual races, when conditions are far from the expected, using scoring based on differing wind strengths can appear to be the best solution. However, the choice of wind range is fraught with danger: It will change throughout the course and, particularly in the maxi fleet, boats of varied sizes and rig heights will see different wind strengths aloft. As a result, a nominal height of 10m above sea level is normally selected,

which in turn needs to be accurately measured throughout the race course if race officers are to make a fair assessment of conditions. Now, we all know that the wind is rarely stable enough to achieve this, plus the breeze typically builds or dies as an afternoon of racing progresses – so when do you make the call? No, I believe that results should be based on the performance of the crews, not on such decisions made by race officials.

Furthermore, a single number system encourages yacht design, configuration and preparation, as well as crew work that is capable of performing throughout the range of conditions that Mother Nature throws at us. In contrast, a multiple scoring system compensates those not as well prepared and may also encourage designs and configurations that are less capable. If a design is lacking stability to race safely in strong winds, it should not be encouraged to do so by a strong wind rating reduction, but penalised for its inadequacies, and the designers encouraged to resolve the problem rather than optimise for it.

Throughout my research into single number versus multiple scoring systems, it has also become very apparent that while individual races may see small changes in results between the two (for better or worse, I do not know!), in an overall series or championship they rarely, if ever, result in a major change on the podium or the general ranking. So it appears clear that the benefits of a multiple scoring system are far outweighed by the additional complexity of the race management required, the uncertainty caused on the race course for competitors, as well as the influence it can have on yacht design and set-up.

Therefore, for all IMA racing, single number scoring solutions are the recommendation, if not the requirement, be it for monohulls or multihulls.

Accuracy

One aspect that is vital is the need for detailed and accurate knowledge of each yacht's measurement data. In the IMA we have worked tirelessly for many years to ensure we have reliable and consistent data throughout the whole fleet. This year we have asked a number of owners to carry out weight measurements, when confidence in their yacht's previous numbers has been reduced through annual maintenance and modifications etc.

We are often asked why we don't follow the more theoretical approach of hull scanning and floatation measurements for the whole fleet, as is done for the

supermaxis. The simple answer is: consistency. Time and again we have demonstrated that weighing is the most reliable and consistent method. It is not dependent upon accurate definition of freeboards on yachts where these references rarely exist. Nor is it reliant on ideal conditions where the floatation can be measured to the nearest millimetre with complete confidence; often for a maxi yacht, the change in floatation measurement of just one millimetre can result in a change in calculated displacement of hundreds of kilograms. Even with the greatest of care, as was discussed at length last year within the former Maxi 72 fleet, significant mistakes can happen and are hard to resolve. So we keep it simple: pick up a yacht and weigh it. This avoids calculations dependent on hull scans, perfectly positioned and recorded reference points in ideal conditions and with

configurations for precise floatation measurements, all of which can result in inaccurate results.

Please consider that, when it comes to measurement - if we didn't need it, we wouldn't ask for it. And as a result, for those yachts racing at IMA events, we have a higher confidence in data accuracy than at virtually any other fleet racing event. Considering the size and complexity of the maxi fleet, I thank you all for your patience and constant understanding in allowing us to set the benchmark.

Multihulls

Another big step for the ATO is the inclusion of a multihull division. Long gone are the days when multihulls were either pure thoroughbred offshore beasts often sailed shorthanded or, at the other end of the spectrum, floating caravans. Over the last decade or so Gunboats and similar designs, are now capable of outpacing the fastest monohull maxis while also being able to travel in luxury between top cruising destinations around the world. Some IMA members have been finding such features appealing – not least the speed achieved when racing while retaining comfort, due to greatly reduced heel angles, plus more deck and saloon space in which to relax and bring along family.

To be absolutely clear: Multihulls will not race against the monohulls of the existing IMA fleet. They are being introduced as an entirely new and separate class with their own rating system and scoring. To establish this, we talked to the owners about existing rules and their preferences, and looked into the most recognised and best-administered systems around today.

In some ways, rating multihulls is simpler than rating monohulls. For all yachts, how much rigging



*ORCmh will be used to rate multihulls when they attend IMA events.
Photo: www.sailingenergy.com*



moment is available is a key gauge with which to compare performance. For a monohull this comes from a combination of weight distribution defining the vertical centre of gravity, form stability from the hull shape, and dynamic stability from how the water flows over the appendages. The different rating rules tackle this challenge in varying ways, with varying measurements and assumptions. But for a multihull the vast majority of its righting moment comes from the form stability produced simply by the distance between the hulls: The wider the platform, the more righting moment you have. This is nice and easy to measure, without the need to strip the boat and carry out complex and weather dependent measurements. On the other hand, weighing such wide boats can be more of a challenge.

On the whole, racing multihulls have so far been largely limited to class rules, or been one-designs. For decades general handicap multihull racing has taken place under the MOCRA rule, under the custodianship of Simon Forbes, who has also been a long-standing staff member at World Sailing - long enough for the federation to have changed its name twice (YRU to ISAF to World Sailing). Simon stepped down from World Sailing technical duties in 2022, but we are glad to know that his passion for multihull racing has led him to join ORC in managing its multihull system - ORCmh. This made the choice of rating system rather simple, particularly as MOCRA has also merged with ORCmh, providing us with a well-used tool for the future of multihull racing under the IMA umbrella.

Of course, there are multiple technical and logistical hurdles, and the focus is on expanding our range, ensuring that we develop multihull racing alongside the monohull fleet to the same high quality.

Our focus at present is on the growing catamaran fleet. With this in mind, and with the view of providing effective and enjoyable racing, we have also reviewed the available scoring solutions within ORCmh, and as discussed earlier, we are certain to go with its single number option.

Whatever type of maxi or multihull you are sailing in 2023, I hope that you all enjoy your racing and are excited by where the IMA is heading.

James Dadd



While 2022 saw Roberto Lacorte's fully foiling 60ft *FlyingNikka* taking part in her own class at the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, for 2023 the Yacht Club Costa Smeralda and the IMA are introducing another genre of maxi yacht to their premier event: Maxi Multihulls.

Maxi Multihulls come in many different flavours, from giant sponsored French trimarans that gobble up oceanic miles, to less performance-orientated 'floating hotels', whose palatial accommodation is

very popular with cruisers. By going ultra-hitech with multihulls it is possible to get some way towards achieving both - a boat with giant accommodation and luxury, but also state-of-the-art construction and race boat equipment, and ultra-high performance: Imagine a two-hulled Wally, capable of supersonic boat speed.

For the last two decades, such boats have been epitomised by Gunboat's catamaran range but, in a

classic example of 'imitation being the sincerest form of flattery', several other manufacturers are now following a similar formula, offering fast, spacious, good-looking and very high-tech two-hulled cruising yachts.

Such boats are popular with blue water cruisers, especially those on a schedule - why go from A to B at sub-10 knots on a lumbering monohull when you can do the same at 20+ knots? As with all high-

performance boats, there comes a time when a desire emerges among their owners to prove their speed by lining up against others on a race course.

Race organisers' willingness to accept multihulls has varied widely around the world. All the Caribbean events welcome them with open arms. In fact, the world's official fastest offshore yacht - Dona Bertarelli and Yann Guichard's 40m trimaran *Sail of Change* (ex-*Banque Populaire V/Spindrift 2*), which in 2012 covered 908 miles in a day, averaging 37.8 knots - is participating in Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille, although this is perhaps no different to when the 44.7m long *Mari Cha III* competed at Antigua Sailing Week. Elsewhere, multihulls were first permitted to enter the UK's Round the Island Race back in the early 1960s, while they were allowed into the Transpac in 1995 and the Royal Ocean Racing Club welcomed them into the Rolex Fastnet Race in the late 1990s.

"Maxi yachts come in all shapes and sizes," explains IMA Secretary General Andrew McIrvine. "Aside from their ever-increasing overall length, they range from thoroughbred racers to pure cruisers, and today cover a huge age range, from the classics and Js, Swan 65s, IOR and IMS maxis, to the very latest IRC racers and cruiser-racers. Last year it was fascinating to see *FlyingNikka* out on the race course and this year we are responding to yet another part of maxi racing – the multihulls. These are no longer the preserve of professional French teams, but are privately owned and campaigned in the exact same way as our monohull maxis are."

In fact, some multihull owners have strong monohull or even maxi yacht backgrounds. For example Jason



On board the Gunboat 68 Tosca.
Photo: Patrick Condy/PKC Media

Carroll, a two-time Melges 32 World Champion, ‘went multihull’ in 2015, campaigning a GC32 flying catamaran, as well as his Gunboat 62 *Elvis*, which he is about to replace with a new Gunboat 80.

Steve Cucchiaro, owner of the Gunboat 60 *Flow*, was a two-time All-American in collegiate sailing while at MIT. He was subsequently part of the US Olympic team and won a gold medal at the 1979 Pan-American Games. More recently he has campaigned a Swan 601 at the 2019 Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup and last year won the Mini Maxi class at the Rolex Swan Cup. The *Flow* catamaran is entered in this year’s Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup.

But the biggest convert has been Lord Irvine Laidlaw, well known for his lengthy series of *Highland Fling* monohulls. Laidlaw first started racing in 1979, his first *Highland Fling* being a humble Westerly GK34 acquired in 1980, by which time he was living in Hong Kong. During the 1980s he was a leading light of the IOR racing scene when, among other accolades, his Farr One Tonner *Highland Fling 3* was part of the British team that won the 1985 Southern Cross Cup.

Since his IOR days, he has been through a series of Swans, winning the Swan World Championship in 1994 with *Highland Fling 7*, a Swan 60, before embracing the IMS rule of the late 1990s with a Carroll Marine 60, coinciding with a couple of seasons in the fledgling Farr 40 class. But the most successful *Highland Fling* was the Reichel/Pugh 82 maxi he had launched in 2009, which in 2022 won the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup for a fifth time. “What an incredible boat,” Laidlaw recalls. “Basically, you could win in the light and in the heavy.”



As to what piqued Laidlaw’s interest in multihulls, after four and a half decades racing monohulls, his reasoning may well resonate with other maxi monohull owners, boiling down to age. Now 80, but still sprightly, he explains: “Larger monohulls could become difficult for me to helm – which you have to do as an owner-driver. The rules for that are very reasonable and very fair, but the problem on a monohull is that you have 10 minutes off every hour and you have to sit on the rail, because there is nowhere else, and even on the rail there is no room for you. If you are beating upwind at 28+° heel it is difficult and my balance isn’t quite as good as it used to be. So it really isn’t a rest...”

“I thought ‘I am either going to have to stop racing large monohulls or I should look for something else.’ So I looked for something else and came across the Gunboat 68, which I got for the 2021 season. And we went right out and won our class at the Loro Piana Superyacht Regatta. That was to see if it was going to give me the racing fun that I required. In the end I could still envisage me using that until I was 90, which I couldn’t racing a monohull aged 85+.”

Laidlaw says he is fine with the motion of his maxi monohulls and multihulls, but what makes the Gunboat so special is that on the catamaran: “I

come off the wheel, I sit in the shade, I can have a coffee, I am sitting on a nice soft cushion. I do that for 10 minutes and I am totally refreshed. You absolutely can't do that on a monohull.

"So I was just looking a little ahead - the time to make a change is before you have to make a change. I could have done a couple more years of monohull sailing, but then I would probably give it up totally. Now with the Gunboat 80 I think I have got a boat that I can use until I retire entirely from racing."

The latest *Highland Fling* is due for launch in July, ready to participate in the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup. While currently the greatest turnout for multihulls of

this type is in the Caribbean, there seems to be growing interest in racing them in the Mediterranean. "We are hoping that by me moving into multihulls, we will encourage others to do the same, but it will take a few years," Laidlaw acknowledges. "We will have five multihulls in Porto Cervo and we hope that some people will look at that and say 'wow - that looks fun'. The more competition we have, the more fun it is." And fun it will be; the VPPs for his Gunboat 80 indicate 34 knots of boat speed in 23 knots of wind.

Lack of numbers means that multihulls are a long way from representing more than a small percentage

of the fleet at the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup. In this first year the YCCS is envisaging a maximum of five boats competing, provided their LH is 18.29+m and they have a valid ORCmh certificate. Until recently the MOCRA rule was being used by many race organisers to handicap their multihull classes, but this has now been incorporated into the ORCmh multihull rule which is also being run by the former MOCRA Rating Secretary Simon Forbes.

The IMA is also in conversation with private owners of MOD70s and other former ORMA60 trimarans, with a view to incorporating them into the Association, perhaps in 2024.



Lord Irvine Laidlaw has moved into catamarans to add more years to his already lengthy yacht racing career.



Over the last five decades there are very few racing yacht classes that haven't been touched by designers judel/vrolijk. The Bremerhaven-based Dutch-German duo have enjoyed success at the highest level; from America's Cup victories to repeated successes in the 52 Super Series, all the way back to the ILC box rules of the 1990s, to the Admiral's Cup and the IOR 'ton' classes of the 1970s and 80s. They have also designed some of the most successful maxis, winning all but one Rolex Mini Maxi/Maxi 72 World Championships between 2009 and 2018.

Fietje Judel (left) and Rolf Vrolijk at an early Admiral's Cup.

Born in Haarlem in the Netherlands, young Rolf Vrolijk took up sailing aged 12. In dinghies he was a Dutch champion several times over and ended up as part of the Dutch Sailing Performance team, but in the early 1970s abandoned his Olympic aspirations. Racing OK dinghies naturally drew him to Germany, and Hamburg which, since 1972, is where he places his seaboots.

During the early 1970s, Vrolijk was involved in sail design and project management for Quarter and



Mini Tonners, but as a hobby, although over 1973-76 he was part of the C&C Yachts Europe Group in Germany. A crucial moment came in 1974 when North Sails Germany's Eckart Wagner enlisted him to help with a Half Tonner he was having built in La Rochelle ready for that year's World Championship. He ended up project managing and sailing on *NorthStar* (above) when they won the Half Ton World Championship. The boat was one of two Doug Peterson Half Ton designs built at Chantier Hervé. It was halcyon days for the ton classes, all a



Above: Rolf Vroljik today.

Below: The first judel/vroljik design - the Quarter Tonner Quadriga.

hotbed of innovation, yet also a friendly place where Vroljik got to know Peterson, Ron Holland and other yacht design luminaries.

During this time he came across Fietje Judel who was rating secretary of the Deutscher Segler-Verband (German Sailing Federation), but also dabbling in yacht design. He had been asked to design a Quarter Tonner and asked Vroljik to help. The result was *Quadriga*, built in 1978 for mast maker Rudi Magg. During this 'wild west' period she was built using a new foam core product called Rohacell which only came in flat panels, requiring much ingenuity to shape. "You were really experimenting, building boats at the time - rigging and mast design were similar. We ended up using a Star boat spar and seeing see if we could keep that up! Rod rigging was also new and you had to figure out how to fasten that." In the 1970s Judel had built a Quarter Tonner with an aluminium honeycomb core: "Of course it fell apart later due to the salinity..."

It was in 1980 that finally judel/vroljik 'turned pro', as Vroljik puts it. This coincided with their first involvement with the Admiral's Cup, working up the Peterson designs *Container* and *Pinta* for the German team in 1981. Their timing was impeccable - while the German team, with one judel/vroljik, *Dusselboot*, finished third in 1981, they were the runaway leader in 1983, as they were again in 1985 by which time all three boats - *Outsider*, *Rubin G VIII* and *Diva* - were their designs.

The 1983 German big boat was Willi Illbruck's *Pinta*, one of two 43ft sisterships built by *Container* owner Udo Schütz's company using high curing temperature pre-preg Kevlar and foam and



DESIGNER FEATURE - JUDEL/VROLIJK

honeycomb core over a steel mould plug - highly advanced for the day. Around this time, Torsten Conradi became the third partner in judel/vrolijk and today, almost four decades on, runs the company. The designers enjoyed further Admiral's Cup success with a third Admiral's Cup victory for Germany in 1993 with their designs *Pinta*, *Rubin* and *Container*.

Following the demise of IOR and the move into IMS and its ILC box rules, judel/vrolijk enjoyed further success with the Illbrucks and their *Pinta* yachts, winning the IMS World Championship in 1996. A decade later when the TP52 class became the new grand prix boat, success continued with Peter de Ridder's *Mean Machine*, winner in 2006, plus *Pinta* for Michael Illbruck, *Cristabella*, *Matador*, *Artemis*, various *Ráns* and *Azzurra*, and most recently *Provezza* and *Platoon* - the 2017 and 2019 Rolex TP52 World Champion.

During the 2000s Rolf enjoyed a significant interlude in the America's Cup, first with Bravo Espana in 2000 before being an early recruit to Ernesto Bertarelli's Alinghi challenger for the 2003 Cup in New Zealand. The Swiss challenger famously won the America's Cup on their first attempt, then retained it in Valencia four years later, only to lose the Deed of Gift match in 2010 to Larry Ellison's Oracle Team USA. Less well-remembered is that judel/vrolijk also designed an ACC boat for a German campaign backed by the Illbrucks, but when no additional backing materialised, the boat became Team New Zealand's 2007 trail horse.

Time spent working for America's Cup campaigns is the equivalent of a Yacht Design PhD. For example,



*Top left: Udo Schutz's IOR50 was part of Germany's winning Admiral's Cup team in 1993. Photo: Alastair Black/PPL
Left: Platoon - Harm Müller-Spreer's double Rolex TP52 World Champion. Photo: Nico Martinez/52 Super Series*

Alinghi's design team was able to tank test ten 8.5m long models using the special facility for ships in St Johns, Newfoundland, plus other facilities in the UK and Belgium, before continuing with two-boat full scale testing. "Now you do all your homework in the computer, unless you get away from an existing family and you need some real world feedback," says Vrolijk. "Always it takes one or two generations of boats to get it right – as we are seeing now with the AC75s."

judel/vrolijk's involvement with maxis dates back to the early 1980s when the 'inshore' IOR fleet was split, with some hitting the maximum size of the IOR's Class A and others its minimum. In 1983, in what would become a very lengthy association with Finnish builder Baltic Yachts, judel/vrolijk designed two of the latter type at 63ft: *Saudade* for Albert Buell and a sistership, *SiSiSi*. These were built much like race boats with a sandwich core, S-glass/aramid and vinylester resin, but were fully appointed below with teak cabinetry, some removable for racing. Sadly 'small' maxi racing dwindled and it would be another decade before Buell called upon judel/vrolijk to create a replacement, this time a 112ft aluminium cruiser built by Royal Huisman. "We had a long fight with Hausman to get a carbon fibre mast on it," Vrolijk recalls.

judel/vrolijk have since worked closely with Baltic Yachts on numerous maxi cruiser-racers and superyachts. Among many, this has included a series of *Pink Gins* - a 30m in 1999, a 46m in 2006 and a 54m in 2017 - for German Hans Georg Nader.

But by far the most consistent success judel/vrolijk has enjoyed is its 10-year run, almost unchallenged



until recently, in the Mini Maxi/Maxi 72 fleet. This began after the 2007 America's Cup with Dan Meyers' 66ft *Numbers*, whose crew included Brad Butterworth and many others from Alinghi, which unofficially was the test platform for the AC90 monohull the Swiss team was proposing for the 33rd America's Cup. *Numbers* notched up repeated successes on both sides of the Atlantic in 2008, including the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup with Alinghi's Ernesto Bertarelli at the wheel.

While *Numbers* was optimised for IRC, at the same time the STP65 box rule class was developing in

the USA. For this judel/vrolijk designed two boats – *Luna Rossa*, which won the Rolex Middle Sea Race, and *Container*, which won PalmaVela and Rolex Giraglia.

Their greatest success came with Niklas Zennström's 72ft *Rán 2*, which not only won back-to-back Rolex Fastnet Races (the first time since the 1950s) in 2009-11 but also the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup in 2009 and three of the first four Rolex Mini Maxi World Championships in Porto Cervo. She was superseded by Hap Fauth's *Bella Mente*, the Rolex Maxi 72 World Champion in 2015 and 2016, followed by

As part of the Swiss design team, Vrolijk was a key piece of Alinghi's successful challenge and defence of the America's Cup during the 2000s. Photo: Thierry Martinez/Alinghi



Top left: First collaboration with Baltic Yachts in 1983 - the 66ft SiSiSi.

Bottom left: the Baltic 175 Pink Gin V was launched in 2017. Photo: Marco Moog Photography

Top right: 'Powered by Alinghi', Dan Meyer's 66ft Numbers was one of the first IRC Mini Maxis. Photo: James Boyd/thedailysail.com

Bottom right: The STP65 Container, one of the last of a long line of race boats for Germany's Udo Schütz. Photo: Nico Martinez/www.martinezstudio.es

Dieter Schön's *Momo*, world champion for the next two years. As testament to these designs, all now out of class, it was the former *Momo*, now Jim Swartz's *Vesper*, that won the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup again in 2022.

Of these boats' evolution, Vrolijk explains: "Their weight was optimised and dropped a lot. The consequence of that was the boats could carry more sail for the same displacement. Then there was the development of the mast and the sails: depowering of the sail plan is as important as hull design, because with the hull the classification rules (ie Germanischer Lloyd) prevent you from going more extreme."

From there, draft started increasing, upwards from 4.6/4.8m with recent boats exceeding 5.7m. "The racing got more upwind-orientated and the losses downwind were compensated by better sails. The angles the boats were sailing downwind were getting higher and sail shape development went in parallel: There were no losses downwind; only gains upwind."

Many of the former Maxi 72s have also been lengthened, the first to undergo this treatment being Sir Peter Ogden's *Jethou* (originally built by Baltic as *Stig*) that grew to 77ft.

Aside from the 72s, Judel/Vrolijk have produced a Wallycento: Sir Charles Dunstone's *Hamilton*. "That didn't come out very well at the beginning, mainly because we were not 100% right on the displacement weights, so the whole concept was not 100%," admits Vrolijk. "But when we changed the boat and optimised it as *Open Season*, it did very well." This required 7ft to be added to her stern. She now races as *Spirit of Malouen X*.



Top right: *Rán 2* is a three-time World Championship winner and two-time Rolex Fastnet Race winner. Photo: James Boyd/www.thedailysail.com
Right: *Bella Mente* also won the Mini Maxi/Maxi 72 Worlds three times. Photo: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi

There are potentially interesting times ahead for judel/vrolijk's relationship with Wally. This season we can expect to see the Wally 93 *Bullitt* (originally built as *Nahita*) being actively campaigned by Italian Andrea Recordati. Meanwhile, due for imminent launch is Claus-Peter Offen's Wally 101 *y3k*, which will be Offen's first judel/vrolijk design, having always been a Frers man. As Vrolijk describes it: "It is a much higher performance boat - very close to *Open Season* in terms of its performance - with a big sail area and relatively low displacement. He was fed up because the old boat was sticky downwind - you sail around against high performance boats and you can keep up with them upwind, but downwind they disappear. He was looking for a boat with good accommodation, but with good downwind and reaching performance and that only works with sail area and displacement." *y3k* will be around 6-10 tonnes lighter than a Southern Wind of an equivalent size.

judel/vrolijk has also designed Wally's new wallywind sailing yachts, including a 110, 130 and 150, the first 110 being currently under construction.

As to a new generation of thoroughbred maxi racers, Vrolijk reckons that owners will avoid the 70-something foot size range, as this will continue to be dominated by heavily optimised former Maxi 72s for some years yet. "It would be difficult to beat an existing boat because you'd have to do a really hitech, pro project. That scares people off. So then - what is the next size up in order to be ahead of them at the first mark? And you are talking about a 78-80 footer." He thinks we may see a few more race boats coming in at around 85ft, a similar size to Wendy Schmidt's *Deep Blue*.



Despite Judel having fully retired and Vrolijk now only involving himself in projects in which he's interested, the future continues to look bright for the company, now led by Torsten Conradi alongside Johan Siefer and Tobias Kohl (responsible for racing boat projects like the 52s and 72s), with Vrolijk's son Alexander and Max Minarek as Brokers/Managing Directors.

So why have they been so successful for more than four decades now? "It doesn't matter which rule - IOR, IMS, a box rule or even America's Cup - the real challenge is to have a very clear, clean look at the class and what the options are," states Rolf.

"Then maybe you go in smaller steps than you'd like to. With the owners/projects you have to be careful that you have the whole package: Available budget; the interest of the owner; a good crew and being able to develop a boat too, because boats are launched with 80% of their performance, but there is still 10-20% more you can get out of it. If you follow that and keep supporting it correctly, you will be successful. We have seen that across all classes we've worked in."

They have also done well maintaining clients. Over the years they have done most - seven or eight boats



– for *Rubin* owner Hans-Otto Schumann, Willy Illbruck, Udo Schütz, Niklas Zennström, Ergin Imre, Harm Müller Spreer and for Hans Georg Näder. The secret? “Basically, we try to tell them the truth!” They also try to stay involved and be part of a boat’s development.

Today the method of yacht design has evolved. Once upon a time projects would get resources to carry out tank testing from where they would build their computer modelling tools. Aside from their work with the America’s Cup, Judel/Vrolijk carried out tank work developing their early Mini Maxi/72

designs. However, today the tank has been more or less replaced by Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD), where yacht modelling takes place digitally. “I don’t think you will see tank testing again,” predicts Vrolijk.

While some designers prefer the more scientific and more clearly defined goalposts of ORC, Vrolijk acknowledges that sailing under IRC has some clear merits: “I like it quite a lot because you see that at events people are not unhappy - they know exactly where they are. They have one number and they know you help and support them as much as

you can - not to beat the rule, but to be in this ‘IRC good world’ that is predictable.”

A common problem of all the current rules, says Vrolijk, is that they don’t evaluate dynamic elements, so aspects such as in what wind strength a boat starts planing is not accurately accounted for. “I think IRC has a good future, especially in the bigger boats. You can still do quite well creating a good IRC boat. Of course there are always problems within the rules you’d like changed. If someone doesn’t win, they always blame the rule... or the designer!”

*Top left: The Wally 93 Nahita is now being campaigned by Andrea Recordati as Bullitt. Photo: IMA/James Boyd
Top right: Judel/Vrolijk’s relationship with Wally has now progressed to the three Wallywind models (right).*

Looking ahead to 2023



*Highland Fling XI leads NorthStar and Jethou around Capri's famous Faraglioni rocks during the IMA's Maxi European Championship.
Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi*



2023 MAXI RACING SEASON PREVIEW

Once again, in 2023 the IMA will hold its second Caribbean Maxi Challenge, followed by its Mediterranean Maxi Inshore and Offshore Challenges, as detailed over the following pages.

This season there are several significant birthdays, starting with the Rolex Giraglia, part of the IMA's Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge, which will celebrate its 70th anniversary. Cooked up over a dinner in Paris between Beppe Croce, President of the Yacht Club Italiano; René Levainville, President of the Yacht Club de France and Franco Gavagnin in December 1952, the first edition of the Giraglia Cup took place the following year. The course this year is the same as then, between Saint-Tropez and Genoa via the now famous turning mark off northern Corsica. To mark the special occasion, this year the yacht clubs involved are laying on special celebrations.

In England, the Royal Ocean Racing Club is holding the 50th edition of the Rolex Fastnet Race. The first edition, then known as the Ocean Race, was held in 1925 when its participants formed the 'Ocean Racing Club'. To date, the event's largest entry has been 388, making it by far the world's most popular offshore race in the world. For the special 2023 edition as many as 450 entries are expected, from the giant 100ft Ultim trimarans and IMOCAs to 30ft family cruisers, with the giant IRC fleet in between, including, of course, maxis. Already entered are American Bryan Ehrhart's *Lucky* (ex-*Rambler 88*), Jean-Pierre Barjon's *Spirit of Lorina* and Zachary Lamb's *Milan*, the former *Rosebud*, winner of the 2007 Rolex Sydney Hobart. For a second year the race will finish in Cherbourg.

In 2025 the RORC will be holding further celebrations to mark its centenary. In addition to that year's Rolex Fastnet Race, the club is working with the New York Yacht Club to lay on a special edition of the transatlantic race from Newport to the Lizard/Cowes, the modern iteration of the most famous early offshore races held in 1866 and 1905.

Historically the Baltic has been popular with maxi yachts. In 2024 it will be possible to compete in two races there: The RORC will be holding the second edition of the Roschier Baltic Sea Race. Biennial, running on 'even' years between Fastnets, this event is a giant windward-leeward, starting off Helsinki, Finland, rounding the island of Gotland off Sweden's east coast, before returning to Helsinki.

Before this is the Baltic's oldest offshore race, the Gotland Runt. Starting in Stockholm, this rounds Gotland before finishing off the Royal Swedish Yacht Club's base in Sandhamn.

2023 will see a strong maxi yacht entry in the Transpac from Los Angeles to Hawaii. First held in 1906, this race has developed its own breed of maxi, the ULDB 'sled', partly due to its course – typically a 2,225-mile downwind speed fest. The present monohull course record of 5 days 11 hours 14 minutes was set by *Comanche*, line honours winner (picking up what is known as the Barn Door Trophy) in 2019. At the time of writing, 18 maxis were entered in the 2023 edition, of which 12 were typical ULDBs, including six Santa Cruz 70. Scratch boat is Manouch Moshayedi's *Rio100* (ex-*Zana*) while at least two former MOD70 trimarans were expected, including Jason Carroll's *Argo* and Justin Shaffer's *Orion*.

Left: Two special editions of the Rolex Fastnet Race are taking place in 2023 and 2025.

Photo: ROLEX/Kurt Arrigo

Right: The start of the Rolex Sydney Hobart has become an Australian tradition.

Photo: ROLEX/Carlo Borlenghi



France



Rolex Giraglia

151 Miglia-Trofeo Cetilar



Regata dei Tre Golfi



IMA Mediterranean Maxi Offshore Challenge

- Rolex Middle Sea Race - 22 October 2022
- La Larga (PalmaVela) - 29 April 2023
- Regata dei Tre Golfi - 12 May 2023
- 151 Miglia-Trofeo Cetilar - 1 June 2023
- Rolex Giraglia (offshore) - 14 June 2023
- Aegean 600 - 7 July 2023
- Palermo-Montecarlo - 22 August 2023

Spain

Mallorca

Menorca

Ibiza

Palma

Formentera

Sardinia

Corsica

Italy

Naples

Capri

Sicily

Palermo

Valletta

Malta

Greece

Sounio

La Larga



Palermo-Montecarlo



Rolex Middle Sea Race



Aegean 600





When Andrew McIrvine became Secretary General of the IMA, more maxi racing took place inshore than offshore. This was despite most maxi yachts being more than capable of racing offshore and there being many world class events in which they could compete. Thus he established the IMA Mediterranean Maxi Offshore Challenge (MMOC), uniting the top offshore races in the region into a championship. It was first run over 2015-16 – the series not running over a calendar year in order that its silver trophy can be presented to the winner at the IMA's annual Members' Dinner at the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup. George David and *Rambler 88* were worthy winners of the first MMOC.

Today the MMOC has grown and comprises seven events from which competitors must sail at least three to qualify. If they sail more, their worst result, or results, are discarded.

The series kicks off with October's Rolex Middle Sea Race. First held out of Malta in 1968, this is the most intriguing geographically of all the 'classic 600 mile offshore races'. The start is tremendous, from the Maltese capital's Grand Harbour, surrounded by its numerous ancient forts and towering Turk-repelling ramparts; the start gun an equally dramatic howitzer canon.

Its course, an anticlockwise lap of Sicily, is exceptional too, first passing Mount Etna and then negotiating the current, maritime traffic and wind vagaries of the Messina Strait, going on past the Aeolian islands, to the turning mark at Stromboli, the second active volcano participants pass. The race continues along the north and west coasts of Sicily, down to the islands of Lampedusa (just 40 miles from the Tunisian coast) and Pantelleria, the southerly turning mark from where boats return through the Comino Channel to the finish line at the entrance to Valletta's Marsamxett Harbour. Taking place in the Mediterranean autumn, competitors should be prepared to experience anything from storms to flat calms – even within the same race.

While 2022 was one of the slowest on record, the year before it was one of the fastest with *Comanche* scoring the elusive 'triple' (line honours; overall win under IRC and a new race record of 40 hours 17 minutes 50 seconds), while Jason Carroll's MOD70 trimaran *Argo* set a new multihull race record of 33 hours 29 minutes 28 seconds.

The MMOC resumes in the spring with La Larga, the offshore race of PalmaVela. Palma has been a popular venue with maxi owners since the 1980s. Its position was galvanised when in 2004 the Real

Club Náutico de Palma introduced Maxi Race Week as the maxis' season opener. Since then the event has been rechristened PalmaVela and allowed smaller yachts to compete as well. In 2021 La Larga was introduced as an offshore race preceding PalmaVela's inshores. The course for this is flexible but typically 225-350 miles long, rounding Ibiza, Formentera and other Balearic islands, according to the conditions. In 2022 Andres Varela Entrecanales's Vismara Mills 68 *Pelotari.Project* scored 'the double' - line honours and corrected time victory.

The MMOC then moves to Italy and the Regata dei Tre Golfi, organised by one of Italy's most prestigious yacht clubs, Naples' Circolo del Remo e della Vela Italia. For a second year, in 2023 this event forms the offshore part of the IMA's Maxi European Championship.

The race starts in the early evening from Naples' Castel dell'Ovo, close to the CRVI's clubhouse, and then heads north via the three bays of Naples, Salerno, and Gaeta, to the northerly turning mark at Ponza. It then returns south, with competitors able to leave Capri to port or starboard, bound for the southerly turning mark of the Li Galli islands south of the Amalfi coast. New for 2023 is the race finishing off Sorrento, instead of Capri's Marina Grande.

At the end of May is the Italian event on the steepest ascent at present. Founded and supported by IMA Vice President Roberto Lacorte, the 151 Miglia-Trofeo Cetilar follows the successful formula of an interesting course around picturesque Mediterranean islands, bookended by two sumptuous parties. The first of these is prior to the start in Livorno, while at the finish another is held in the Yacht Club Punta Ala's magnificent grounds. The course heads southwest to



Andres Varela Entrecanales' Mills-Vismara 68 Pelotari. Project en route to victory in 2022's La Larga.
Photo: Nico Martinez/PalmaVela

the Giraglia rock, off northern Corsica, where yachts often find themselves becalmed in the middle of the night, forced into taking extreme tactics to find breeze – although this was not the case in 2022, when the strongest breeze was at the Giraglia. The course then heads southeast, past Elba and on to the Formiche di Grosseto rocks off the mainland coast, before the final leg north to Punta Ala.

This is one of the shortest events in the MMOC, requiring just one night at sea. The present record of 13 hours 50 minutes 43 seconds was set by George David's *Rambler 88* in 2019.

Just two weeks later competitors sail past Giraglia again in the race bearing the Corsican island's name. Rolex Giraglia was first held in 1953 as a means of thawing relations between Italy and France after WWII. It has since been held on several courses but typically (as it will in 2023) sets sail from Saint-Tropez, heading west to a turning mark at Ile de Port Cross from where the fleet steers a course for the Giraglia rock and then on to the finish off Genoa. Conditions vary – the 2022 race was ultra-light, to the extent that the Yacht Club Italiano's race committee chose to remove the first turning mark. However it can also be breezy, as in 2019, although this needs to hold for as long as possible if competitors want a chance to better *Esimit Europa 2*'s 2012 race record of 14 hours 56 minutes 16 seconds.

Held for the first time in 2021, the Aegean 600 is the MMOC's newest event. Organised by the Hellenic Offshore Racing Club, the race is run out of Olympic Marine in Lavrio, just 30 miles from central Athens. Its course is an anticlockwise lap of the Dodecanese, passing places that fire the imagination of anyone with

even a passing interest in mythology: From the start/finish line off Homer’s sanctuary, the Temple of Poseidon on Cape Sounion, the course passes the Santorini Caldera, Milos, Karpathos, the cosmopolitan hotspot of Mykonos, and Delos, plus major islands such as Rhodes and Kos close to the Turkish coast. Its route is designed to balance all points of sail, providing a mix of open versus protected water racing, while avoiding shipping routes, etc. Also, like the RORC Caribbean 600, it smiles on maxis, with Carlo A. Puri Negri’s Farr 70 *Atalanta II* the outright IRC Overall winner of the first edition, followed by Gregor Stimpfl’s Scuderia 65 *Hagar V* in 2022.

The MMOC concludes with the Palermo-Montecarlo. The only event to touch land in Sicily, this is organised by the Circolo della Vela Sicilia, based in Mondello, north of Palermo. While the finish is in Montecarlo, to prevent boats from taking extreme courses, there is a mid-way gate off Porto Cervo operated by the Yacht Club Costa Smeralda. Competitors can then pass through ‘Bomb Alley’ and through the Strait of Bonifacio, either leaving Corsica to starboard or following the 30 mile longer route up Corsica’s east coast.

Taking place at the end of August, the race can frequently be light and ultra-challenging. The course record is another held by the 100ft *Esimit Europa 2*, which set a time of 47 hours 46 minutes 48 seconds in 2015.

Past winners

2015-16	<i>Rambler 88</i>	George David (USA)
2017-18	<i>Atalanta II</i>	Carlo A. Puri Negri (ITA)
2018-19	<i>Vera</i>	Miguel Galuccio (ARG)
2021-22	<i>Spirit of Lorina</i>	Jean-Pierre Barjon (FRA)



The famous Giraglia Rock off northern Corsica.
Photo: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi

PalmaVela



Rolex Giraglia



Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez



IMA Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge

- PalmaVela - 3-7 May 2023
- IMA Maxi European Championship inshores - 15-18 May 2023
- Rolex Giraglia (inshores) - 11-13 June 2023
- Copa del Rey MAPFRE - 29 July-5 August 2023
- Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup - 3-9 September 2023
- Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez - 30 September-6 October 2023

Spain

Italy

Saint-Tropez

Corsica

Porto Cervo

Sorrento

Sardinia

Palma

Mallorca

Copa del Rey MAPFRE



Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup



IMA Maxi Europeans - inshores



Sicily

Malta



In 2023 the MMIC will again comprise six events, with IMA members having to complete a minimum of three (if they sail more, their worst results can be discarded).

As usual the MMIC will kick off with PalmaVela. The Bay of Palma remains one of the world's top racing grounds, where maxis have been competing since the class' earliest days. In 2022 the Real Club Náutico de Palma's season opener enjoyed a resurgence, especially from the Wally fleet. This will continue in 2023 with nine maxis entered at the time of writing, including the Wallycentos *Magic Carpet Cubed* and *Galateia*, and featuring the welcome return of Argentina's Miguel Galuccio and his 2018-19 MMOC-winning Reichel/Pugh 84 *Vera*. Prior to Thomas Bscher's new sistership *Open Season*

making her debut later in the season, entered in PalmaVela is Hans-George Nader's Baltic 68 Cafe Racer sistership, *Pink Gin Verde*. Another interesting entry is one of the first maxis - *Stormvogel*, Cornelius Bruynzeel's line honours trophy hunter, built to the maximum 70ft limit at the dawn of the IOR rule in 1961 and which the Dutch plywood pioneer campaigned across the globe, including the Sydney Hobart race.

For a second year, the four days of inshore racing at the IMA Maxi European Championship will form the MMIC's second event. Run by the Circolo del Remo e della Vela Italia in conjunction with the IMA, this will comprise four days of inshore/coastal racing in the Bay of Naples/Capri area, the fleet based out of

Despite participation increasing in offshore events, racing inshore remains the most popular discipline among maxi owners, with the biggest gatherings regularly being at the final two inshore events of the season: Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, followed a month later by Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez.

As a result, competition in the Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge (MMIC) is typically both closer and fiercer. When it was first held in 2019 it came down to the last leg of the last race of the last event, Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, with IMA President Benoît de Froimont and his Wally 60 *Wallyño* beating Jean-Pierre Barjon's Swan 601 *Lorina 1895* by a whisker. Then, when it was held again for the first time after the pandemic in 2022 it was another narrow victory, with Alessandro Del Bono's ILC 78 *Capricorno* ending up just ahead of the Wallycentos - David M. Leuschen's *Galateia* and Sir Lindsay Owen-Jones' *Magic Carpet Cubed*.



Photos: Left - Nico Martinez; ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi, Gilles Martin-Raget/www.martin-raget.com
Right: The Real Club Nautico de Palma hosts two annual maxis events - PalmaVela and Copa del Rey MAPFRE. Photo: @Maria Muiña by SailingShots.es

Sorrento on the mainland. This race course is a favourite among maxi owners with the Sorrento Peninsula and Mount Vesuvius as the backdrop in one direction and Capri in another with the fleet one day likely to be sent on the popular lap of Capri. The PRO this year will be leading yachtsman turned race official Stuart Childerley.

The MMIC's third event will be a special one for the Yacht Club Italiano as the Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez will be celebrating the Rolex Giraglia's 70th birthday. Over three days prior to the start of the main offshore race, inshore racing for the maxis will take place on the Baie de Pampelonne, just to the south of the Golfe de Saint-Tropez, but possibly with the traditional coastal course between Port-Cros and Ile du Levant reinstated. Although it doesn't form part of the IMA championship, the YCI are also encouraging competitors coming from Italy to take part in a feeder race from Sanremo, starting on 9 June and arriving in Saint-Tropez the day before the start of inshore racing.

Traditionally the number one multiclass big boat regatta in the Mediterranean, the Real Club Náutico de Palma's Copa del Rey MAPFRE offers racing on the Bay of Palma at the height of the season, as well as some excellent social events in their always bustling clubhouse. The event is notable as His Majesty King Felipe VI both participates in the event bearing his name and then hosts the prize-giving held in Ses Voltes, the piazza adjacent to Palma's chief landmark, the Catedral-Basílica de Santa María de Mallorca.

While some events fall in and out of favour, consistently most popular among maxi owners is the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, held every September in

Porto Cervo, Sardinia. Like the Bay of Palma, the Costa Smeralda, developed by the Aga Khan in the early 1960s, has been a popular racing area for maxi owners since the 1970s, with the first Maxi World Championship held here during the IMA's first season of racing in 1980. Here the highlight is the extraordinarily beautiful race area around the La Maddalena archipelago and 'Bomb Alley', down which the prevailing northwesterlies funnel. The event is hosted by the Yacht Club Costa Smeralda with key social events such as the IMA Members' Dinner and the Rolex Gala Dinner at the Cala di Volpe hotel. Thanks to the long association between the Association and the YCCS, Porto Cervo remains the spiritual home of the maxi class.

Deciding event of the MMIC will be Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, which today attracts a fleet as large as the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup. While for the last few seasons the event has been extended to two weeks, with the maxis competing in week two; for 2023 the event is returning to a one-week format, but with maxi racing slightly staggered versus the modern/classic fleet. For the last few years, the IMA has been involved in the management of the maxi racing here, which has helped improve the quality of the competition with, for example, the race committee now mostly using windward starts.

The winner of the 2023 MMIC will be presented with the series' silver perpetual trophy at Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez's prize-giving.

Past winners

2019	<i>Wallyño</i>	Benoît de Froidmont (BEL)
2022	<i>Capricorno</i>	Alessandro Del Bono (ITA)

Left: Past the Costa Smeralda's Monaci islands at the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup.

Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi

Right: The new ClubSwan 80 My Song makes her debut in the azure waters of the Costa Smeralda.

Photo: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi



British Virgin Islands



Puerto Rico

Netherlands Antilles



IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge

- RORC Caribbean 600
20 February 2023/19 February 2024
- St Maarten Heineken Regatta
2-5 March 2023/29 February-3 March 2024
- Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille
16-22 April 2023/14-20 April 2024



St Maarten Heineken Regatta



Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille



RORC Caribbean 600



While the western Mediterranean is a well-trodden path for most maxi owners, racing in the Caribbean offers a very different yacht racing experience. Usually there is more wind, more sea, more heat and more humidity, but also welcome novelties such as being able to race through the night while only wearing shorts and a t-shirt.

Historically the region is known for its famous ‘race weeks’ and ever since events such as Antigua Sailing Week and St Maarten Heineken Regatta were created, they have enjoyed the participation of maxi yachts.

A significant issue with racing in the Caribbean is getting there. Shipping is one option, although more expensive and less reliable than it once was, with the added complication that there are limited ports to ship into and out of: typically the major French islands, plus Antigua, Grenada and Tortola. Delivery is another option although this results in

unnecessary wear and tear. Perhaps the most fun option is to take part in the RORC-IMA Transatlantic Race from Lanzarote across to Grenada. Up until recently this coincided with the pre-Christmas crossing of the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers, but recent editions saw the start moved to January, allowing crews to get Christmas and New Year at home before heading off.

The IMA presents a special silver perpetual trophy to the monohull line honours winner of the RORC-IMA Transatlantic Race. Recipients of this have included *Leopard 3*, the *Baltic 130 My Song*, the *VPLP-Verdier 100 Comanche* and most recently the *VO70 I Love Poland*. The record for this 3,000 mile race was set by *Comanche* in 2022 with a time of 7 days 22 hours 1 minute 4 seconds.

In 2022 the IMA extended its reach into the Caribbean with the establishment of the IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge. Unlike its Mediterranean equivalents, the Caribbean Maxi Challenge is open to all maxis, not just those of IMA members, with the aim of it gathering momentum, in turn attracting more yachts to visit from the Mediterranean. Significantly it also includes both inshore and an offshore, with competitors able to score the best two out of three.

For 2023 and 2024 the Caribbean Maxi Challenge is consolidating around three events: The RORC Caribbean 600 offshore, St Maarten Heineken Regatta and Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille.

First up in February is the RORC Caribbean 600. This event was first run in 2009 by the Royal Ocean



Photos left: Laurens Morel; Christophe Jouany; RORC/Tim Wright
Right: Vesper and Bella Mente match racing at the 2022 Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille.
Photo: Christophe Jouany/Les Voiles de St Barth





Racing Club, set up with the aim of it becoming the latest of the world's 'classic 600 mile' offshore races, alongside the Rolex Fastnet, Sydney Hobart and Middle Sea races. Compared to those, the Caribbean 600 provides a much more complete test: Not only do competitors face brisk trade winds and an Atlantic swell, but the race course has more turns than perhaps the rest put together, with often the compete sail wardrobe seeing action. Starting and finishing in Antigua, the course passes around 11 islands, extends north to St Maarten and south to Guadeloupe, taking in Barbuda, Nevis, St Kitts, Saba and St Barth, among others.

The present monohull record of 37 hours 41 minutes 45 seconds was set by George David's *Rambler 88* in 2018, while in 2022 Jason Carroll's MOD70 trimaran *Argo* demolished the existing multihull record, romping around the course in just 29 hours 38 minutes 44 seconds.

The race lends itself to maxis which have won not only line honours, but the majority overall under IRC too. They have included George David's *Ramblers* (2011/18), Hap Fauth's *Bella Mentis* (2015/17) and George Sakellaris' *Proteuses* (2014/16), plus the Askew brothers on their VO70 *Wizard* (2019) and Roy P. Disney's *Pyewacket 70* (2023).

Antigua is one of the oldest yachting hubs in the Caribbean and is well connected with the USA and Europe via a large international airport.

This is also true of the Franco-Dutch island of St Maarten, where at the beginning of March, one of the Caribbean's most popular race weeks - St Maarten Heineken Regatta - is held. The event is run, as it has been for the last 40 years, by the Sint Maarten Yacht Club.

Crystal clear waters and northeasterly trades provide a spectacular setting for racing. Each day the maxis are sent off on either a coastal course, including, if conditions allow, a race around St Maarten, or up to four inshore races. The organisers, led by Regatta Director Michele Korteweg, are receptive when it comes to the requirements of maxi yacht teams and the courses they prefer.

As with most Caribbean regattas, the fleet covers the complete range, from fully professional race

teams to amateur crews and bareboat charterers. Within the maxi fleet there is usually a strong entry of former Volvo Ocean Race yachts, which took the top three places in 2023.

Action on the race course is matched by the strong entertainment programme ashore with the Dutch brewer-backed parties featuring top international acts such as the Black Eyed Peas, UB40, The Commodores and The Jacksons.

A few weeks later in mid-April the crews return for Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille, a short flight or ferry ride away from St Maarten. Judging from the grand gathering of superyachts that pitch up there for Christmas and New Year, St Barth is today the favoured Caribbean destination for the jetset. Thus it is easy to see why its main annual regatta is perhaps the fastest-growing of the Caribbean regattas.

Competition here comprises five days of racing for maxis under IRC on a variety of courses around the French island paradise and between St Barth and St Maarten. Overseeing the race management is famous French offshore sailor Luc Poupon. Most attractive here is the ambiance, like Saint-Tropez but with palm trees, plus a social programme that includes live music every evening in the event village, a Crew Party and a layday grand gathering at the magnificent Nikki Beach.

Backed by Peter Harrison's company Richard Mille, Les Voiles de St Barth is the deciding event in the IMA's Caribbean Maxi Challenge.

Winner

2022 *I Love Poland* Polish National Foundation (POL)

Left: Fast out of the blocks in the 2022 RORC Caribbean 600.
 Above: The VO65 *Ambersail II* chases the Austrian Ocean Race Project's VO65 *Sisi* during the RORC Caribbean 600.
 Photos: RORC/Tim Wright/photoaction.com

IMA Yacht of the Year Trophy

While the IMA has its trio of ‘challenges’, the Association also presents a wider, more all-encompassing annual prize: the Yacht of the Year

Trophy. This goes to the member whose yacht has achieved generally the best performance throughout the year. To make this as fair as possible, it is

calculated using a formula based upon the number of races in which a yacht has taken part, and its performance in each, taking into account the number of entries.

The IMA Yacht of the Year winner is announced at the end of every season and is presented to its recipient at the IMA Members’ Dinner during the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup the following year.

The winner’s trophy is an antique, refurbished, Georgian style, two-handled cup with cover, manufactured in London by Barnard Bros. at the end of the 19th century. It was purchased by the IMA through a dealer who once worked for Garrard, the silversmiths which crafted the America’s Cup.

After an exceptional season of racing, both inshore and offshore, that also saw them win the IMA’s Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge, the 2022 IMA Yacht of the Year was Alessandro Del Bono’s *Capricorno*. Read more about *Capricorno* on p24.



Benoît de Froidmont presents the IMA Yacht of the Year Trophy to 2021 winner *Twin Soul B*'s Luciano Gandini.
Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi

Past winners

2013	<i>Rán II</i>	Niklas Zennström (SWE)
2014	<i>Robertissima</i>	Roberto Tomasini Grinover (ITA)
2015	<i>Momo</i>	Dieter Schön (GER)
2016	<i>Rambler 88</i>	George David (USA)
2017	<i>Proteus</i>	George Sakellaris (USA)
2018	<i>Atalanta II</i>	Carlo A. Puri Negri (ITA)
2019	<i>Rambler 88</i>	George David (USA)
2021	<i>Twin Soul B</i>	Luciano Gandini (ITA)
2022	<i>Capricorno</i>	Alessandro Del Bono (ITA)

Gianfranco Alberini Challenge Trophy

Gianfranco Alberini was the much revered and long-serving Secretary General, first of the International Class A Yacht Association and then the IMA, after the Association was renamed. His tenure as lynchpin of the Association and the maxi class lasted from when he was first appointed until his untimely death in June 2013.

Having been Secretary General of the Yacht Club Costa Smeralda since 1975, and from 1981 its Commodore, it was he who made the YCCS the IMA's base for so many years. He also established and developed several maxi events, notably the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, and brought Rolex on board as a partner.

To honour their late Secretary General, soon after his death the IMA Board established in his name this perpetual trophy: A dodecagonal silver cup, mounted on a juniper plinth.

The trophy was originally awarded to the IMA member whose crew demonstrated the most exceptional sportsmanship in the Volcano Race, an event Alberini had originally set up and which the YCCS had run. Sadly the Volcano Race no longer runs, so the intention is for it now to be awarded at the IMA Maxi European Championship.

Past winners

2014	<i>Shirlaf</i>	Giuseppe Puttini (ITA)
2015	<i>Fra' Diavolo</i>	Vincenzo Addressi (ITA)
2016	<i>Wild Joe</i>	Márton Józsa (HUN)



Top: The Gianfranco Alberini Challenge Trophy.
Above: Secretary General Andrew McIrvine presents the IMA Trophy to I Love Poland's Grzegorz Baranowski for winning line honours in the 2023 RORC-IMA Transatlantic Race. Photo: RORC/Arthur Daniel

IMA Trophy for the RORC-IMA Transatlantic Race

Prior to the IMA introducing its Caribbean Maxi Challenge, it was already a joint organiser with the Royal Ocean Racing Club of the RORC-IMA Transatlantic Race, running from Lanzarote in the Canary Islands to Grenada in the southern Caribbean.

When the race was first introduced it set sail in the late autumn and coincided with the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers. It has since been moved so that it leaves in January, after the Christmas break, but still comfortably in time for the Caribbean season. This change has proved a success, with the event now showing steady growth. In 2023 there were 16 racing in the monohull fleet and another four in the multihull class. While a trio of 50-footers won the race overall under IRC, claiming the line honours win was the Poland National Foundation's VO70 *I Love Poland*, whose crew were presented with the IMA's 'Adam Style' vintage, sterling silver, perpetual trophy for their achievement.

Past winners

2015	<i>Nomad IV</i>	Jean-Paul Riviere (FRA)
2016	<i>Leopard 3</i>	Mike Slade (GBR)
2017	<i>CQS</i>	Ludde Ingvall (FIN)
2018	<i>My Song</i>	Pier Luigi Loro Piana (ITA)
2019	<i>Childhood</i>	Bouwe Bekking (NED)
2021	<i>Green Dragon</i>	Johannes Schwarz (AUT)
2022	<i>Comanche</i>	Mitch Booth (AUS)
2023	<i>I Love Poland</i>	Polish National Foundation (POL)



Don't let his very Mediterranean joviality fool you! For Pierre Roinson, President of Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez (aka 'La Nautique') and for decades now a man of the Var region, is still at heart a Breton. It was growing up in Saint-Malo in north Brittany that Roinson received his initiation into the nautical world; from early dinghy sailing to his first transatlantic voyages, forging friendships with the greats of ocean racing such as Loïc Caradec, Jean-Pierre Millet and Alain Gabbay. Perhaps it is no surprise that this man, who is so deeply entrenched with the Rolex Giraglia and presides over Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, considers the oceans to be more than just a simple playground, but as a theatre of great sport and the opportunity for beautiful communion between seafarers.

For most of his career, Roinson worked in communications for great champagne companies and it shows. He combines simplicity, authenticity and genuine conviviality around a common passion for beautiful sailing yachts, to produce great, successful nautical events. For owners, skippers or crew; from classic yachts to production boats to Maxis; Roinson has the sage-like wisdom and connections that enable him to anticipate worries, and handle expertly any of the 1001 aspects of a regatta.

President of the Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez - by luck!

A member of the Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez (SNST)

for 40 years, and having sat on its Board of Directors for seven years, Roinson acceded, somewhat by chance, to the Presidency of the club on 27 April 2020. He was the successor to Tony Oller, who previously took over from André Beaufile.

"I never ever wanted the Presidency," he admits. "My position as an active member and participant in local regattas was enough for me. But I gave in to the pressure of my friends, and since then I've been playing the game." His passion remains the sea, plus the racing, in which he continues to participate aboard his Beneteau First 45.

Of his early days in the Cote d'Azur hotspot, Roinson recalls: "I discovered Saint-Tropez in 1973. I had just returned from a transatlantic delivery trip on a 10m sail boat. I then delivered *Sayula II*, a Swan 65 designed by Sparkman & Stephens, which had just won the first Whitbread race, to Panama. I was the only Frenchman on board, but it was a unique experience for a young sailor and gave me experience of 'big' boats for the first time.

"Since then, I have fallen under the spell of this small village in the Var region, which reminds me of Saint-Malo - a corsair city, the cradle of my childhood, and where many great sailors have also left their mark.

"The SNST has given me a lot and I have met some wonderful people. It was a fair return for me to get involved in the club."

Professional life

Although he was brought up sailing in Brittany, it was in the Mediterranean that Roinson realised the attraction sailing had, not just for the public, but

sponsors too. Champagne houses had also noticed his dynamism and ability to enable the most resistant sailors to enjoy their experience of the sea.

At this point Roinson found himself at a crossroads in his professional life. Sailing in the Atlantic and West Indies came to a halt when Moët Hennessy entrusted him with a commercial position in the Mediterranean. Thus Roinson transitioned from the 'cider' of his youth to the 'champagne' of his adulthood; from a life of adventure on the high seas to that of the corporate manager. His rigour and good judgment quickly made a mark within the French wines and spirits giant, where he made a career, at the same time becoming a 'man of the Mediterranean' with ease.

Club man

When Roinson retired he was able to concentrate more on his pastimes. "The passion for the sea has never left me and I was able to go cruising," he explains. "It was with pride that I presented the SNST's burgee to yacht clubs as far afield as Havana and Beirut." The sea and boats continue to light up his days. Roinson is above all a regatta sailor, proud of his club, of his small Var port, which has become so renowned throughout the international sailing world.

Having been a competitive yachtsman and member of the SNST for such a long time, Roinson has been involved from the outset with Saint-Tropez's major sailing event, which has evolved to become Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez. "I was there at the very beginning of La Nioulargue, when Patrice de Colmont was at the helm," he recalls. "He continues to inspire me - his ability always to give priority to

Photos: Gilles Martin-Raget/www.martin-raget.com





conviviality, friendship and the joy of being together. I am a member of the SNST and an owner of a sail boat based there. I participate in many regattas and since 1983 in the Nioulargue and then Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, flying the colours of our club." Now in his capacity as President of the club organising the event, it is he who steers its course: "I decide, I rule, I push..."

Hosting the Maxi fleet

While Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez is renowned for being a grand gathering of the largest and most impressive classic yachts, the event has always attracted large modern yachts. This has grown to the extent that, for the first time in 2021, the event became a two-week affair. While the smaller yachts and classics competed in the first week, the maxis



were given the full run of the harbour and the Golfe de Saint-Tropez in the second week. This change has clearly resonated with the teams to the extent that participation during the maxi week in Saint-Tropez now rivals that of the class' premier event, the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup.

"These majestic boats are sailed with an almost military precision, by crews that can exceed 30 in number. We know and understand the high standards and the quest for excellence required by the International Maxi Association and the maxi yacht class," continues Roinson. "We do our utmost every year to be up to this challenge - on the water with impeccable race organisation, which now meets the expectations of maxi owners and sailors, and on land, offering the best of Saint-Tropez's

magic, the town and its port, plus the always enchanting climate at the beginning of autumn. The town has its own reputation, but today it can be compared with the other great capitals of Mediterranean sailing such as Porto Cervo and Palma de Majorca, for example. All of this contributes to the success of Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, where last year, in our second year with the new formula, we were one of the most popular events in the maxi calendar, attracting 45 boats."

Roinson adds that this is the same recipe they also apply earlier in the season for Rolex Giraglia, along with their friends and partners at Yacht Club Sanremo and the Yacht Club Italiano in Genoa. "We are very proud to be part of this beautiful Mediterranean triangle."

Top left: Presenting prizes at Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez.

Top right: The maxi fleet occupies Saint-Tropez's Vieux Port.

Photos: Gilles Martin-Raget/www.martin-raget.com



The America's Cup in Saint-Tropez

For the last two seasons, the club and Saint-Tropez have hosted the French stopover of the international SailGP multihull circuit. But since then, the Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez has been in the news when it was revealed as the French team's official challenging club for the 37th America's Cup, boosting the prestige of the club immeasurably. In this, the club will represent the Orient Express Team, a brand of the ACCOR hotel group.

"It's real international recognition," agrees Roinson. "This now puts La Nautique on the same level as the Royal Yacht Squadron, the New York Yacht Club, or the Royal Perth Yacht Club; in the pantheon of yacht clubs involved in the oldest sporting trophy in the world."

"Forwards, always!"

The world is changing, sporting practices are evolving, regattas are diversifying and the demands of sponsors and partners are adapting. Pierre Roinson remains a man of the times, well in tune with his era. He anticipates requirements and modulates his programmes accordingly, always taking into account the direction of sailors' desires and aspirations, which he understands and shares.

"I am fortunate to have extremely competent and motivated technical teams at La Nautique, capable of adapting to the most demanding owners. We are a real company, with just that extra touch of friendship that makes it possible for us to adapt our races and our courses with ease, with the sole aim of satisfying our clients - the sailors. Saint-Tropez does the rest..."

Denis van den Brink

Left: Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez is renowned for its classic yachts.





J CLASS - WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP BOUND

If last season saw an exciting resurgence of interest in J Class racing, 2023 looks like it will be marked by a period of consolidation as the class prepares for the J Class World Championship, which will be held in Barcelona during the 37th America's Cup in 2024. The prospect of seven J Class yachts sharing the spotlight with the latest generation of AC75s is truly mouthwatering; the magnificent Js offering an historical, graceful counterpoint to the ultra-fast foilers.

The return of *Ranger* and *Svea* to the class racing scene was the catalyst for a brilliant 2022 season, which started off in the Caribbean. Here *Ranger* opened by winning the class at the St Barths Bucket, a welcome maiden regatta triumph for her brand new owner, for whom this was his first major sailing competition.

Svea is now in the hands of a trio of passionate Swedish co-owners who immediately proved themselves a potent force, despite little training time and quite limited J Class experience on board. *Svea* won her first event, the Superyacht Cup, and repeated this success at the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup. However *Ranger* won the 2022 J Class title, aggregated over all of the season's regattas.

2023 will see the welcome return of *Rainbow*, which has a new owner in renowned Kiwi yachtsman Neville Crichton, while the defending World Champion *Lionheart* is also rejoining the competition. *Rainbow* is being refitted in Palma and may make some of the last races of the season, but, with a crew under Erle Williams, Crichton plans a full 2024 campaign with the objective of winning the world title in Barcelona. *Lionheart* has not raced since 2020 and is having new decks fitted, but should be ready to race by June.

Eight J Class yachts are expected in Barcelona for the Worlds. *Endeavour* will also be in attendance to enjoy the festivities.

Within the J Class *Rainbow* is widely acknowledged to have great potential. She last raced with the J Class fleet at the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup in 2014. She was a title contender going into a high-octane last day in Porto Cervo and will rightly be viewed as a serious prospect for 2024, even considering that her crew will not have had much recent class racing experience. After all, Crichton is a hugely experienced owner who knows what it will take to win and will doubtless ensure *Rainbow* is optimised and ready to take on the best.

A Dykstra yacht design replica J, the 2012-launched *Rainbow* is quite faithful to the lines of Harold Vanderbilt's original 1930 design by Starling Burgess, which successfully defended the 1934 America's Cup against *Endeavour* 4-2. J Class yachts of that second generation, like *Endeavour*, are smaller and lighter, and correspondingly have slightly less sail area than the next generation. However Dykstra's naval architect Jeroen de Vos believes *Rainbow* will be a good all-rounder, especially on the windward-leeward courses: "*Rainbow* always has been a really good boat with high potential - a very stable boat. She did well before and I am sure will be competitive again in this fleet. She will be close to the performance limit in the light, but the boats really are so close on the water, it is very much about how well they are sailed on the day."

Structured luff headsails, upgrading sheeting systems, a hydraulic ram main traveller control and

Left to right: *Svea*, *Velsheda* and *Ranger*. Four Js competed at the 2022 Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup.
Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi



*The German-owned Topaz was launched in 2015 to a 1935 design by Frank C Paine.
Photos: IMA/Studio Borlenghi*

optimised mainsail roach profile are just some of the updates being undertaken as *Rainbow* is brought up to modern racing spec. The boat should launch at the end of June before a month of commissioning.

Matthew Sweetman, *Rainbow's* boat captain, continues: "We are not planning on racing this year, but let's see how the job list goes later in the year. We will do the full 2024 season. We are all very excited about going racing, but the main goal is to have the boat fully reliable first. We know the boat is a quick boat and is very well balanced. But we don't know exactly where we will sit until we line up against other boats on the water and see how much they have all moved on. We have a good feeling for where we might be, we like to think we know where we are trying to get to, but until you get out there you are not really going to know."

Lionheart was the dominant boat in the lead up to winning the America's Cup J Class Regatta in 2017, which proved the prelude to her victory at the World Championship in Newport, RI. She last raced at the Antigua Superyacht Challenge in the spring of 2020 when she finished second, tied on points with *Velsheda*.

Lionheart and *Velsheda* are both having new teak decks as a key part of their respective refits, in part the reason why there was no class activity in the Caribbean this spring.

"It is important to stress that superyacht teak decks last about ten years and this one has done 12, so we are all doing our utmost for the environment," emphasises Toby Brand, boat captain of *Lionheart*, which has also had a new main engine installed and a programme of high-level servicing. "We are all

excited. Our owners are excited to be back racing with the class. The biggest thing is that although we have been successful in the past, we are most excited to be just getting out there with the other boats. For us it is just great the class is coming together."

With Bouwe Bekking staying with *Svea*, it will be Doyle Sails' Mike Sanderson who will be tactician on *Lionheart*, with Kelvin Harrap as strategist and Miles Seddon navigating, while Ian Moore is expected to do the 2024 season. *Lionheart* should be back in the water in May for trials to make sure everything is ready for their first races in June.

Sanderson is relishing the challenge of his new role with *Lionheart*: "I have been very honest with the team on my total lack of J Class experience, but I'm hoping that my extensive time spent in long and skinny IACC class boats, and also bigger and heavier superyachts, will strike a nice balance. Keeping much of the *Lionheart* team from the past, I will be a sponge of learning from these guys who have all raced the boat very successfully before. But in saying that, we are very aware that the game has moved on at a pretty rapid pace in *Lionheart's* absence. And new programmes like Neville Crichton's *Rainbow* will certainly come in all guns blazing!"

The *Svea* crew will remain very much as it was in 2022. Their winter work has largely been fitting a new aircon system and systems maintenance. They have some new sails, which update those existing ones, which were recut for her new rig set-up.

"We are prepping to really hit the ground running when racing starts," says Bouwe Bekking. "It is going to be great to have *Lionheart*, as current world champions, back and *Rainbow* we all know as a

Formerly owned by Tom Siebel, Svea is now being campaigned by a trio of Swedes including Niklas Zennström.





quick boat. She will surely be up there.” *Svea*’s long-term captain Paul Kelly concluded at the end of their successful 2022 season that “the boat has never gone quicker”.

Velsheda has been undergoing a refit in Palma, which has included redecking. There is some hope that a new subdeck will shed a little weight from the current racing fleet’s only original J. “It will be pretty minimal, but we are doing all we can. We will know when we incline,” says *Velsheda*’s Barney Henshaw-Depledge. “It is all ramping up for Barcelona and of course we are trying to tweak all we can. I am sure it will be very closely contested and, with *Rainbow* in the fleet again, it will be great. She is a light boat with a high righting moment. She might be scratch boat instead of us.”

Of the boats which actively raced in 2022, both *Hanuman* and *Ranger* will remain in the Caribbean and USA this season with mainly cruising itineraries planned. *Ranger* will be back racing in Europe in 2024.

Accordingly, the 2023 racing season is very much Mediterranean-based. The class is doing all it can to listen to owners and crews to lay out a programme of regattas well into the future.

This season opens at the Superyacht Cup Palma (21-24 June) where *Velsheda*, *Svea* and *Lionheart* should race. At the 33rd Rolex Maxi Yacht Cup in Porto Cervo (3-9 September) *Topaz*, *Velsheda* and *Svea* are expected to compete. Then the fleet will race for the first time as a class at the third edition of Ibiza JoySail (28 September - 1 October), where *Topaz*, *Lionheart* and *Svea* have indicated they want to race.

The World Championship season, 2024, will open with a standalone J Class regatta in June – perhaps in Mahon, Menorca – followed by the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, which will be the perfect warm-up for Barcelona.

There will be a Barcelona Pre-Worlds on 2-3 October 2024, leading up to the J Class World Championship over 7-11 October, when eight races are scheduled over five days. There is likely to be the provision for one coastal race on the programme.

Stuart Childerley, the J Class Association’s secretary, who in April celebrates having been in the post for one year, reflects: “Everything is shaping up well. We have great cooperation with the America’s Cup organisers who are super enthusiastic about the event, as are the host club - the Real Club Nàutic de Barcelona. It will be great to see the class centre stage again in the America’s Cup environment. Last season was about awakening interest again. This season, 2023, seems set to be about preparation and consolidation, while 2024 looks set to be a cracker.”

He adds: “We really have a great group of owners who are very much on the same page, sharing their passion for the J Class. One key to our success going forwards is to have events scheduled well into the future, so owners and their teams can plan well ahead. We have good, open debate. Everyone seems to be in good spirits and looking forward to racing.”

Meanwhile the J Class rule VPP has been further updated through the winter with the benefit of the data accrued over a full, active 2022 season, which saw a broad range of wind and sea conditions. New inputs to the VPP include mast rake, spinnaker pole length and aero efficiency. This VPP is now with the

teams and their advisers before being locked in until the end of 2024.

“We are keeping focussed on delivering the best possible racing, taking into account safety and owner’s enjoyment of the class,” Childerley concludes.

Andi Robertson



Left: *Ranger* is back in action, in new hands, following the death of her original owner John Williams in 2018.

Right: Ronald de Waal has campaigned *Velsheda* since acquiring her in 1999.

Photos: IMA/Studio Borlenghi

Wally update from MD Stefano de Vivo

While the sailing side of Wally Yachts might have seemed quiet since its majority shareholding was acquired by the Ferretti Group at the beginning of 2019, in the background much has been happening. Last July the trend-setting boat builder founded by Luca Bassani unveiled its new wallywind110, 130 and 150 models with naval architecture from judel/vrolijk. Meanwhile construction of former IMA President Claus-Peter Offen's new Wally 101 y3k has continued, ready for delivery in May.

Bassani continues as Wally's creative genius with his design team in Monaco, but the company is now run by Stefano de Vivo, who, following the change of ownership, is Wally Yachts' Managing Director, but also Chief Commercial Officer of Ferretti Group.



Above: Wally Managing Director Stefano de Vivo.
Right: The first wallywind110 is already under construction.

In fact, he initially suggested the possible Wally Yachts deal to his seniors at Ferretti Group.

Personally, de Vivo is delighted to be involved with Wally. His background is as a Mini 6.50 sailor, and he is a trained naval architect. He joined Ferretti as an apprentice and has spent the intervening years entirely focussed on powerboats. "Now I can finally come out of the closet and admit: 'I am a sailing guy!'"

While the company has an office in Milan, typically de Vivo operates out of Ferretti Group HQ in Forlì, some 15km from Italy's Adriatic Coast. Conveniently this is also where some Wallys have been built, including the new y3k. When Ferretti Group bought their 75% stake in Wally Yachts it was also announced that they would be investing many

millions of Euros in the company over the following three years. Part of this has gone into a new facility to build Wally's range of innovative motorboats, while a new facility to build their sailing yachts is due to open soon in Italy.

Bassani is currently the company's Chief Designer, President of the Wally Class and retains a 25% stake in the company. "We have made sure that Luca will forever be Wally and I think this is what he wants," states de Vivo. "The deal created a new strong wind in his creative sails. As you can see, both on the sailing and on the power side, we have new products and new thoughts."

Ferretti is a famous powerboat builder, and the Group also owns Pershing, Riva, Itama, Custom Line



and CRN, ie exclusively power boats, until Wally arrived. But de Vivo notes the origins of Ferretti, like many builders in Italy, was in sailing yachts (Ferretti's last was in 1991). Times change: up until the 1980s they were building perhaps one power boat for every eight sailing yachts; figures that are reversed today. This can be seen within Wally too. While their powerboats might be smaller in length and price, and despite their only being introduced in 2000, to date around 260 have been produced compared to 48 sailing boats.

Aside from the investment, the benefits to Wally of joining Ferretti Group are many, including shared technology and experience in production building. The Group has its own five axis milling machine in Forli, able to create moulds of up to 30m, in turn enabling millimetre accurate construction.

Without even having a buyer yet for the wallywind110, design and engineering work has been completed and construction already started, ready for a June 2024 delivery - building on spec that could never have taken place before. They expect to build at least three of each model and so are constructing suitably robust tooling – Bassani would point out that this is nothing new as Wally produced a larger series of Wally 80s during the 2000s.

While the hull and most of the structure of the new trio is fixed, everything else is fully customisable to an owner's wishes. Remarkably even for different deck configurations, rigs and keel choices (fixed, lifting or telescopic), VPPs have already been run, thereby allowing potential owners to fully comprehend each before purchasing. It also reduces

supply times. "Building a 110 from zero takes about 26-28 months. Once you have all the moulds it takes 18 months. All of a sudden it is only one summer, not two," explains de Vivo. Naturally, Wally can still produce entire one-offs, as they have with the new y3k.

Similarly, Ferretti Group is learning about Wally's own build technology, especially lightweight construction. "Lightness of materials and their engineering is interesting for powerboats, because they are trying to use less power. Carbon fibre has been introduced into most of our production, along with lighter interiors, etc," says de Vivo.

Under Ferretti there is no fundamental change to the Wally ethos Bassani created: Wally sailing yachts are still luxurious, innovative cruisers, but are fast, simple to sail and can be raced. Specifically, they are designed for people who want to sail, says de Vivo: "In five knots of wind a Wally will be sailing at 7-8 knots. For those who would rather motor we have the wallypower."

Due to its size, de Vivo believes the wallywind110 is the model most likely to be raced and therefore most will be fitted with a lifting/telescopic keel - the latter will be on the first 110. This can increase draft from 4.50 to 6.95m compared to the standard 4.50m fixed keel version. The 110 also comes with a choice of rigs and the first will feature a taller racing mast and a square top mainsail.

Meanwhile it is sure that Bassani will continue innovating. According to de Vivo, clients today expect this from Wally. "Wally is the brand of sailing and power boats that can feature very

innovative ideas. Some might wonder if Wally has lost its compass, but others recognise we may be 20 years ahead. Take the wallytender, launched 20 years ago, it was completely different, and a lot of people copied it. It was Luca's idea, and, you know what, it works."

The reasons for the size of the latest trio of Wally sailing yachts is due to the market, says de Vivo. He would be reluctant to go shorter than 90ft today. "There is a lot of competition and manufacturers there that sell boats for less than cost, which I can never understand. And when Wally was selling the 80 they were probably considered like 130 footers today in terms of the number of people who could afford them." According to de Vivo they have had enquiries for 50+m sailing yachts. While possible, Wally is not yet in this market and would prefer to restrict itself to sizes that can be built in carbon fibre rather than aluminium.

While on the periphery of the Wally Class, de Vivo is pleased that in recent seasons Wallys have successfully joined the main IMA maxi fleet, when previously they usually raced alone against other Wallys. "They are super happy and we as a company are super happy too, because we can say three Wallys were on the start line and most of the time three got on the podium. For us that is great."

That the IMA is attempting, with its circuits, to guide owners towards certain events is good too, says de Vivo: "Owners appreciate knowing where there will be more boats racing. If there are more maxis, race organisers can provide them with better service. We need to work together to try and create a critical mass."

Big summer for Baltic

The latest yacht for former IMA President Thomas Bscher is set for launch this spring. After his Wally 107 *Open Season* was sold and is now Jean-Luc Petithuguenin's *Spirit of Malouen X*, the new *Open Season* (below right) will be the second Baltic 68 Café Racer. This follows *Pink Gin Verde* which debuted at Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez in 2021.

Designed by Javier Jaudenes, who also penned Kim Schindelhauer's Baltic 108 *WinWin*, the first example of the 68 Café Racer marked its sustainability credentials by being built in Gurit's prepreg SPRINT, comprising 50% carbon fibre and 50% Bcomp ampliTex flax, plus cork used in place of teak on deck and the fitting of solar panels and electric propulsion. Launching this March, the new *Open Season* will be similar but with a 100% carbon fibre hull, reducing displacement to around 20.6 tons. Her 2023 programme includes the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup and Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez.

Meanwhile, early in the summer, Baltic's new Malcolm McKeon-designed 110 will launch. She too will have an electric propulsion system with a Danfoss motor driving a conventional shaft. She will feature a lifting keel, Southern Spars rig package and the possibility of sun awnings featuring photovoltaic cells. She may take part in the St Barths Bucket in 2024.

More radical and more secret at this stage is Baltic's ultra-lightweight 111 Custom, due for launch at a similar time. This has been designed by Jarkko Jämsén with Botin Partners carrying out the naval architecture and with structural work from PURE Design and Engineering. She is believed to be a

foiler of some description and, if true, at this size will be a beast.

2023 is a significant year for Baltic Yachts, marking the 50th anniversary of the Jakobstad, Finland-based builder. Back in 1973, when they were located in Bosund, they introduced their first production model, the Baltic 46, followed by the Baltic 39 which sold 74 units. The company went on to build many significant maxis and superyachts, including the Reichel/Pugh-designed 147ft *Visione* for Dr Hasso Plattner in 2002, followed by various *Pink*

Gins for Hans Georg Näder (Baltic's owner), the 218ft super-ketch *Hetairos*, the DSS-equipped *Canova*, *Nilaya*, *WinWin*, *Nikata* and Pier Luigi Loro Piana's beautiful, but shortlived 130ft *My Song*.

Celebrations will include an open day at their yard in June, featuring *Queen Anne*, the very first yacht build by Baltic. Following this will be a grand gathering of the clans at the Baltic Yachts Rendezvous, taking place over 14-17 September in Porto Rotundo, Sardinia where up to 30 boats may attend.





Upgrading the Gunboat 68

Gunboat continues to develop its niche, producing sleek, good-looking catamarans that are built fully in carbon fibre and with full race-boat spec daggerboards, rudders, spars, sails and gear – making them capable of blistering speeds in considerable luxury. All the current models are from leading multihull designers VPLP, with some composite work produced by Fibre Mechanics in Lymington, then shipped to the Gunboat factory in La Grande Motte for completion.

At the time of writing Gunboat, owned by Grand Large Yachting (a group including Allures Yachting, Outremer catamarans, Garcia Yachts and RM) had two 80s under construction. The first, the latest *Highland Fling* for Lord Irvine Laidlaw, is due for launch in July. A year later the second will be launched: the latest *Argo* for GC32 owner and former Melges 32 World Champion Jason Carroll. Meanwhile Gunboat 68 #6 and #7 are also under construction, at least one of which is destined for the race course, plus two of the more cruising-orientated Gunboat 72s.

At Dusseldorf Boat Show in January Gunboat announced its new 70-footer, an update on their 68 model, based on the hull tooling for the Gunboat 72 but with an entirely new deck and cabin top design. Compared to their existing models, the 70 (above) has its rig stepped further aft, thereby improving balance and performance and allowing for a more manageable mainsail size and a larger self-tacking Solent jib.

Compared to the 68, the size of the saloon and the aft owner's cabin has been increased. In addition to Gunboat's traditional internal helm position and forward cockpit round the mast step, there is the option of having a new helm station that pivots to port or starboard, plus dual aft exterior helm positions. The 70 also features greater use of renewables for power sources and the choice of standard and performance rig packages. As usual with all Gunboats, they are highly customisable and, for example, owners can choose where on the line between cruising and racing they wish their yacht to be positioned.

Mylius 66RS

Mylius yachts often do very well in IMA events with the company President Luciano Gandini's Mylius 80 *Twin Soul B* the Association's Yacht of the Year in 2021, after a season that saw her win the 151 Miglia-Trofeo Cetilar. Aldo Parisotto's Mylius 65FD *Oscar3* too is regularly in the top results.

The Podenzano-based company currently has the first of their Carkeek-designed 72s in build. This resembles a Maxi 72 with a bowsprit, dreadnought bow and chamfered foredeck-topsides up forward, but with a luxury interior. With their latest, the 66RS model, they have reverted to a more 'typical' plumb-ended Mylius look from their regular designer Alberto Simeone. Compared to the Grand Soleil, construction is carbon fibre/epoxy to maintain strength and light weight. The hull has a high prismatic coefficient, both giving it greater stability and higher performance off the breeze.

More of a cruiser-racer, the 66 (below) features a deckhouse, but one which is low and streamlined but nonetheless offering a large window acreage and a view out from the raised dinette. A sprayhood and lower cockpit seating provide good protection in the cockpit when sailing offshore. Below there is a three-cabin layout with the owners cabin in the bow. This permits a stern garage for a 3.30m tender.





All on a Nautor Swan

As usual the company most engaged in building maxis remains Nautor Swan. Pride of the moment remains the Juan K-designed Persico-built ClubSwan 80, the first example of which, Pier Luigi Loro Piana's *My Song*, made its debut at the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup last September, where she scored her first race win. She followed this up with participation at the Rolex Swan Cup and Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez. In the interim she had her removable interior reinstalled to attend Monaco Yacht Show. It is understood that this attention has resulted in a second ClubSwan 80 having been sold to a 'known' owner. However focus on the 80 is unlikely to remain for long as Nautor's order book remains extremely strong.

Nautor has a long history in maxi yachts, especially its Swan 65s, which won the first Whitbread Round the World Race 50 years ago. Today the company divides its models between the Swan, SwanMaxi, ClubSwan and SwanShadow (motorboat) ranges.

In addition to the maxi-sized ClubSwans - the 80 (*My Song*) and the extraordinary 125 (*Skorprios*), the SwanMaxi range includes the German Frers-designed 88, 98, 108, 120 and 128ft models which have interiors design by Misa Poggi, with the involvement of top Italian designer Lucio Micheletti in the 88 and 108.

Incredibly, Nautor has either built, or has in build, every model in their SwanMaxi range, with the exception of

the 120, at the time of writing. *Be Cool* was the first example of the Swan 98 and has been racing. The first 108 is due for launch at the beginning of July, although her owner intends at present to use her purely for cruising and charter. Meanwhile work has started on the first 88 which will feature a hybrid electric engine as the biggest in the range, the 128 (above), will have too. Nautor has sold a 128 which is due for launch in 2025 (one of the biggest yachts they have ever produced – the biggest being a 131...). As if this weren't enough they are also building a 78, the largest of their smaller-sized Swan range, again a Frers design. Obviously not all of these yachts will race, but it is still a most impressive order book.

*The Juan K-designed ClubSwan 80 had much input from the My Song team and features twin rudders, canting keel and straight daggerboards. Much of her interior is removable.
Photos: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi except for interior: Nautor Swan/Studio Borlenghi*





Grand Soleil 72

With the announcement of their new 65 (above), Cantiere del Pardo are now marketing three maxis in their Grand Soleil Performance range, in addition to their 72 and 80ft models. These are all designed by Matteo Polli with Nauta Design handling the deck and general layout and interior. They come in performance and blue water cruising versions, sharing the same hull design. Hulls are built in biaxial fibreglass with vinylester resin and carbon fibre reinforcement, but demonstrating their sustainability by also incorporating eco as well as vinylester resins, linen fibres and water-based paints and solar panels.

The mast is located well aft, increasing fore-triangle size, to improve ease of handling, further benefitting from the jib being self-tacking. Thus the 65 can be sailed efficiently doublehanded. Below the water there is a T configuration keel and single spade rudder. Various keel options are available from standard fixed drawing 3.5m, shallow at 3.0m to telescopic.

The Performance version of the 65 features a streamlined deckhouse and sportier design, with a galley located towards the stern to maximise the dining and relaxation areas. Compared to the Mylius 66RS also featured here, the Grand Soleil Performance 65 is slightly shorter with marginally more beam (5.9m compared to 5.73m), but with a slightly heavier 'light' displacement of 26 versus 24.2 tonnes. In terms of sail sizes, her main is 154sqm, jib 120sqm and Code Zero 220sqm.















Neo 600

Neo Yachts, located close to Bari on Italy's Adriatic coast, have introduced an extended version of their Carkeek-designed 570 C model, the Neo600. The new boat uses the same hull mould as its smaller sibling, but with a new deck, the extra length adding an extra cabin and head compartment to the accommodation.













Very much an ultimate racer-cruiser, the 600, like the 570 C (above), is designed with race boat performance, built in pre-preg carbon fibre and with race boat spec deck gear, it can be raced shorthanded or fully crewed. Yet it is also an effective cruiser with minimal draft, a fully-fitted out interior including aircon and a freezer, and a tender garage. To achieve this dual functionality, she comes with racing and cruising sail wardrobes and a semi-removable interior.

The first 570 C *Carbonita* proved her performance credentials when she claimed third place on elapsed and corrected time in last year's Palermo-Montecarlo. The 600 is designed so that it can participate in IMA maxi events.













Scanning the QR code with your phone will take you to each event's website

DATE	EVENT	TOP MAXI RESULTS	CONTACTS
<p>20 February 2023 19 February 2024</p> 	 <p>RORC CARIBBEAN 600 Course: Starting and finishing off English Harbour, Antigua, passing Barbuda and rounding the islands St Kitts and Nevis, Saba, St Barth, St Maarten, Tintamarre, Guadeloupe, La Désirade and Redonda Distance: 600 miles</p>	<p>2023: IRC Super Zero and overall - <i>Pyewacket 70</i> 2022: IRC Super Zero - <i>Comanche</i> 2020: IRC Zero - <i>Wizard</i> (2nd) 2019: IRC Zero and overall - <i>Wizard</i> 2018: IRC Zero and overall - <i>Rambler 88</i> 2017: IRC Zero and overall - <i>Bella Mente</i></p>	<p>Organiser: Royal Ocean Racing Club in association with the Antigua Yacht Club e: racing@rorc.org t: +44 (0) 1983 295 144 www.caribbean600.rorc.org</p> 
<p>2-5 March 2023 29 February - 5 March 2024</p> 	 <p>ST MAARTEN HEINEKEN REGATTA Where: Sint Maarten Courses: Coastal</p>	<p>2022: CSA 1 - <i>Sailing Poland</i> 2020: CSA Ocean Racing 1 - <i>I Love Poland</i> 2019: Maxi 1 - <i>Selene</i>; Ocean Racing 1 - <i>I Love Poland</i> 2018: Maxi - <i>Kialoa III</i>; Ocean Racing 1 - <i>Green Dragon</i></p>	<p>Organiser: Sint Maarten Yacht Club e: info@heinekenregatta.com t: +1 721 544 2079 www.heinekenregatta.com</p> 
<p>16-22 April 2023 14-20 April 2024</p> 	 <p>LES VOILES DE ST BARTH RICHARD MILLE Where: Saint Barthélemy Courses: Coastal</p>	<p>2022: Maxi - <i>Vesper</i> 2019: Maxi 1 - <i>Sorcha</i>; Maxi 2 - <i>Windfall</i> 2018: Maxi 1 - <i>Proteus</i>; Maxi 2 - <i>Windfall</i></p>	<p>Organiser: TP Sail e: contact@lesvoilesdestbarthrichardmille.com www.lesvoilesdestbarthrichardmille.com</p> 
<p>29 April</p> 	 <p>LA LARGA (PalmaVela's offshore race) Courses: Palma de Mallorca to Palma, via Dragonera, Ibiza and Formentera and Cabrera (225 miles) or via Dragonera, Tagomago, Cabrera (165 miles)</p>	<p>2022: ORC 0-1 - <i>Pelotari.Project</i> 2021: IRC - <i>L4/Trifork</i></p>	<p>Organiser: Real Club Náutico de Palma e: coordeportiva@rcnp.es t: +34 971 72 68 48 www.palmavela.com</p> 















Scanning the QR code with your phone will take you to each event's website

DATE	EVENT	TOP MAXI RESULTS	CONTACTS
3-7 May	 PALMAVELA Where: Palma de Mallorca Courses: Up to six windward-leeward and coastal 	2022: IRC/IMA Maxi Yachts - <i>Galateia</i> 2019: IRC - <i>Vera</i> 2018: Wally - <i>Magic Blue</i> ; IRC - <i>Selene</i>	Organiser: Real Club Náutico de Palma e: coordeportiva@rcnp.es t: +34 971 72 68 48 www.palmavela.com 
12 May	 REGATA DEI TRE GOLFI <i>Part of IMA Maxi European Championship and Tre Golfi Sailing Week</i>  Course: Naples, Capri, Italy via Ponza and Li Galli Distance: 155 miles	2022: Maxi - <i>NorthStar</i> 2021: Maxi (IRC) - <i>Shirlaf</i> 2019: Maxi - <i>Lunz Am Meer</i> 2018: IRC 0 - <i>Caol Ila R</i>	Organiser: Circolo Remo e Vela Italia and Yacht Club Italiano in collaboration with the IMA e: info@tregolfisailingweek.com t: +39 081 764 6393 www.tregolfisailingweek.com 
15-18 May	 IMA MAXI EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP INSHORES <i>Part of Tre Golfi Sailing Week</i>  Where: Sorrento, Italy Courses: Windward-leeward, coastal	2022: Class 1 - <i>NorthStar</i> ; Class 2 and overall - <i>Lyra</i> ; Class 3 - <i>Wallyño</i> ; Class 4: <i>Blue Oyster</i> 2021: <i>Shirlaf</i> 2019: Maxi Racer - <i>Caol Ila R</i> ; Maxi Racer-Cruiser <i>Wallyño</i> ; Maxi Cruiser-Racer - <i>Plis Play</i> ; Mylius Cup - <i>Oscar3</i>	Organiser: Circolo del Remo e Vela Italia and the IMA e: info@tregolfisailingweek.com t: +39 081 764 6393 www.tregolfisailingweek.com 
1-3 June	 151 MIGLIA - TROFEO CETILAR Course: Livorno to Punta Ala, Italy, via Marina di Pisa, Giraglia rock and Formiche di Grosseto Distance: 151 miles 	2022: IRC Over 60 - <i>Arca SGR</i> 2021: IRC Over 60 - <i>Twin Soul B</i> 2019: IRC Over 60 - <i>Vera</i> 2018: IRC Over 60 - <i>Vera</i> 2017: IRC Over 60 - <i>Azzurro VI</i> 2016: IRC Over 60 - <i>My Song</i>	Organiser: Yacht Club Punta Ala, Yacht Club Livorno, Yacht Club Repubblica Marinara di Pisa e: segreteria@151miglia.it t: +39 050 310023 www.151miglia.it 

Scanning the QR code with your phone will take you to each event's website

DATE	EVENT	TOP MAXI RESULTS	CONTACTS
11-13 June 	 ROLEX GIRAGLIA (inshore) Inshore courses: Windward-leeward and coastal (Feeder race: Sanremo, Italy to Saint-Tropez, France Start: 9 June Distance: 57 miles)	2022: Maxi 1 - <i>Jethou</i> ; Maxi 2 - <i>Capricorno</i> ; ORC 0 - <i>Leaps & Bounds 2</i> 2019: IRC 0 Racer - <i>Jethou</i> ; IRC 0 Cruisers - <i>Lorina 1895</i> 2018: IRC 0 Wally - <i>Magic Carpet Cubed</i> ; IRC 0 - <i>Cannonball</i>	Organiser: Yacht Club Italiano in collaboration with Yacht Club Sanremo (feeder race) and Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez e: info@yci.it t: +39 010 253381 www.rolexgiraglia.com 
14 June 	 ROLEX GIRAGLIA (offshore) Course: Saint-Tropez, France to Genoa, Italy via the Giraglia rock Distance: 241 miles	2022: IRC 0 - <i>Itacentodue</i> 2021: IRC 0 - <i>Itacentodue</i> 2019: IRC 0 + overall - <i>Caol Ila R</i> 2018: IRC 0 + overall - <i>Momo</i> Rolex Giraglia - Combined results 2022: Maxi 1 - <i>Tango</i> ; Maxi 2 - <i>Capricorno</i> ; ORC 0 - <i>Leaps & Bounds 2</i> 2019: IRC 0 Racer - <i>Jethou</i> ; IRC 0 Cruisers - <i>Wallyño</i> 2018: IRC 0 - <i>Cannonball</i>	Organiser: Yacht Club Italiano in collaboration with Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez e: info@yci.it t: +39 010 253381 www.rolexgiraglia.com 
7 July 	 AEGEAN 600 Course: Sounio, Greece via Milos, Santorini caldera, Kassos, Rhodes, Kandelioussa, Kos, Farmakonisi, Agathonisi, Patmos and Mykonos Distance: 605 miles	2022: <i>Hagar V</i> 2021: <i>Atalanta II</i>	Organiser: Hellenic Offshore Racing Class e: info@aegean600.com t: + 30 210 4123357 whatsapp: +30 6932708404 www.aegean600.com 
29 July - 5 August 	 COPA DEL REY MAPFRE Where: Palma, Mallorca Courses: Windward-leeward and coastal	2019: Mallorca Sotherby's IRC - <i>Cannonball</i> 2018: Mallorca Sotherby's IRC 0 - <i>Momo</i>	Organiser: Real Club Náutico de Palma e: coordeportiva@rcnp.es t: +34 971 726848 www.regatacopadelrey.com 

Scanning the QR code with your phone will take you to each event's website

DATE	EVENT	TOP MAXI RESULTS	CONTACTS
22 August 	 PALERMO-MONTECARLO Course: Palermo, Sicily to Montecarlo via YCCS gate off Porto Cervo Distance: 437 miles	2022: <i>Lady First III</i> (2nd) 2021: <i>Aragon</i> (12th) 2019: <i>Vera</i> (1st) 2018: <i>Atalanta II</i> (4th)	Organiser: Circolo della Vela Sicilia, Yacht Club de Monaco and YCCS e: info@palermo-montecarlo.it t: +39 091 347731 www.palermo-montecarlo.it 
3-9 September 	 MAXI YACHT ROLEX CUP Where: Porto Cervo, Sardinia Courses: Coastal, but some windward-leeward	2022: Super Maxi – <i>Shamanna</i> ; Maxi - <i>Highland Fling XI</i> ; Mini Maxi 0 - <i>Flying-Nikka</i> ; Mini Maxi 1 - <i>Vesper</i> ; Mini Maxi 2 - <i>Capricorno</i> ; Mini Maxi 3+4 - <i>H2O</i>	Organiser: Yacht Club Costa Smeralda in conjunction with the IMA e: secretariat@yccs.it t: +39 0789 902200 www.yccs.it 
30 Sept-6 Oct 	 LES VOILES DE SAINT-TROPEZ Where: Saint-Tropez, France Courses: Windward-leeward and coastal	2022: Maxi 1 - <i>Spirit of Malouen X</i> ; Maxi 2 - <i>Cannonball</i> ; Maxi 3 - <i>Lyra</i> ; Maxi 4 - <i>Saïda</i> 2021: IRC 1 - <i>Magic Carpet Cubed</i> ; IRC 2 - <i>Topaz</i> ; IRC 3A - <i>Jethou</i> ; IRC 3B - <i>Lyra</i> ; IRC 4 - <i>Bambo</i>	Organiser: Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez e: info@snst.org t: +33 494 973054 www.lesvoilesdesaint-tropez.fr 
21 October 	 ROLEX MIDDLE SEA RACE 2023 Where: Malta Course: Starting and finishing in Valletta, Malta, anticlockwise lap around Sicily via the Strait of Messina, Stromboli, Favignana, Pantelleria and Lampedusa Distance: 606 miles	2022: IRC 1 and 2nd overall - <i>Spirit of Lorina</i> 2021: IRC 1, IRC overall and race record - <i>Comanche</i> 2020 IRC 1 - <i>Aragon</i> 2019 IRC 1 - <i>Rambler 88</i> 2018 IRC 1 - <i>Momo</i>	Organiser: Royal Malta Yacht Club e: info@rolexmiddlesearace.com t: +356 21 333109 www.rolexmiddlesearace.com 
8 January 2024 	RORC-IMA TRANSATLANTIC RACE 2024 Course: Puerto Arrecife, Lanzarote to Camper & Nicholson's Port Louis Marina, Grenada Distance: 2,995 miles	2023: Line honours and 4th overall - <i>I Love Poland</i> 2022: Line honours/1st overall/record - <i>Comanche</i> 2021: Line honours and 4th overall - <i>Green Dragon</i>	Organiser: Royal Ocean Racing Club e: racing@rorc.org t: (44) 1983 295 144 rorctransatlantic.rorc.org/ 



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