



PRESS RELEASE

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Annapolis-to-Newport Race Announces Invited Classes

Participating skippers can apply for an A2N-specific rating certificate

Annapolis, MD (August 23, 2016) — Organizers of the Annapolis-to-Newport Race have announced the classes invited to participate in the 2017 edition.

The 36th biennial Annapolis-to-Newport Race will feature competition in IRC, PHRF Racing, PHRF Cruising, Multihull and Double-handed. Jim Praley, chairman of the Annapolis-to-Newport Race, said the organizing committee is once again encouraging Performance Cruising and Classic-Corinthian sailboats to participate.

“We have selected those classes that attracted a representative number of entries in 2015 and seem likely to do so again for 2017,” Praley said. “Of course, if any other classes present themselves in sufficient numbers, we will offer them a start as well.”

Annapolis-to-Newport Race officials have determined that a minimum of eight boats is necessary to comprise a class. Six boats will be considered for a sub-class, such as when a group of one-designs race within a PHRF class.

The 70th anniversary Annapolis-to-Newport Race will begin on June 2-3 on the Chesapeake Bay with the fleet divided into two parts based on rating. Slower boats will start on Friday while the faster boats will get underway on Saturday with the goal of having the entire fleet arrive in Newport within close proximity.

Official Notice of Race will be posted in September and skippers will be able to enter beginning on that date. Classes not included at this time are ORC and ORR.

“We felt it was not wise to dilute the pool too much,” Praley said. “However, if there is a groundswell of interest in the ORC Club or ORR rating systems and either can muster eight boats, we will add them to the lineup.”

Annapolis-to-Newport Race organizers pioneered a new approach to handicapping PHRF entries during the 2015 edition. Skippers were able to obtain a rating specifically created for this 475-nautical mile passage, which begins in the Chesapeake Bay and ends at the mouth of the Narragansett Bay with a lengthy Atlantic Ocean leg in between.

Bruce Bingman, a member of the Annapolis-to-Newport race committee, said a consortium comprised of PHRF experts from the four regions of the country most likely to produce entries succeeded in developing fair and equitable ratings.

The Annapolis-to-Newport rating panel worked closely with the US Sailing Offshore office to tailor the assigned panel ratings using a Velocity Prediction Program (VPP) based off the average course configuration for this particular distance race.

“We found that assigning our own ratings that took into account the unique elements of the Annapolis-to-Newport Race course worked out very well,” Bingman said. “The corrected times in the PHRF classes came within a very tight band. Participating skippers seemed very pleased. I heard no complaints.”

The Annapolis-to-Newport-specific PHRF rating program is particularly helpful to Performance Cruiser and Classic/Corinthian entries as the special characteristics of those types of boats is considered.

Praley said the Annapolis-to-Newport Race organizing committee intends to reach out to owners who have never competed in this offshore classic. Several first-time skippers were part of the Performance Cruising Class in 2015 and realized afterward that doing an offshore race is not as daunting as it seems.

“We will be conducting multiple seminars aimed at folks who have not done the race before,” Praley said. “Our goal is to reach out to all the cruising classes on the Chesapeake Bay and beyond because there are a lot of boats out there that are well-suited to doing the Annapolis-to-Newport Race.”

A detailed list of planned seminars will be announced shortly, but the Annapolis-to-Newport organizing committee has already scheduled an expert to conduct a presentation on preparing boats for offshore racing during the annual U.S. Sailboat Show, being held in Annapolis this October.

Sandy Grosvenor will serve as Principal Race Officer for the 2017 Annapolis-to-Newport Race. Bingman, whose serves as ratings chair for A2N, will oversee the starts while Mark Murphy will coordinate finishes at Castle Hill Lighthouse.

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