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## **World Class Talent Heading to Key West Race Week --- New Designs and Familiar Names on the Scratch Sheet**

Key West, Fla. - Quantum Key West 2013 has many intriguing plotlines and some of the classes that will be most closely watched are the popular, new J/70, professional-laden IRC/TP 52 and rapidly developing HPR.

Many of the world's top sailors will duke it out in the 52 class with Key West serving as opening stop on an ambitious 2013 series. Organizers of the recently introduced High Performance Rule are eager to showcase Version 4 of the rating system at the renowned winter regatta held off the southernmost tip of Florida. The J/70 class will make its Key West debut in dramatic fashion as it is the regatta's largest with an impressive 39 boats.

The J/70 has taken the sailing world by storm with J/Boats having already sold 350 of the small one-design racers. Many top-notch skippers who have competed in Key West in other designs will do so this year in the latest J/Boats design, including successful pros Tim Healy and Kerry Klingler. Klingler noted that most owners are still learning the boat, particularly how to handle the oversized spinnaker, which will be critical to success next week.

"Key West has always been a tremendous showcase for any new design and we are looking forward to launching the J/70 to a wider audience with great competition at one of the world's most renowned regattas," Rod Johnstone, the founder of J/Boats said.

A strong fleet of six boats – three from Europe, three from the U.S. – will do battle as the curtain rises on the new 2013 "52 Super Series." Defending series champion Azzurra (Italy) and past MedCup champion Quantum Racing (USA) headline the fleet of exciting speed machines.

"Overall, we are pretty happy with the entries. Given the reputation and popularity of Key West we can be sure that we are looking forward to a good week of racing," said Rob Weiland, class manager for the IRC/TP 52 and co-organizer of the Super Series. "It will be interesting to see how the American boats fare against the Mediterranean boats. My feeling is that it might be quite even."

While the 52-footers are crewed entirely by professionals, an owner-driver rule is in place for Quantum Key West 2013. Michigan owner Doug DeVos will try to repeat as regatta champ after dominating the competition with six bullets in 10 races a year ago.

Tactician Ed Baird, a past Rolex Yachtsman of the Year and veteran of numerous America's Cup campaigns, is the only newcomer to a crew that captured the Audi MedCup and the IRC/TP 52 World Championship in 2011. Andy Horton (strategist), Juan Vila (navigator) and Warrick Fleury (trimmer) are other key members of the Quantum afterguard.

**Continued...**

## ***World Class Talent Heading to Key West Race Week continued***

Argentina owner Guillermo Parada will steer Azzura with Italian pros Vasco Vascotto and Francesco Bruni aboard as tactician and strategist, respectively. The newest generation 52-footer, off the boards of designer Botin Partners, performed quite impressively while winning the 2012 Super Series under the flag of Yacht Club Costa Smeralda.

Class president Niklas Zennstrom (Sweden) is no stranger to success in Key West, having won the Mini-Maxi class last year. Zennstrom will helm Ran, which finished third overall in the 2012 52 Super Series behind Azzurra and Quantum. Volvo Ocean Race winning navigator Jules Salter will handle tactics for Zennstrom aboard the United Kingdom-flagged Ran.

Gladiator, led by British owner-driver Tony Langley, posted two podium finishes in the 2012 Super Series and will be seeking to improve its consistency with American professional Chris Larson calling tactics.

Newcomers to the 52 Super Series, but not to Quantum Key West, are Interlodge (Austin and Gwen Fragomen, Newport, R.I.) and Rio (Manouch Moshayedi, Corona del Mar, Cal.), both of which sail with largely amateur crews. Moshayedi just took delivery of a brand new boat in November.

Veteran North Sails professional Steve Benjamin has been the driving force behind the HPR class, which was created to better suit the new wave of high-performance designs. Benjamin and fellow pro Dobbs Davis introduced the HPR at last year's Key West and the rule authority has spent the past year developing and further refining the formula.

HPR racing made its debut at the Storm Trysail Club IRC East Coast Championship and One-Design Regatta this past October with a diverse fleet of eight boats. Benjamin said getting its own start at Key West marks a major milestone for the rule.

Benjamin believes so strongly in HPR that he commissioned a new boat designed to fit the formula. Spookie, an HPR Carkeek 40, made its debut at the Storm Trysail Club regatta and placed third. Now Benjamin is eager to gauge Spookie's performance against Decision (Stephen Murray, New Orleans), a sister ship that was launched later.

Competition off the Conch Republic figures to be interesting as the nine-boat fleet features such diverse designs as a Ker 40, GP 42 and Farr 400. This marks the second Key West appearance for the Farr 400, which will feature 5 boats and thus have a one design sub class competition within the HPR class.

No team is traveling further than Santa, a Farr 400 owned by Claus Landmark of Norway and skippered by America's Cup veteran Jesper Bank. The crew features several sailors with Olympic and Volvo Ocean Race experience and has been dubbed the "Scandinavian Vikings."

Another foreign Farr 400 entry is Team Premier, which is skippered by the managing director of the boat builder. Dubai-based Hannes Waimer is taking a brief vacation from his busy schedule with Premier Composite Technologies and will have Volvo veteran Gordan Maguire aboard as tactician.

"From a personal point of view I am just looking forward to getting back on the water and going racing with the Farr 400. Most of the time I am in the factory seeing the boats being built so it will be great to be on the water in Key West, and to meet again with our Farr 400 owners from both sides of the Atlantic and share the enjoyment of racing at one of the must-do regattas," Waimer said.

The Melges 24 and 32 classes have their customary competitive, international showing. The Melges 32 class has seven foreign entries and the Melges 24s have rebounded with 23 strong programs.

There's more grand prix excitement on tap with the Farr 40s, Swan 42s and Mini-Maxis. PHRF racing, a long time mainstay at race week, will continue to have a presence with two classes racing on Division 3.

***Continued.....***

## **World Class Talent Heading to Key West Race Week continued**

Quantum Sail Design Group is back as title sponsor after coming away pleased with its initial collaboration with Premiere Racing a year ago.

"We had such a great event last year, we felt pretty confident by the end of the regatta that we'd be back. The Premiere Racing crew is tops when it comes to race management and it's a pleasure to work with them on this event," said Ed Reynolds, managing director of Quantum. "We have more boats coming this year, which is an indication that the sailing community still loves Key West. We've been working hard to build on the success of last year and from all indications it's going to be another great week."

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Regatta dates are January 20 – 25, 2013.

Event Sponsors include Title Sponsor **Quantum Sails** (Official Sailmaker) and Day Sponsors **Lewmar/Navtec** (Official Marine Hardware), **Mount Gay® Rum** (Official Rum), and **Nautica Watches** (Official Timekeeper). The Supporting Sponsors are **B&G** (Official Marine Electronics), **Marlow Ropes** (Official Rope), and **Gill** (Official Technical Gear).

Key West Race Week is also supported by *The Florida Keys & Key West Tourism Council*. The *Historic Seaport at the Key West Bight* is the Official Marina. The *Ocean Key Resort and Spa* is the Official Hotel. *Sapporo USA* is the Official Beer.

24 Industry Partners bring their support through a program that is now in its 12<sup>th</sup> year.

*Quantum Key West 2013* is a US SAILING sanctioned event.

The racing will be conducted under permit in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. The sanctuary protects 2,900 square nautical miles of critical marine habitat, including coral reef, hard bottom, seagrass meadow, mangrove communities and sand flats.

Event information, past results and photos: [www.Premiere-Racing.com](http://www.Premiere-Racing.com)

### **About Quantum Sail Design Group**



Founded by a group of independent, experienced sailmakers who shared a common vision, the Quantum Sail Design Group has been dedicated to overcoming the trend towards mass-marketing and mediocrity in the sailmaking industry. The company is known for its winning sail designs in dozens of classes from dinghies to super yachts and its high-performance FusionM® sails.

Quantum has more than 60 sales and service outlets throughout the world, with European headquarters in Barcelona, Spain, and corporate offices in Traverse City, Michigan.

[www.QuantumSails.com](http://www.QuantumSails.com)

For more information and coverage of Quantum Key West Race Week 2013:  
Web Site: [www.Premiere-Racing.com](http://www.Premiere-Racing.com)

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[Quantum Key West 2012 Results](#)

Photographs are available to qualified media.  
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