



**January 22, 2014 - For Immediate Release**

## **Fantastic Key West Sailing Conditions on Mount Gay Rum Day**

Key West, Florida Keys - Broad smiles and weary bones usually means a successful day on the water for sailboat racers. There was plenty of both on the docks around the Conch Republic on Wednesday after organizers of Quantum Key West 2014 completed three races in strong winds.

Northerly winds that held steady from 12-16 knots provided the best racing conditions yet for the 10 classes on three divisions. After completing three races combined on Monday and Tuesday, the competitors were thankful for the full day's work.

"It was another beautiful Key West sailing day. That's why we all keep coming back here," said Alec Cutler, skipper of the Melges 32 *Hedgehog*.

Cutler was particularly pleased after surviving an on-course-side start and maintaining the overall lead for the third straight day. *Hedgehog* was over early in the opening race on Wednesday, but battled back to place second.

"That was our best race yet considering the circumstances. We clawed our way back through the fleet," said Cutler, who is three points ahead of Dalton DeVos and the *Delta* team.

Completing three races caused a shakeup in the standings in many classes, including IRC 2. *Ran*, the British entry skippered by Niklas Zennstrom, posted a solid line of 4-1-2 for the day to take over the lead among the six 52-footers. Adrian Stead is calling tactics while fellow Briton Nick Asher is serving as strategist aboard *Ran*, which now leads *Azzurra* by one point.

"Our starts were strong and that allowed us to go where we wanted to go," Asher said. "We've gotten ourselves into contention, but we need to keep plugging away. Tomorrow is the big day. There will probably be three more races and that's going to determine a lot."

*Quantum Racing*, which led the 52 Class for two days, suffered some bad luck in the first race on Monday – hooking a lobster pot and having to stop the boat in order to get it clear. That mishap resulted in a sixth place finish, but skipper Doug DeVos and crew remain in third overall just two points behind *Ran*.

*Bella Mente*, the Judel-Vrolijk 72-footer skippered by Hap Fauth, snatched the lead in Mini Maxi class by a point over *Caol Ira R* (Alex Schaefer, Newport, RI). *Shockwave*, the third entry in the class, retired after suffering a mechanical failure during the first race of the day and is in third place. Skipper George Sakellaris expected the broken part to be fixed in time for *Shockwave* to resume racing on Thursday.

*Arethusa*, a Swan 42 skippered by Phil Lotz of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., had a real strong day with a line of 1-3-2 and now leads IRC 3 by four points. Veteran professional Jeff Madrigali is calling tactics aboard *Arethusa*, which overtook fellow Swan 42 *Vitesse* (Jon Halbert) for first place.

"It was really a fantastic day of racing and we really appreciate getting three races in," Lotz said. "We had good conditions for the Swans. It wasn't quite windy enough for the lighter boats to plane. I thought we did a good job of shifting gears and staying in phase."

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## Fantastic Key West Sailing Conditions on Mount Gay Rum Day - *continued*

*Little Wing*, the Italian entry owned by Nicola Ardito, has put forth a dominant performance in Melges 24 class. Hugo Rocha, a three-time Olympian and 1996 bronze medalist in 470 class for Portugal, is calling tactics on *Little Wing*.

"The wind was very shifty and Hugo did a very good job of putting the boat in the right place," helmsman Enrico Zennaro said. "Our boat speed is very good. We have been able to make big gains on the course."

That was evident in Wednesday's first race when *Little Wing* went from fifth to first on the final leg, catching a big puff just before the finish to pass a couple boats.

There is also a new leader in J/70 class, largest of the regatta with 60 boats. North Sails professional Tim Healy steered *Helly Hansen* to a couple seconds and a third on Wednesday to take control with a low score of 29. *Catapult*, skippered by Joel Ronning of Minneapolis, Minn., is 12 points behind in second.

Geoff Becker is calling tactics upwind while John Mollicone is doing the honors downwind for Healy (Jamestown, RI), the defending regatta champ.

"Going downwind we were in-between planing and displacement mode so you had to decide when to keep the bow up and the jib out," Healy said. "There were big gains and losses to be made downwind."

Healy explained that a J/70 begins to plane in around 15 knots of breeze and attempting to do so when the wind is not strong enough causes the boat to really slow down. "It's crucial to know when to soak it low," he said.

*Decision* and *Spookie*, a pair of Carkeek 40-footers, have engaged in a great duel in High Performance Class. *Decision* led at the end of racing on Monday and Tuesday, but has surrendered the lead to *Spookie*, which won two races and placed second in the other on Wednesday. Skipper Steve Benjamin was particularly pleased about the second considering that *Spookie* was over early at the start and was able to pass two boats on the course.

"We got good starts in the last two races of the day, stayed in phase for the most part and were able to go around the corners cleanly," said Benjamin, a key figure in developing the High Performance rule.

Dobbs Davis, U.S. editor for Seahorse Magazine and another leading proponent of HPR, said the competition at Key West this week has been the closest in the brief history of the class. "The deltas between the first and fourth place have been the smallest of any HPR regatta held to date," he said.

*Spaceman Spiff* and *Team Fireball*, a pair of J/111s, are duking it out in the eight-boat PHRF 1 class. *Spaceman Spiff*, sailed by Rob and Ryan Ruhlman of Cleveland, Ohio, pulled ahead by 2 ½ points based on the results in Wednesday's last race. *Spaceman Spiff* tied the J/122 *El Ocaso* for third place on corrected time while *Fireball*, skippered by Eddie Fredericks of Annapolis, suffered a sixth place finish.

"We feel good about the way the boat is moving. I think the key for us has been minimizing mistakes and recovering from the few we have made," Rob Ruhlman said. "We have sailed conservatively, especially at the starts."

PHRF 1 was deemed the most competitive class at Quantum Key West on Wednesday and that earned *Teamwork* the Mount Gay Rum Boat of the Day honor. Skipper Robin Team steered his J/122 to three bullets as *Teamwork* jumped from sixth to third in the overall standings.

"We had a little pep talk this morning at breakfast and reminded everybody what we are capable of when we are focused and determined," Team said. "We had epic conditions today and our team loves that type of breeze. Our tactician, Jonathan Bartlett, was on fire. He hit every shift all day long."

*Vayu2*, skippered by Ron Buzil of Chicago, is running away with the 14-boat J/80 class. Professionals Jahn Tihansky and Andrew Kerr are helmsman and tactician, respectively, aboard *Vayu2*, which has won four races and finished second in the other two in building a commanding 12-point lead over *Rumor* (John Storck Jr., Huntington, NY).

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## Fantastic Key West Sailing Conditions on Mount Gay Rum Day - *continued*

Skipper Bill Sweetser and his team aboard *Rush* have maintained the lead in PHRF 2 for three straight days. Sweetser has steered the J/109 to first in four races and second in the other two.

Bill Wagner  
Press Officer

For those who can't be out on the race course, there will be plenty of ways to follow the racing. Last year was a first for "Key West Live" coverage (**#QKeyWest**) and there will be more real time bloggers and video coverage to keep everyone connected this year. <http://premiere-racing.com/QKWLive/>

Regatta dates are January 19 - 24, 2014.

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

Key West Race Week is also supported by The **Florida Keys & Key West Tourism Council**. The **Ocean Key Resort and Spa** is the Official Hotel. **Sapporo USA** is the Official Beer and **Regatta Ginger Beer** is the Official Ginger Beer. **Chelsea Clock** is providing their classic Ship's Bell Clocks for the Boat of the Day trophies.

**23 Industry Partners** bring their support through a program that is now in its 13th year. Quantum Key West 2014 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, Quantum Sail Design Group is dedicated to overcoming the trend toward mass-marketing and mediocrity in the sailmaking industry. The company is known for its high-performance Fusion M sails and winning sail designs in dozens of classes from dinghies to super yachts.

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

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

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Top Three in Class after Three Days  
Place, Yacht Name, Sail, Owner/Skipper, Results, Total Points

High Performance Class (HPR - 4 Boats)

1. SPOOKIE, USA95, Steve & Heidi Benjamin - 4, 2, 1, 2, 1, 1, ; 11
2. Decision, USA84001, Stephen Murray - 3, 1, 2, 1, 3, 4, ; 14
3. Riot, USA38007, Marc Ewing - 2, 3, 4, 3, 2, 2, ; 16

Mini Maxi Class (IRC 1) (IRC - 3 Boats)

1. Bella Mente, USA45, Hap Fauth - 3, 1, 2, 1, 1, 1, ; 9
2. Caol Ila R, USA60669, Alex Schaerer - 1, 2, 1, 2, 2, 2, ; 10
3. Shockwave, USA60272, George Sakellaris - 2, 3, 3, 4/DNF, 4/DNC, 4/DNS, ; 20

52 Class (IRC 2) (IRC - 6 Boats)

1. Rán, SWE5211, Niklas Zennstrom - 2, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, ; 14
2. AZZURRA, ITA280, Pablo A. Roemmers - 3, 3, 2, 2, 4, 1, ; 15
3. Quantum Racing, USA52011, Doug DeVos - 1, 1, 1, 6, 3, 4, ; 16

IRC 3 (IRC - 10 Boats)

1. Arethusa, USA4216, Phil Lotz - 7, 1, 4, 1, 3, 2, ; 18
2. Vitesse, USA4240, Jon Halbert - 2, 2, 2, 8, 5, 3, ; 22
3. Catapult, USA1253, Marc Glimcher - 1, 7, 1, 6, 1, 7, ; 23

*Continued...*

52 Class (Super Series) (One Design - 6 Boats)

1. Rán (SS), SWE5211, Niklas Zennstrom - 2, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, ; 14
2. AZZURRA (SS), ITA280, Pablo A. Roemmers - 3, 3, 2, 2, 4, 1, ; 15
3. Quantum Racing (SS), USA52011, Doug DeVos - 1, 1, 1, 6, 3, 4, ; 16

Melges 32 (One Design - 7 Boats)

1. Hedgehog, BER1, Alec Cutler - 1, 1, 4, 2, 2, 1, ; 11
2. Delta, USA1215, Dalton DeVos - 2, 3, 5, 1, 1, 2, ; 14
3. Helly Hansen Inga from Sweden, SWE322, Richard Goransson - 6, 2, 3, 5, 3, 3, ; 22

Melges 24 (One Design - 6 Boats)

1. Little Wing, ITA798, Nicola Ardito - 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, ; 5
2. Tramp, USA708, Thomas Ritter - 2, 3, 3, 3, 3, ; 14
3. Zingara, CAN629, Richard Reid - 4, 4, 6, 2, 4, ; 20

J 70 (One Design - 60 Boats)

1. Helly Hansen, USA2, Tim Healy - 2, 20, 3, 2, 2, ; 29
2. Catapult, USA187, Joel Ronning - 7, 13, 4, 12, 5, ; 41
3. Savasana, USA96, Brian Keane - 4, 3, 12, 28, 7, ; 54

J 80 (One Design - 12 Boats)

1. Vayu2, USA156, Ron Buzil - 1, 2, 1, 1, 1, 2, ; 8
2. Rumor, USA19, John Storck, Jr - 8, 3, 2, 4, 2, 1, ; 20
3. Blue Jay, USA546, Bob & Cheryl Hayward - 4, 4, 3, 3, 5, 3, ; 22

PHRF 1 (PHRF\_ToT - 8 Boats)

1. Spaceman Spiff, USA93, Rob and Ryan Ruhlman - 2, 3, 2, 3, 2, 3.5, ; 15.5
2. Fireball, USA86, Team Fireball - 1, 5, 1, 2, 3, 6, ; 18
3. Teamwork, USA52939, Robin Team - 5, 8, 6, 1, 1, 1, ; 22

PHRF 2 (PHRF\_ToT - 7 Boats)

1. Rush, USA51, Bill Sweetser - 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 1, ; 8
2. Rhumb Punch, USA41, John and Linda Edwards - 2, 3, 5, 1, 2, 3, ; 16
3. Heat Wave, USA144, Gary Weisberg - 3, 5, 2, 3, 5, 2, ; 20