



# QUANTUM KEY WEST RACE WEEK 2015

## January 18-23, 2015

December 12, 2014 – For Immediate Release

### Speed, Power and Excitement heading to Quantum Key West Race Week --- 28<sup>th</sup> Edition begins January 18

Bill Wagner, Press Officer

**Florida Keys, Key West** - High-speed foiling catamarans, powerful 72-foot Maxi yachts, innovative High Performance Racing designs and large classes of exciting sport boats are heading to the Florida Keys. Quantum Key West Race Week 2015 will once again showcase the full spectrum of sailboat racing amid the beautiful setting of aqua-colored waters and warm sunshine.

Many of the world's best sailors will come to the Conch Republic for the 28<sup>th</sup> edition of Key West Race Week, being held Jan. 18-23. For the fourth consecutive year, Quantum Sail Design Group will serve as title sponsor of the iconic event, which is organized by Premiere Racing.

"One important thing Key West has done for Quantum: It's brought us closer to our clients," said Farley Fontenot, a managing partner for the international sailmaking company. "We are a company that wants to help sailors achieve their goals. A week in Key West gives our professionals a great opportunity to get out on the docks and interact directly with clients and do whatever possible to help them improve their boat's performance."

Fontenot will be on hand to provide coaching for Doug and Dalton DeVos in the Melges 32 class and will be joined in Key West by Quantum professionals sprinkled throughout the fleet, which will feature as many as 11 classes consisting of boats ranging from 23 to 72 feet.

A touch of the America's Cup will come to Key West for the first time with the addition of the GC 32 class. GC stands for 'Great Cup' and the state-of-the-art foiling catamarans mimic the larger models used in the most recent America's Cup by providing an airborne racing experience.

"These boats are fun and fast," said Chad Corning, program manager for skipper Jason Carroll and the Argo team. "The GC 32 can achieve speeds of 40 knots in 20 knots of breeze going downwind, which is exhilarating."

The GC32 Racing Tour will be held from May through September out of such European sites as Austria, England, Germany, Italy and France. Key West will serve as somewhat of a training and tuneup event for the Argo program along with at least three others from Switzerland, The Netherlands and France.

"Key West is a really good venue for these boats because it has generally flat water along with big breeze," Corning said. "Aboard Argo, we are still learning the boat and refining our techniques so this event is a crucial steppingstone in our preparations."

From a spectator standpoint, the most majestic racing machines in Key West will be those racing in the Maxi 72 class, which typically requires a crew of 17 to race. Minneapolis-based skipper Hap Fauth and his crew aboard Bella Mente return after capturing class honors in 2014 and will do battle with a pair of familiar foes in Numbers (Gunther Buerman, Highland Beach, Fla.) and Shockwave (George Sakellaris, Framingham, Mass.).

Terry Hutchinson, a veteran of multiple America's Cups and a former Rolex Yachtsman of the Year, recently joined the Bella Mente as tactician. Hutchinson, who has competed at Key West almost every year since 1991, has spent most of the past decade calling tactics aboard a TP52 and Farr 40 at this regatta.

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“This is the first time I’ll be racing a boat of this size in Key West so it will be interesting,” Hutchinson said. “We’re going against two strong programs loaded with great sailors so it will be fun, challenging racing. If it’s light air, we’ll have our hands full with Shockwave, which won in those conditions off Copa del Rey.”

One-design racing continues to increase in popularity worldwide and there will be several strong classes at Quantum Key West 2015. For the third straight year, J/70 will be the largest class in Key West with a whopping 38 boats entered so far. Jud Smith (Africa, Marblehead, MA), Mauricio Santa Cruz (Bruschetta, Brazil) and Carlo Alberini (Calvi Network, Italy) are among many well-known skippers that will be competing this year.

One of the nice storylines of the regatta is the resurgence of the Melges 24 class, which is showing a significant increase in entries over last year - a positive sign for this iconic sport boat class.

“The Melges 24 is experiencing a grass roots revitalization and Melges sailors are always excited about sailing in venues such as Key West, which has long been popular with the class,” said Peter Craig, President of Premiere Racing.

Brian Porter (Lake Geneva, WI) and his team on Full Throttle have enjoyed significant success on the Melges 24 circuit for a sustained period of time and will certainly be a favorite in Key West. Bora Gulari (Detroit, MI) is another accomplished skipper and a threat to win any class in which he competes.

Premiere Racing is very pleased to have a pair of J/Boat classes making one design debuts at Key West Race Week. To date, the J/111 has attracted seven boats while J/88 has six on the scratch sheet. Cleveland skipper Rob Ruhlman steered Spaceman Spiff to victory in PHRF 1 last year and is looking forward to one design racing against other J/111s.

“I think it’s absolutely outstanding that we have a one-design start and we are very excited about the caliber of competition,” Ruhlman said. “It’s really a great class because the boats are so evenly matched.”

This will be the 13<sup>th</sup> Key West for Ruhlman, who is president and CEO of Preformed Line Products. Ruhlman started coming to the Conch Republic in 1994 with a Tripp 26 and has also raced a Mumm 36, Farr 40 and 13D5 in the regatta.

“It’s January and I get the heck out of Cleveland!” Ruhlman said when asked what he loves most about Key West. “Seriously, the whole event is just fantastic. I think the format has greatly improved over the years. Not much has changed on the water... the race management is still top-notch. However, some of the off-water tweaks the organizers have made over the years have been for the better. There is a sense of camaraderie at Key West that you don’t find at other big events.”

The Farr 280 will make their Key West debut next January. Four boats will battle for one design sub-class trophies within a larger PHRF class.

Regatta dates are January 18 - 23, 2015

Event Sponsors include Title Sponsor **Quantum Sails** and Day Sponsors **Lewmar** (Official Marine Hardware), and **Mount Gay® Rum** (Official Rum). The Supporting Sponsors are **B&G** (Official Marine Electronics), **Marlow Ropes** (Official Rope), and **Gaastra** (Official Clothing and Footwear).

Key West Race Week is also supported by The **Florida Keys & Key West Tourism Council**. **Sapporo USA** is the Official Beer and **Regatta Ginger Beer** is the Official Ginger Beer.

**Chelsea Clock** is providing their classic Shipstrike Clocks for the Boat of the Day trophies.

**20 Industry Partners** bring their support through a program that is now in its 14th year.

Quantum Key West Race Week 2015 is a **US SAILING** sanctioned event.

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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.

Entries, Preliminary Scratch Sheet, Past Results and Photos: [www.Premiere-Racing.com](http://www.Premiere-Racing.com)

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### About Quantum Sail Design Group

Founded in 1996 by a group of independent, experienced sailmakers who shared a common vision, Quantum Sail Design Group is dedicated to providing a superior customer experience with the best service, products, and quality. The company is known for its high-performance Fusion M™ sails for all types of sailors and boats, from dinghies to super yachts.

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.

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

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### For more information on Quantum Key West Race Week 2015

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