



Block Island Race Week 2015

For immediate release:

Dec. 08, 2014 – Larchmont, NY – Registration is now open for the 2015 Block Island Race Week (BIRW), the 50th anniversary of this iconic East Coast sailing regatta organized by the Storm Trysail Club. Race Week 2015 is scheduled for June 21-26 and includes multiple races per day, lots of shoreside activities, and a Round the Island Race. In addition, this year's event includes several new initiatives, including new classes of boats that will be invited to race and an emphasis on youth and environmental awareness.

“Even though registration has just opened, we are thrilled 20 boats have already signed up and we hope to have a record turnout to mark the 50th anniversary,” says Peter Rugg, event chairman for Block Island Race Week 2015. “We have assembled a serious A-team to manage the on-water and shoreside aspects of the regatta.”

With a tradition of world-class regatta management, the Storm Trysail Club is calling on the breadth and depth of its membership to make certain this landmark event is the best one to date. Dick Neville is again the principal race official; John Fisher, Eric Kreuter, and Marcy Trenholm lead the

shoreside efforts. A dozen other club members are handling other aspects of the regatta's preparation.

BIRW traditionally attracts a high caliber of sailing competitors. Several one-design classes have already announced their decision to hold major championships at Race Week 2015:

- J-109 class will hold its North Americans
- J-105 class will hold its East Coast Championships
- Swan 42 class will hold its New England championship and qualifier for the East Coasts

The fast-growing and popular new J-70 class already has two entrants for Race Week 2015. Beyond the traditional fully crewed racing programs, BIRW organizers are also reaching out to several other communities of sailors. For example, in recognition of the steady expansion of interest in doublehanded sailing/racing, there will again be a Doublehanded class in Race Week 2015. This aspect of sailboat racing is, for many with production boats, a viable way to have a family boat and have a fun racing fix without needing to maintain a program for a large crew. Furthermore, dedicated shorthanded boats like the Class 40s and the Mini Transat 650s make up for relatively small class numbers with excitement about their boat and the type of sailing that can be done in them, and so the BIRW committee has extended invitations to these two exciting classes to participate in the 2015 event.

In the same vein, the BIRW organizers are promoting the Classics class for traditional wooden boats at the 2015 event. Entrants in the Doublehanded and Classics classes will have one race per day over distances appropriate

to the weather conditions around fixed marks on Block Island Sound.

As an environmental measure, Block Island Race Week 2015 is a paperless regatta, with all registration done exclusively online, and daily racing results during the event displayed on LED screens. The organizing committee is organizing a number of other elements that will embrace junior and youth sailors, conservation, and care of the sea. Particulars will be announced in coming months.

The Block Island Race Week regatta was conceived by Ev Morris and Jakob Isbrandtsen and was modeled on the famous British regatta “Cowes Week”. It was designed to emphasize both sailboat racing and shoreside fun, and has grown to become a favorite New England summer regatta, a way to enjoy the camaraderie of sailors, family, and friends. A detailed survey conducted after BIRW 2013 revealed that sailors want to come back because it is a fun family event with great racing. The survey found that more than 80% of participants found out about the Race Week 2013 via word of mouth from their mates. Accordingly, the Race Week 2015 committee has sent invitations to many prominent and popular racing classes such as the Beneteau 36.7, J-120, and J-29, as well as HPR, IRC, and PHRF owners/boats as well.

For more information about the event, please visit the 2015 Block Island Race Week website, blockislandraceweek.com.