

PRESTIGE TAKES A LOOK AT THE
SPORT OF YACHTING AS YACHTS
GET READY TO RACE IN THE
AMERICA'S CUP THIS JULY

TAKING TO THE

SEAS

words: **DANIEL SCHEFFLER**

There is something about sailing... the mix of ocean, speed and that arousing sleekness of a yacht. Perhaps it's the wood, the steel and the fresh air that whisks something significant together. And then, of course, there's the competitive nature of professional yachting that evokes something rather regal. Yachting offers an intoxicating recipe for fun, sun and the good things in life with a sprinkle of sophistication thrown in for good measure. Sleek, sexy yachts hold so much appeal. Add a race in which your yacht gets to show its mettle, and we're really talking...

PAST TENSE

Legend has it that in 1851 a schooner, named America, sailed past the Royal Yacht, between the Isle of Wight and the south coast of England, whilst Queen Victoria was watching. The queen was quick to ask who was in second place and she was promptly told "Your Majesty, there is no second". That attitude has remained with the America's Cup to this day. The America's Cup, by the way, is described as a "singular pursuit of excellence". It's the



most prestigious, and oldest international yacht race in the world and it's been held every year for over a century.

There are two seasons of the AC World Series (2011/12 and 2012/13) prior to the beginning of the 34th America's Cup. At the end of each AC World Series circuit, a series champion is crowned based on their cumulative scores from each event. The second season of the AC World Series also

sees the challengers for the 34th America's Cup collect points towards a Louis Vuitton Ranking, which will confer an advantage at the beginning of the Louis Vuitton Cup next month in July.

The America's Cup, which is older than the modern Olympics, is certainly the hardest race to win in modern day sports and has only been won by four different nations. This year's America's

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Cup has defenders, Oracle Team USA, being challenged by Artemis Racing from Sweden, Emirates Team from New Zealand and Luna Rossa Challenge from Italy. The Oracle Team, founded by Larry Ellison, has skipper James Spithill holding the cup for the Golden Gate Yacht Club.

"The history and prestige associated with the America's Cup attracts not only the world's top sailors and yacht designers but also the involvement of wealthy entrepreneurs and sponsors," writes John Rousmaniere in his 1983 book named after the race. The America's Cup is a test of sailing, boat design but also of fund raising by the world's wealthiest. And so this year, in the bay of San Francisco in July, the yacht set and other fanatics will be coming out for the spectacle of the year with AC72 wing-sail catamarans with speeds up to 40 knots. Since 1983, Louis Vuitton has sponsored the Louis Vuitton Cup as a prize for the winner of the challenger selection series. And the brand is also the official timer of the cup.



WATCH THAT CAT

There are two new designs for the 34th America's Cup this summer – both catamarans. There's the 11-man crew AC72 at 22m hull-length and a mast height of 40m with a displacement value of 5 900kg and the 5-man crew AC45 at 13.45m, with a mast height of 21.5m and a displacement value of 1 400kg. The boats, regatta style, are built for quick assembly and disassembly and are designed to be as nimble and easy to

maneuver as possible. James Spithill from the Oracle Team USA was the test drive dummy for these high-adrenaline yachts. According to the *San Francisco Examiner*, John Kostecki, also from Oracle Team USA, said the boats will be travelling at the same speed as the cars going over the Golden Gate Bridge.

LUXURY BRANDS ON BOARD

In the race for supremacy, the luxury brands are not far behind - they look to this



prestigious event as a way to get involved with the right market. The eclectic Spanish shoe brand Camper, a long-time supporter of the sport, is sponsoring the Emirates Team New Zealand and has created two new styles, 'Challenger' for sports with the boat in fast motion and 'Match' for the post-race celebrations and for fraternising during the America's Cup. With Camper's signature 360 stitches with nautical-looking red highlights and the extra traction with rubber outsole lugs, the shoe is the perfect accompaniment. Of course, the Louis Vuitton Tambour Regate Automatic watch is also a perfect accessory. The LV 171 movement, 30-minute chronograph is waterproof and comes in a 44mm stainless steel black PVD case with rubber surround. Extra functions specifically engineered for the race are the 5-minute countdowns and luminescent hands for extra visibility in the midst of nighttime ocean spray.

SUPER YACHT SPECTATORS

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IT MAKES SENSE THAT DURING THIS **'SUMMER OF RACING'** THE SUPER YACHTS OF THE WORLD WOULD BE INTERESTED IN GETTING INVOLVED TOO



would be interested in getting involved too. The America's Cup Super Yacht Programme unites the pinnacle of competitive sailing with the height of luxury yachting – by offering a priority

berthing. Not only will the super yachts have the best views to watch the America's Cup, they will have a chance to participate in their own regatta. www.americascup.com