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America's Cup Charters Celebrates Cup Racing Legacy

World's Largest 12 Meter Fleet Continues to Inspire

NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND, USA (July 8, 2008) -- Though the current America's Cup competition is in legal disarray and sailing syndicates associated with it are quickly unraveling, America's Cup Charters in Newport, Rhode Island (USA), is managing the largest fleet of 12 Meters in the world and celebrating a half century of 12 Meter Class racing. The company has expanded by adding Easterner (US-18) and Enterprise (US-27) to its already overwhelmingly impressive fleet of thoroughbred 12 Meters, which includes Weatherly (US-17), Nefertiti (US-19), American Eagle (US-21), Intrepid (US-22) and Freedom (US-30). To America's Cup enthusiasts, these names (and sail numbers by which they are readily identified on the water) are synonymous with the Cup's finer days, when real men battled on the water, not in the court room, and real boats were of the awe-inspiring lines that have famously silhouetted themselves against the Newport skyline since 1958 when the 12 Meters made their debut in Cup competition.

"2008 is the 50th Anniversary of the beginning of the 12 Meter legacy in America's Cup racing," said George Hill, who started America's Cup Charters in the mid-1980s with Herb Marshall, after the two had respectively returned Weatherly and American Eagle back to racing form and the Newport waterfront. "It's amazing that here we are, five decades later, with seven 12 Meters in one place that has so much historical significance in Cup history."

Newport, referred to as the "Sailing Capital of the World" and located in the "Ocean State," has more ties to the America's Cup than any other place on the planet. Until 1983, an American syndicate had always successfully defended the Cup in what became the longest winning streak--132 years--in the history of any sport. In 1930, '34, and '37, after the Cup competition moved to Newport from New York, it was sailed in magnificent J Class sloops of over 120 feet in size. Then WWII came and Cup racing halted, but it was resurrected in 1958 using the 64- to 70-foot long 12 Meters, since they were the world's largest active racing class and J boats had become extravagantly expensive in the post-war economy.

Cup racing in the "Twelves" continued until 1983, when America, and Newport, finally lost the coveted silver ewer called the America's Cup. On a fateful day in September, 25 years ago, Dennis Conner, sailing Liberty, failed to cover the Australians (on Australia II) in the seventh and final race of the series. Conner went on to win the Cup back from Down Under with Stars &

Stripes in 1987, the last year the Twelves were used, and executed his right to conduct the next competition in San Diego.

Another of Conner's famous 12 Meters, Freedom, joins Weatherly and Intrepid as America's Cup Charter stable mates that have successfully defended the Cup (1980, '62, and '67/'70, respectively), while Easterner, Nefertiti, Enterprise and American Eagle all contended in the America's Cup Trials for the defense. Before he was a communications mogul, the young Ted Turner also won most of the world's greatest ocean races with American Eagle after it had retired from America's Cup racing, but that is only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the famous designers, skippers and crew that story the rich past of these yachts.

America's Cup Charters, like the 12 Meters that form its foundation, has aged beautifully over time. It now specializes in corporate outings (think team building) and private racing and destination charters (think world-class adventure travel) from the beginning of May through October in ports of call ranging northward of Newport to Maine and southward to Chesapeake Bay. There is even the option for Newport visitors to opt in on a two-hour sunset sail when one or more of the Twelves is resting between outings. With the option for guests to actively participate or just sit back and relax (i.e. no experience required), each America's Cup Charter excursion is orchestrated to make the memory of 12 Meter sailing both significant and purely enjoyable.

America's Cup Charters now manages the world's largest fleet of 12 Meters, and certainly sailing aboard these legendary yachts will continue to inspire anyone fortunate enough to claim a position aboard. John Harrison, whose Westpac Banking Corporation partnered with America's Cup Charters for a corporate outing, wrote to proprietors Hill and Marshall: "I would like to offer my thanks and admiration to you for saving such proud and beautiful boats. Your enterprise and hard work in restoring them is a public service."

With America's Cup Charters having salvaged a piece of history while creating the charter experience of a lifetime, there is good cause to celebrate.

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