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MARIN BRIEFS

Big Boat Series back in Bay Area

IJ report

On Thursday, Marin sailors will take up the challenge on the Bay for the 43rd Rolex Big Boat Series. A significant contingent of Marin-based boats and their crews will contend for any number of trophies being offered up in the prestigious regatta. More than 112 boats and 1,000 sailors from all over the nation will compete in either IRC-handicapped racing or in one of the five one-design classes: Express 37, J/105, J/120, 1D35, and Melges 32.

Boat and crew organization are key to success in this top-level regatta. Mill Valley sailor, 29-year old Ashley Perrin, will be managing the Farr 40 Astra, owned by San Francisco Yacht Club member Mary Coleman. Other Marin sailors joining Perrin on Astra are Rene Castro (Mill Valley), and Sylvain Barielle (Napa).

"My job is to make sure our boat is completely prepared mechanically and that start each race with the right crew and correct crew weight," Perrin said.

"My job is relatively easy as Astra is locally based," Perrin said. "The other Farris that we will compete against are from out of town which can complicate things. This is my sixth Big Boat regatta and I always look forward to it. It's the big event of the year for sailors here."

Possibly the most exciting fleet to watch out for is the J/105 fleet, boasting a complement of some 33 boats. Returning fleet champion and multiple Perpetual Trophy winner Good Timin', will have aboard renowned sailor Melissa Purdy and her brother Tom, proprietors of Tiburon restaurant Waypoint Pizza.

Scott Sellers of Larkspur, who will be racing again on Donkey Jack, has consistently placed in the top ranks in the past 2 Big Boat events. Other Marin J/105 sailors to look out for include Tim Russell of Novato on Aquavit, and Kristen Lane of Tiburon on Brick House.

On the water spectators can take in the racing between Treasure Island and the Golden Gate Bridge, with the finish line set off the St. Francis Yacht Club race deck. From shore, the Golden Gate Bridge will provide great viewing, or the Marina Green adjacent to the St. FYC competing boats will race within feet of the shore. For daily race results and more information, visit www.stfyc.com.