

CHARLESTON RACE WEEK 2022 BRINGS A RETURN TO NORMAL ON ALL FRONTS!

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Charleston Race Week is back in full force. Coronavirus canceled the iconic spring regatta in 2020, while the ongoing pandemic forced organizers to hold a scaled-back event in 2021. With conditions improving throughout the United States, event director Randy Draftz is pleased to announce that Charleston Race Week 2022 will showcase a return to normal.

A fleet of more than 200 boats in 15 classes is expected to descend upon this famous southern coastal city for the 27th edition of Charleston Race Week, being held April 28-May 1.

"The previous two years were difficult for sailboat racing with numerous regattas being canceled or postponed. It is a testament to the popularity of Charleston Race Week, the commitment of our sponsors and the determination of our competitors that we were able to hold the regatta in 2021 amidst the pandemic," Draftz said. "We are thrilled to have made it through to the other side and are excited to host a regatta that will be better than ever."

Charleston Race Week, which has always been a regatta unlike any other, is making a strong comeback this year."

Quantum Sails deserves applause and praise for its unwavering support of Charleston Race Week, which has been ongoing for nearly a decade. Quantum's resources were a major reason why the 2021 regatta was a success despite the inability to conduct social activities. Quantum Sails will once again play a prominent role in Charleston Race Week 2022 as a primary sponsor and will have numerous personnel on-site to support sailors on and off the racecourse.

As usual, many of Quantum's professional sailors will be competing in the regatta and available to provide tips and advice throughout the four-day regatta. Quantum president Ed Reynolds explained why the renowned sail-making company values its partnership with Charleston Race Week.

"The combination of a great venue, the best competition and amazing social activity is the reason Charleston Race Week is considered by many as the most important annual regatta in the United States," Reynolds said. "We at Quantum Sails are grateful to support an event that just keeps getting better."

Reynolds emphasized how much the Quantum team enjoys interacting with sailors from all over the world during Charleston Race Week, calling the regatta a great opportunity to connect with the customers the company serves.

"Thanks to excellent management, the event attracts the best sailors – giving racers of all abilities the opportunity to experience top level competition," Reynolds said. "The unique chance to have access to the top pros in their classes for dock talks, and world-class coaching for debriefs gives people a front row seat to learn from the best."

Charleston Race Week organizers are grateful to have many other loyal and important sponsors, notably corporate sponsors Gosling's Rum and Mount Pleasant. Enjoying a Dark 'n Stormy mixed with Gosling's Black Seal Rum is a longtime regatta tradition, while the town of Mount Pleasant remains a most gracious host of a race week whose headquarters is the fabulous Charleston Harbor Marina & Resort.

Meanwhile, Charleston Race Week is excited to announce several new sponsors coming aboard in 2022: [Blackbaud.com](#), Rheos Nautical Eyewear, Plankowner Brewing Company and Tarpon Cellars, Napa Valley.

[Blackbaud.com](#) equips change agents with cloud software, services, expertise and data intelligence. Rheos specializes in stylish sunglasses that are lightweight, durable and float – ideal for sailors.

Plankowner Brewing, based in Boiling Springs, South Carolina, produces coastal and nautical themed brands inspired by the sailing lifestyle. Owner and president Shawn Waggoner, a member of Columbia Sailing Club who previously sponsored the 2021 Sunfish North American Championship for women.

Waggoner has announced that Plankowner, as the “official beer of Charleston Race Week, will be branding two local labels especially for Charleston Race Week – a lager and a blonde ale. “Plankowner Brewing Company is thrilled to be participating in the 2022 Charleston Race Week and supporting this great regatta. As a sailor and brewery owner, I love bringing those two passions together,” Waggoner said. “Charleston Race Week is one of the premier and iconic regattas on the East Coast and a fantastic opportunity to get our brand in front of the largest gathering of sailors in South Carolina.”

Competitors will be able to enjoy Gosling’s Rum and Plankowner beer and wine tastings provided by Tarpon Cellars, Napa Valley at the nightly regatta awards parties, being held at Charleston Harbor Marina & Resort at the usual spot on the beach. Following a one-year hiatus due to COVID, it will be business as usual with the parties featuring live music and daily racing highlights on the Jumbotron.

“We feel comfortable we can conduct the parties in a safe and responsible manner,” Draftz said. “A big part of Charleston Race Week is the social side and we’re happy the sailors will be able to gather again to enjoy camaraderie and fellowship.”

T2PTV Video Production, featuring cameraman Bruce Nairn and on-course commentator Ashley Love, will be filming on all six courses (four inshore, two offshore) and will put together an exciting highlight package that practically puts viewers onboard the boats.

As always, Charleston Race Week will be providing expert advice, instruction and analysis to all competitors. Daily weather briefings sponsored by Quantum will be streamed online each morning. Leandro Spina, Olympic Development Program director for US Sailing, will conduct daily debriefs after racing is complete.

Spina has been with US Sailing since 2008 and has been dedicated to identifying and supporting the next generation of American Olympic sailors ever since. In 2018, the United States Olympic Committee named Spina its Developmental Coach of the Year. Spina’s in-depth debrief sessions will be held in-person in front of the Jumbotron and will utilize drone footage.

Charleston Race Week is bringing back the fun and enjoyable pro-am competition on Saturday evening. Some of the top luminaries in the sport will compete aboard RS 21 one-designs on a short course set close to shore. Check the regatta website ([charlestonraceweek.com](#)) for the complete schedule of events.

Ultimately, it’s all about the action on the water and there is no better venue for grand prix sailboat racing than Charleston, which always delivers a variety of wind strengths and challenging tidal patterns.

Among the notable sailors set to compete are renowned professionals and former Rolex Yachtsman and Yachtswoman of the Year – Cory Sertl and Terry Hutchinson. Sertl will be racing in the RS21 class, while Hutchinson will be skippering an entry in J/70 class. Laura Grondin, who was on the short list for the 2022 Rolex Yachtswoman of the Year award, will be one of the favorites in talent-laden J/70 class with her strong team featuring Taylor Canfield.

Other returning sponsors include Team One Newport, Roper St. Francis Healthcare, Bainbridge, B&G, Dimension Polyant, Gill, Francisco Davila's and Lightning Bugz. Additional new sponsors are Beachables and Tarpon Cellars. To register or for more information visit.charlestonraceweek.com.

Photo by Willy Keyworth.