

ORC



Spi Ouest 2010 – now if only these French Open 6.50s and 7.50s could be talked into the ORC sportboat Europeans in Russia we would have a real gunfight on our hands. As it is, the furthest most of this fleet travel is to Lake Geneva where a number of boats regularly take part in the annual Bol d'Or. Interestingly, pockets of Finot's mini-Imoca classes are now emerging in North America

Fresh enthusiasm down under

Passions have been stirring recently among some of the members of the Cruising YC of Australia following their experiment with ORC International in the Rolex Sydney-Hobart and several other races this past season. This has prompted the introduction of a new ORCi division in the upcoming Blue Water Pointscore Series for 2010/2011 which kicks off at the end of July with the Audi Sydney Gold Coast race.

CYCA rear-commodore Garry Linacre has explained that the decision to include an ORCi division is in response to an increasing number of Australian yachts holding valid ORCi certificates following the Hobart race initiative. 'The CYCA has always had a policy to ensure yacht owners are provided with adequate information regarding popular rating systems, so that they can make an informed decision,' said Linacre. 'ORCi divisions will also be introduced as deemed necessary in other offshore races conducted by the CYCA.'

Further north, as the European season gets going in earnest the ORC management team will be spending considerable time further east than usual, with the European Sportboat Championship being held in St Petersburg, Russia, organised under the auspices of the St Petersburg Sailing Union and the Russian Offshore Race Association. This event should prove especially interesting, with the culture of this historic world-class city serving as backdrop to an intense week of competitive sportboat sailing. This will also be the first ORC championship-level event held anywhere within the former Soviet Union, and indicates the substantial progress that is being made in the region to further the game from its infancy barely a decade ago.

The NoR is also now out for the 2010 ORCi world championship, to be held at the other end of the Baltic in Flensburg in September. To provide the infrastructure needed to get boats rated for these and the other ORC events held in some 40 countries around the world, our chief measurer Nicola Sironi leads a peripatetic life. Just in the past two months he has been measuring boats in the Chiloé archipelago of Chile, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, as well as undertaking measurer seminars in the Baltic region, Holland and most recently Portugal. 'But it's been an interesting time, learning how various groups develop interest and adopt measurement standards and rating rules,' says (a tired) Sironi!

'Plus the boats in each of these newer regions of activity can

be unique... so the process has to stay quite adaptive. We usually all end up learning much from each other.'

Amen to that.

GP42s in the blocks

Unlike their larger TP52 cousins, teams entered in the GP42 division of the MedCup have not had to make broader rule-related changes to their boats, so most are focusing on crew and sail development ahead of the opening round of the 2010 series in Cascais. Some, including Javier Goizueta, GP42 class president, are also still finalising sponsorship arrangements for the year ahead. Goizueta has this year teamed up with Olympic gold medallist Jose María van der Ploeg to race his 2009 Botín & Carkeek design *Madrid*, with Italian match racer Paolo Cian also expected to join his strong Spanish team.

Meanwhile, the GP42 series' first UK team, John Bassadone's Peninsula Petroleum, are putting the finishing touches to preparations on their 2007 Botín & Carkeek design (formerly *Turismo Madrid*), which have included making some reinforcements to the keel fin and structure during the winter at Longitud Cero under the watchful eye of project manager Inaki Castañer.

Dobbs Davis

GILLES MARTIN-RAGET



Bandit! Given one keeps cleaning up in Australia, we thought that we should remind readers what a YW Diamond looks like; there are still some brokerage examples out there for you pot-hunters...