

RACING ROUNDUP

Racing For a Cure



Stars shine for Pro-Am Regatta.

Some of the brightest luminaries in the world of professional sailing graced the waters off Fort Myers Beach, Florida, in early January to raise funds for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS). The Offshore Sailing School Celebrity Pro-Am Regatta was a celebration of the school's 50th anniversary as well as the life of Chuck Wright, former commodore of the St. Charles Yacht Club in Fort Myers. It also further cemented the school's status as a staunch LLS supporter.

Founded by Steve and Doris Colgate, the school has raised more than \$130,000 for LLS in the past four years alone. "We are proud to support LLS to find cures for blood cancers through a fun regatta weekend involving celebrity skippers, crews from across the country, and our local Southwest Florida community," says Steve Colgate. "This event is in honor of all those who valiantly fought blood cancers, especially Charles (Chuck) R. Wright, who spearheaded two Leukemia Cup Regattas as past commodore of The St. Charles Yacht Club."

Packages for the four-day/three-night pro-am regatta weekend started at \$1,500, with \$500 of that going directly to the LLS. Participants not only rubbed shoulders but also raced with sailing royalty including Dawn Riley, the first woman to manage an America's Cup campaign; Dave Curtis, two-time Rolex Yachtsman of the Year; three-time Olympic gold medalist Mark Reynolds; and America's Cup champions Ed Baird, Mike Toppa and Gary Robson, a lymphoma survivor, prolific journalist and author, and vice president of the International Sailing Federation (ISAF).

All racing took place in Colgate 26 keelboats designed by the Colgates specifically for their racing and day-sailing courses. Presented by Merrill Lynch Wealth Management, the pro-am weekend was part of the Leukemia Cup series of regattas. leukemicup.org

New Sailing League Premieres

January's Strictly Sail show in Chicago saw the stateside launch of the Premiere Sailing League (PSL), whose creators describe it as a nationwide racing series modeled on a popular format imported from Germany and Denmark. Seventy-two participating clubs will be divided up by region, with racing getting underway in August in

Chicago; New Orleans; Newport, Rhode Island; and San Francisco.

Teams will compete in J/70s crewed by four sailors.

"To reach the broadest audience, Premiere Sailing League regattas will be held close to shore, have a stadium-style atmosphere, and utilize the latest social media technologies, allowing the sailing and general public to support and encourage their teams," says PSL director and founder Benjamin A. Klatzka, who relocated from Germany to Newport to establish the league.

"Having seen what the new sailing leagues in Europe have done to excite and promote grassroots sailing, we're really excited to support Ben's initiative in the U.S.," says J/Boats president Jeff Johnstone. premieresailingleague.com

Super Performance Honored

Super Boat International's 2014 award winners were recognized at the 2014 Key West World Championships. *Black Pearl* (Production 3 class) and *Hooters Instigator* (Superboat Extreme Class) both took home the Triple Crown Award given to teams who win Florida, national, and world championships in the same year. *Miss Geico*, a member of the Superboat Unlimited class, earned first place overall at the world championships, while *Broadco* (Superboat), *Snowy Mountain Brewery* (Superboat Vee), *SOS Venezuela* (Superboat Stock), and *Crazy Chicken* (Production 4) were crowned world champions in their respective divisions.

For overcoming adversity, Lucas Oil *Silverhook* won the Outstanding Performance Award; for exemplary professionalism in the sport, *Broadco* won the Golden Eagle Award.

Earning National Championship Awards in their respective divisions were *Two Cruel* (Production 4), *The Hulk* Redline Oil (Superboat Stock), *US-1 STIHL* (Superboat), *Absolutely Not* (Superboat Vee), and Lucas Oil *Silverhook* (Superboat Unlimited). With the exception of Lucas Oil *Silverhook*, all of the above also earned Florida Champions Awards given to Florida-based teams who accumulate the most points in their respective classes during the Super Boat International racing season. superboat.com

By BRIAN HARTZ