

It Might Get Loud

Engines will roar when Super Boat International (SBI) kicks off its 2015 season next month. Cocoa Beach, Florida, hosts the 6th annual Space Coast Super Boat Grand Prix May 15-17. The 2014 edition saw *Miss Geico* in the Superboat Unlimited division burn up the race course with an average speed of 90.0 mph—tops among all competitors across every division. The team's first-place finish was a harbinger of success to come as *Miss Geico* would go on to claim the 2014 World Championship in the Superboat Unlimited division.



Super Boat International president John Carbonell

The 2015 campaign also heralds the arrival of Southern Racing Fuels as SBI's official Sunoco race fuel supplier at a time when lower fuel prices are inspiring confidence among the powerboat racing community as well as members of the general public who come out to back the sport. "I think this is going to be a very pivotal year not only in boat racing but in our economy," SBI president John Carbonell was quoted as saying. With lower fuel prices, it will help

our race teams as long as the economy stays strong. Many others have commented on their forecast for next year and I believe it is going to be a very good year."

Maxis square off at St. Barth

Brand-new, state-of-the-art maxi racing yachts *Rambler 88* and *Comanche* are set to compete April 13-18 at Les Voiles de St. Barth off the picturesque shores of the Caribbean island of St. Barthelemy. The vessels were launched a mere one month apart in 2014, and

each carries a significant technological leap forward. *Rambler 88*'s "sabretooth"-style rudders—with jagged leading edges—have created a stir, while *Comanche*'s monolithic forward hull construction, which eschews the traditional sandwiched honeycomb model, also breaks with tradition. Two-time U.S. Sailing Yachtsman of the Year Ken Read will helm the 100-foot *Comanche*, while the *Rambler 88* team will be skippered by owner George David.

Some 900 sailors and 75 vessels from around the world are expected to converge on St. Barth for the race, which was first held in 2010 and has quickly established itself as one of the top racing events in the Caribbean. "The trade winds, the turquoise waters, and these magnificent boats ... we are really lucky to be able to sail in such an extraordinary place!" says French sailing superstar Loïck Peyron, the ambassador for this year's Les Voiles de St. Barth. Peyron was named Sailor of the Year by the French Sailing Federation for winning the 2014 Route du Rhum at the helm of the 130-foot trimaran *Banque Populaire*. Terry Hutchinson, U.S. Sailing's current Yachtsman of the Year, will skipper the 72-foot *Bella Mente* and concurs with Peyron about the undeniable appeal of Les Voiles de St. Barth.

NOOD Series Kicks Off in St. Pete

The National Offshore One Design (NOOD) Regatta Series, now in its 27th year, got under way February 13-15 at the St. Petersburg Yacht Club in St. Petersburg, Florida, with local skipper Grant Dumas taking the overall title aboard *Warrior*, a Tripp 38 competing in the PHRF 1 division. The St. Pete NOOD regatta was *Warrior*'s first major regatta following an extensive 14-month refit. Overall, the fleet included 133 boats competing in nine divisions. For a complete list of results, visit <http://bit.ly/179bzMY>. Scandinavian apparel company Helly Hansen has come aboard as the title sponsor for the 2015 NOOD series, which also includes stops in San Diego, Annapolis, Chicago, and Marblehead, Massachusetts. 

By BRIAN HARTZ