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New and old entries for the 8th Gstaad Yacht Club's Centenary Trophy

In two and a half months' time, some of the most handsome boats from the classic yachting circuit will reunite again on the Cote d'Azur for the 8th edition of the Gstaad Yacht Club Centenary Trophy.

Can there be anything more traditional than gathering centenarian boats for a race especially conceived for them? The **Gstaad Yacht Club Centenary Trophy** in Saint-Tropez, has now become a true tradition.

The regatta, unique in its genre, is reserved to boats that are one hundred years or older and in 2018 will celebrate its eighth edition. Over the years, the Centenary trophy has gathered some of the most gorgeous and best performing classic yachts from the past century.

The event, raced in a pursuit format with staggered starts, is scheduled for Thursday, October 4th and is expected to be yet again the focal point of classic racing at the Voiles de Saint-Tropez. The Centenary Trophy features an especially created and constantly refined handicap system, allowing very different boats in size and rig to compete on equal terms, and its format has proved extremely attractive for the sailors and the public alike, with the first boat to cross the line off the Saint Tropez breakwater to be declared the winner.

Last year's winner has confirmed she will be back to try and be the first crew to win the Trophy for the second time in a row. The gaff sloop *Tilly XV*, built in 1912 for Prince Heinrich Von Preussen to compete in the North Sea races such as the Kiel Week, was renovated and started her new career in the Med, under the loving care of her long-time owner Siegfried Rittler, will be on the starting line in Saint-Tropez.

As will do two "new" centenarians debuting in the regatta this year: the German-flagged *Gaudeamus* from 1914 and British William Fife III designed *Kismet*, both gaff-cutters, the two yachts lived very different lives. "*Gaudeamus has changed a lot of lifelines. She brought a family from East to West Germany, was doing social work with handicapped children and over the last 18 years, she acts as ambassador and sponsor for the charity association Africachild.de*" explained her owner Raimund Marz.

Designed and built by Fife and launched when Queen Victoria was still on the throne in 1898, *Kismet* is celebrating her 120th anniversary. At the outbreak of WWII *Kismet* joined many other yachts in mud berths at West Mersea in Essex where she lay as a houseboat for over 50 years. *Kismet* was "rescued" from near wreck status and underwent a four-year restoration by Adrian Wombwell in Tollesbury, being re-commissioned in 2010 and last raced in Mediterranean waters in that year.

This year too, during the prize-giving night both the Centenary Trophy and the Centenary Award Silver Bowl will be on display. The prize that has been awarded last April in London to the boat deemed the **Centenarian of the Year 2018** and went to *Folly*, a Charles Nicholson design from 1909 that is sailed in authentic period fashion on the Mediterranean classic circuit. The boat has been owned by Argentinean naval architect Germán Frers, who just recently sold it to a new owner. She was drawn by the English designer Charles Nicholson for himself, intending to take the fight to the Scottish design William Fife in the 8-Metre class in 1909.

In 1910 she was moved to Argentina, where she remained until she was bought in the 1990s by Germán Frers. The restoration that he undertook, first in Buenos Aires and then in Argentario in Italy, was based on an original half model, one photo and the Ratsey & Lapthorn sail plan. The result is a picture of sailing as it was. Sailed in authentic fashion, with no winches and period fittings, she is raced widely on the Med classic circuit, often winning against more modern boats.

Past winners of the Centenary Trophy

2011: **Bonafide** (1899)

2012: **Marigold** (1892)

2013: due to adverse weather conditions the title was not awarded

2014: **Olympian** (1913)

2015: **Oriole** (1905)

2016: **Spartan** (1913)

2017: **Tilly XV** (1912)

The Centenary Trophy is organized by The Gstaad Yacht Club in co-operation with the Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez.

Editors' notes:

In 1998 a group of sailor enthusiasts with the vision to "create a unique global yacht club away from the waters, instead of another local club by the waters" founded the Gstaad Yacht Club. Based in the Swiss mountains and in the beginning, very often acknowledged with surprise, the GYC developed to a club with 400 members from over 30 different countries and to a place where members and their guests love to meet. The GYC supports sailing projects on all levels from juniors to professional sailors and it has become a solid force on the Swiss sailing scene and especially among Olympic sailing and the classic yachts.

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