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Celebrating at the 8th Gstaad Yacht Club's Centenary Trophy

In a month's time, some of the most handsome boats from the classic yachting circuit will reunite again on the Cote d'Azur to fight for the 8th edition of the Gstaad Yacht Club Centenary Trophy and to celebrate some very special anniversaries...

The **Gstaad Yacht Club Centenary Trophy** in Saint-Tropez, has now become a true tradition, a special race where unique boats are going to be admired, crews to meet and share and where unique birthdays can be celebrated.

That is the case of *Kismet*, saluting her 120th anniversary by debuting in the Centenary Trophy. Designed and built by Fife and launched when Queen Victoria was still on the throne in 1898, at the outbreak of WWII *Kismet* joined many other yachts in mud berths in Essex where she laid as a houseboat for over 50 years. *Kismet* was "rescued" from near wreck status and underwent a four-year restoration.

Just ten years younger is *Viola*, a William FIFE III gaff cutter built in 1908 for T.M. Hunter of Cowes who raced her for several years until, during the second world conflict, she was derigged. In 1996 *Viola* was renovated by the Raymond Labbé yard at Saint-Malo in the North of France. In 1993, the yacht was declared French national historical monument and since 2000 she has been based at the Maritime Museum in La Rochelle. In 2017 *VIOLA* won the prestigious "Monaco Classic Week" and was named "Yacht of the year" by French Magazine Yachting Classic.

The gaff sloop *Tilly XV*, built in 1912 for Prince Heinrich Von Preussen to compete in the North Sea races was renovated and started her new career in the Med, under the loving care of her longtime owner Siegfried Rittler, won the Trophy last year and is confirmed to be back to try and be the first crew to win the prize for the second time in a row.

She will have to fend off attacks from the 14 yachts entered so far and other "new" centenaries debuting in the regatta this year, like *Cariba* from 1912, *Gaudeamus* and *Iona*. German-flagged gaff-cutter *Gaudeamus*, from 1914 was built for the Königsberg Yacht Club and in the 1950s, she was converted to a Marconi cutter and renamed *Rugia* and in 1962 she was used by Klaus Schroeder's family to flee from East to West Germany, before being sold. Between the 1980s and 90s she was based on Lake Constance, later to be purchased by Raimund Deibele who moved her to the Côte d'Azur, rechristened her *Gaudeamus* and restored her gaff rig.

Iona was built in 1899 and one of the rare 19th century yachts still taking part in the classic and vintage circuit. She belongs to the "25 feet" class, 40 of which were built worldwide in total. She started her new life in 2008 when French Mathias Hellen fished her out of the Thames where she had sunk and sent her to Holland for restoration. During this process, she was converted from a gaff to a Marconi rig.

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 of the Saint Tropez breakwater to be declared the winner.

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 has been owned by Argentinean naval architect Germán Frers.

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.

Media liaison: Carla Anselmi

- mobile [+39 347 4632757](tel:+393474632757)

- email: carlanselmi2@gmail.com

Photographer: Jürg Kaufmann

- Email: juerg@go4image.com

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Gstaad Yacht Club

- web: <http://www.gstaadyachtclub.com/centenary-trophy/>

Managing Director: Cindy Schoenrich

- Email: cindy@gstaadyachtclub.com