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9th Gstaad Yacht Club Centenary Trophy, ready to go

The clock is ticking, just a few hours and some of the most handsome boats from the classic yachting circuit will gather once more on the Cote d'Azur for the 9th edition of the Gstaad Yacht Club Centenary Trophy.

Organisers at the Swiss Club are giving the final touches to the 9th edition of the **Gstaad Yacht Club Centenary Trophy** the regatta dedicated to boats one hundred years and more of age that has become a true tradition and an unmissable rendez-vous for centenarian sailing yachts. The event, raced in a pursuit format with staggered starts, is scheduled for Thursday, October 3rd and is expected to be yet again the focal point of classic racing at the Voiles de Saint-Tropez.

As past winners and participants keep coming back for more, year after year new centenarian yachts make their debut at the Trophy. The 2019 entry list includes, several rookies like 1917 *Apache*, a 8 Metres IR designed by Norwegian architect Johan Anker, known worldwide as the father of the Dragon. *Apache*, second of a series of four, was built in Norway and was shortlisted to participate at the 1920 Olympic Games in Antwerp, but due to change of the 8-m rule in 1919, didn't make it to the games.

A new entry is also the 15 Metre fin keel racing *Ester*, a 1901 gaff sloop designed by Gunnar Mellgren with a pretty unique story to tell: after some very successful decades on the racing circuit, in the late 1930s, due to a fire on board she sunk and was lost, to be discovered only in 2016, 164 feet below the sea surface in the north of Sweden. Fully restored, thanks to the passion of her new owners, *Ester* re-started her successful sailing career.

Two big boats are also taking part for the first time in the Centenary Trophy: *Black Swan*, a gaff ketch designed by Charles E. Nicholson in 1899 celebrating its 120th anniversary and *Sumurun*, a 1914 Marconi ketch by William Fife III. Commissioned by a flamboyant baroness as a gift to her husband, she was named *Sumurun* for an exotic harem girl, designed and built by the legendary Scottish yard Fife & Sons, and hailed as one of the swiftest and most beautiful yachts afloat. *Sumurun*'s story is filled with vivid personalities - among famous guests on board Mick Jagger and John Kerry- and a multitude of racing victories.

These big yachts though, will have to keep an eye on the smaller but fast boats to the likes of *Endrick*, a 7 Metres IR designed by William Fife III in 1912, whose owner and skipper is former Swiss Olympic sailor Jean Degaudenzi, who took part to the 1972 Games in Munich in the Flying Dutchman class.

One of the oldest boats still competing on the classic yachts circuit, *Marigold*, built in 1892 at Gosport and designed by Charles Nicholson, will be on the starting line too. *"I would like to emphasise how enjoyable we find participating in the Gstaad Centenary race, whose unique format brings a different perspective to the week's racing. Combining some of the smaller and also some of the more leviathan*

yachts together in one race, with one common denominator being their age is certainly one of the highlights to the whole series in St Tropez. After taking the decision, not taken lightly, to retire from last year race - we felt the sea state for us could have the potential to cause some damage - we are ever more eager to sail with this unique fleet of yachts once again.” Declared Marigold’s skipper Jason Gouldstone.

Unfortunately, *Tilly XV*, double champion in 2017 and 2018, will not be on the starting line. and will miss the chance to do an historic triple in the Centenary Trophy but *Olympian*, the William Gardner designed gaff cutter from 1913 and skippered by French America’s Cup veteran Bruno Troublé, will be back to defend the title won in 2014 as will do the Herreshoff’s NYYC 30 *Oriole*, that won the Trophy in 2015.

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.

“We are looking forward to the 9th edition of the Gstaad Yacht Club Centenary Trophy, to which the club welcomes some of the most beautiful yachts, if not the most beautiful yachts overall sailed by teams who put their souls and hearts into it. Thankful as well for the collaboration with SNST we wish all the owners, skippers and crew another fabulous year in the Med and thank them for their passion and trust.” said the GYC’s Commodore Manrico Iachia.

This year too, during the prize-giving night both the Centenary Trophy and the Centenarian Award Silver Bowl will be on display. The prize that has been awarded earlier in the year, in April in the Royal Thames Yacht Club in London to the boat deemed the **Centenarian of the Year 2019** and went to Carlotta, 50ft (15m) protection cutter built in 1899, restored by Abernethy and Gaudin in Canada and the Elephant Boatyard in England.

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)

2018: **Tilly XV** (1912)

The Centenary Trophy is organized by The Gstaad Yacht Club in co-operation with the Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez. More info and an entry form are available at this [link](#).

Editors' notes:

The Gstaad Yacht Club was founded in 1998 by 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". 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