



Press release, October 4, 2019

***Olympian* wins Gstaad Yacht Club Centenary Trophy 2019 at photo-finish**

***Olympian*, the William Gardner's gaff cutter from 1913 skippered by Guillaume Fetas has won the 9th edition of the Gstaad Yacht Club Centenary Trophy in a nail-biting photo-finish with *Viola*.**

On Thursday, the day traditionally dedicated to the Défis (the challenges), over 20 of the most handsome boats from the classic yachting circuit gathered on the waters of Saint Tropez to fight for the 9th edition of the Gstaad Yacht Club Centenary Trophy, the only sailing trophy reserved to one hundred years or older boats.

The event is raced in a pursuit format with staggered starts and features an especially created handicap system, allowing very different boats in size and rig to compete on equal terms, with the first boat to cross the line off the breakwater to be declared the winner.

Sunny, blue skies, light wind conditions that never exceeded 10 knots, just perfect for the centenarian beauties, welcomed the 23 yachts - the highest number of entrants so far in the history of the regatta - on a 9 mile course in the bay of Saint Tropez.

After a real sailing duel, *Olympian* this year skippered by Guillaume Fetas, managed to take over *Viola* just five hundreds metres from the finish, by hoisting the big spinnaker, getting the necessary extra speed to cross the line in first. At the end of an exciting 3 hours race, the two boats were separated by only a half boat-length. Despite having won almost all the races she participated to this year, 1908 gaff cutter *Viola* could not write her name in the books of the Centenary Trophy for just a handful of seconds, while third on the finish line was the 10 m I.R. *Marga* from 1910.

"We knew from the start it was going to be tricky for the light wind conditions, very changeable. We just chose not to stick to tactical choices, but to adapt to find the best lane to catch up with the boats that started before us. Our competitors sailed very well, so it was hard for us to beat them." Declared an elated Guillaume Fetas. *"It was a great day on the water and winning with a finish like that is very cool."*

Olympian thus becomes the second boat to have won the Centenary Trophy twice after the success in 2014, together with *Tilly XV* that this year unfortunately could not defend her title. *Olympian* is a P-Class gaff sloop designed by American William Gardner in 1913 that spent almost her entire life in the USA scoring several wins on Lake Michigan, before being rediscovered and restored in 2013 by French America's Cup veteran Bruno Troublé who had her delivered to the Mediterranean. Since then *Olympian* successfully took part to the top regattas and yesterday became double winner of the Gstaad Gstaad Yacht Club Centenary Trophy.

"It was a super exciting race, one of the closest finishes in the history of the Centenary Trophy. Watching from close such an incredible display of racing skills and boat handling on these old yachts was just fantastic." Declared the Gstaad Yacht Club's Commodore, Manrico Iachia. *"We are looking forward to next year, it will be an important milestone with the regatta celebrating its 10th anniversary. We will be working hard to make it a memorable event, from both a technical and a social standpoint, hoping to gather a record number of centenarians."*

The prize-giving night, with more than 140 guests, was held right off the Saint-Tropez waterfront.

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:

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". The GYC was regarded with astonishment in the beginning as a club in the mountains without water and meanwhile developed to a club with about 400 members from over 20 different countries. With sailing projects on all levels from juniors to professional sailors and the launch of the Centenary Trophy regatta in 2011 it has become a solid force on the Swiss sailing scene and for classic boats.

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The Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez

With more than 600 members and organizing fifteen events including the Voiles de Saint-Tropez, the Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez is one of the oldest clubs in France, its origins date back to 1862. Since 2015, the merger of sailing clubs of Saint-Tropez (formerly UST Sailing and SNST) helped to broaden the horizons. Located in two beautiful places, the Club includes several centers of nautical activities: Sailing competition, sailing school and Motor Yachting.

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