



GSTAAD YACHT CLUB

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The fifth Gstaad Yacht Club's Centenary Trophy: an edition to remember

The fifth edition of the Gstaad Yacht Club's Centenary Trophy will be filed in the archives under a tag: challenging. The fifteen one hundred years and more old yachts that went go head-to-head in a pursuit race based on a special handicap system, were in fact faced with extremely challenging conditions, with an easterly wind well above 20 knots, gusting over 25 and an especially tough sea state. Not the easiest setting for the delicate centenarians that, nonetheless, proved to be strong, seaworthy and responsive in the hands of their experienced crews.

Despite the conditions veering to the extreme, a shining sun and bright daylight enabled GYC's official photographer Juerg Kaufmann to take stunning pictures that also will be used for a long time to come.

At the end of a demanding and tough race, NYYC 30 Oriole (1905) crossed the line just off the St Tropez's breakwater in first, thus winning the 5th edition of the Centenary Trophy of the Gstaad Yacht Club at her fourth attempt. *“Since its inception, we always considered a great idea to gather the centenarians during the Voiles de Saint Tropez with the Centenary Trophy, offering them an original race format. I believe the pursuit race concept is interesting, motivating and enjoyable for the crew. Oriole has always taken part and, despite being in the top scorers, we have never been able to win it. A victory was among our goals for the 2015 season.”* declared owner Jean-Pierre Lostis, adding: *“But to win you need the right weather conditions, and this year they were just perfect for us, you need to avoid making too many mistakes but mostly to push hard from start to finish. We did not start that well, we had some issues hoisting the jib and we crossed the line 3 minutes late. Yet, we soon caught up with the boats in front. Upwind and in strong air Oriole is fast and does not beat too much in the big waves of the gulf of St Tropez. We were leading since the first mark but, as it goes, we noticed the faster boats approaching and namely Olympian, the 2014 winner. After the last upwind mark, a long downwind leg was waiting for us. We decided not to hoist the spinnaker but we were fast, pointing right to the mark while the others had to do several gibes. On the last stretch to the finish we realized that Olympian was not in a position to catch us, if we made no mistakes. The crew remained focussed and we made it! We are very proud to have won this prestigious trophy and we wish to thank the Gstaad Yacht Club for organizing the regatta with such energy and passion.”*

“What a joy! To win, yes, but mostly to have pushed Oriole at her maximum, this old American 110 years old lady we all are in love with! She sure deserved this victory, thank you Oriole.” added Francis Van de Velde who together with Lostis and the rest of the crew, were awarded with the exclusive trophy created by Wakely and Wheeler of London in 1911.

Second on the finishing line the "P" class (a smaller version of the 1930s America's Cup J class yachts) *Olympian* (1913) skippered by France's Bruno Troublé, that could not make a double after last year's victory.

Mignon, one of the last surviving International 7-Metre class, launched in 1912 and designed by famous Norwegian architect Johan Anker got the bronze. "It was *Mignon's* debut at the Centenary Trophy, and I think the regatta is an excellent idea. The handicap system is great and I particularly like the staggered start because there is less danger on the line, no risk of collisions at the start. Also, you always know where you are on the course and you can try to catch up. Yes, I like the format." declared her owner and skipper Corentin Thiercelin. "At times the boat was pounding a bit, but this happened the day before and the day after too, so no big issue and then we like wind better so it was ok. *Mignon* is 16,50 metres long so she is not too small. It was fun!"

Past winners of the Centenary Trophy

2011: **Bonafide** (1899)

2012: **Marigold** (1892)

2013: due to adverse weather conditions the race could not be sailed and the title was not awarded

2014: **Olympian** (1913)

2015: **Oriole** (1905)

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". Since December 20th, 2003, GYC has its own clubhouse with 400 members from over 20 different countries. The GYC was a bit of a joke in the beginning as a club in the mountains without water. With sailing projects on all levels from juniors to professional sailors. In the meantime it has become a solid force on the Swiss sailing scene and especially among the classic yachts.

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