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**For Immediate Release – February 5, 2009**

### **Wrapping Up Acura Key West 2009**

**--- A Record Ten Race Series under Sunny Florida Skies**

Key West, Fla - Winning in Key West always brings broad smiles to the faces of skippers and results in much rejoicing among crew members. This was certainly the case following a week long hard fought ten race series on the waters off the Conch Republic. *Acura Key West 2009, presented by Nautica* concluded on Friday January 23, under cloudless skies and with warmer temperatures.

There was drama galore in the final races, not the least of which was in the international **Farr 40** class.

*Mascalzone Latino* (Vincenzo Onorato, Napoli, Italy) and *Barking Mad* (Jim Richardson, Newport, R.I.) were tied with 31 points apiece entering the 10<sup>th</sup> and final race of the regatta. *Joe Fly*, another Italian entry owned by Giovanni Maspero, was just one point behind.

"It all came down to the last beat and *Barking Mad* chose to go hard left while *Joe Fly* went hard right. We knew if we covered Barking Mad we could be no worse than second so that is what we did. It was desperately close racing and we were fortunate enough to win both the race and the regatta," said Adrian Stead, Onorato's tactician.

"It was a story of fantastic teamwork and never giving up. We had a weird day on Wednesday that set us back, but we kept our heads together and finished strong," said Stead, noting that *Mascalzone Latino* responded to finishes of ninth and tenth with a line of 3-2-2-1 in the final four races. That shows the sort of fight in this team," he added.

Jeff Ecklund and the members of the *Star* crew celebrated after pulling out a tough victory in **Melges 32** class. They endured a difficult Thursday with results of 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> and found themselves tied with *Red* (Joe Woods, Torbay, GBR) going into last two races. Ecklund and tactician Harry Melges made the right calls as *Star* posted a fourth and a second to beat *Red* by nine points.

"We made it difficult on ourselves with that one bad day. We had to come out today and get the job done and we did," said Ecklund, who repeated as Melges 32 champion at Acura Key West.

*Star* was also selected as Acura Boat of the Week. The Melges 32 class racing was deemed the most closely contested of the regatta with the top six finishers separated by only 17 points.

Ecklund, 46, grew up racing Scows on the Great Lakes with Buddy Melges and his son Harry, whose family-owned company builds both the Melges 32, 24 and the hot new 20. Harry Melges, who is now president and CEO of Melges Boatworks, serves as tactician on *Star*.

"It would be hard to do this without Harry. He is one of the best sailors in the world and I'm fortunate to have him by my side," said Ecklund, who began steering his own boat about six years ago.

**Continued...**

## Wrapping Up Acura Key West 2009 – *continued*

*UKA UKA Racing* concluded an impressive regatta with a third and a fourth on Friday to secure the title in the **Melges 24** class, largest of the regatta with 33 boats. Skipper Lorenzo Bressani and crew were simply brilliant, winning four races and placing no worse than fifth in compiling 20 points – seven better than the Swiss entry *Blu Moon*, owned by Franco Rossini.

American professional Jonathan McKee, a former Olympic gold medalist, called tactics aboard *UKA UKA Racing*, the reigning world champion which led the regatta from start to finish.

*Vitesse* skipper Jon Halbert rewarded his crew with lunch at the Conch Republic Restaurant after winning the very evenly-matched **Swan 42** class. Three different boats led the regatta at various points and all six boats were always bunched together at mark roundings. Quantum professional Farley Fontenot called tactics on *Vitesse*, which entered Friday a point behind *Arethusa* (Phil Lotz, Newport, R.I.), but beat its top challenger in both races.

“It was crazy how close the racing was all week. We won or lost five races by 30 seconds or less,” Halbert said.

Halbert, from Dallas, Texas, has heard about the annual race week off Key West ever since he began sailing. He has skippered an entry here the past six years and said it was “absolutely fantastic” to finally win the prestigious regatta.

“I’ve been dying to win this event practically my entire adult life. This is very, very rewarding... definitely one of the highlights of my sailing career,” Halbert said.

Daniel Woolery and the team aboard *Soozal* relaxed in the cockpit of the brand new King 40 after capturing **IRC 2** class. Veteran professional Robbie Haines called tactics on *Soozal*, a Mark Mills design that finished first or second in nine of 10 races.

“The racing was super hard all week. It was a dogfight every day and we were lucky to have Robbie, who is just a master at calling the shifts. You can have the fastest boat in the world, but it doesn’t matter if you’re on the wrong side of the course,” said Woolery, a resident of Point Richmond, Cal. “Ultimately, I would credit our preparation. Scott Eason and I spent six weeks in Palm Beach and never saw anything but Crackerboy Boatworks, West Marine, Home Depot and the Comfort Inn. We made sure the boat was right from front to back.”

*Ran*, a TP52 owned by Niklas Zennstrom of Great Britain, put forth a commanding performance in **IRC 1** – winning six races and leading from start to finish. French Olympic medalist Thierry Peponnet called tactics for helmsman Tim Powell.

“We just have a really good team that has been together a year and knows the boat very well, knows how to make her go fast,” Powell said. “It was a fantastic week of sailing. You really couldn’t ask for any better conditions. Niklas really enjoyed himself and is looking forward to coming back next year.”

*Rhumb Punch* capped an incredible comeback in **Farr 30** class, rallying from fourth place on Wednesday to overall victory. It was the second Acura Key West crown for the husband-wife team of John and Linda Edwards of Solomons, Md., who captured J/29 class in 2007.

Edwards said the *Rhumb Punch* team is already anxiously looking forward to the 23<sup>rd</sup> edition of the renowned regatta. The family-based team has been coming to Key West since 2000 and hope they have another 10 years in them.

“There is absolutely no question we are coming back. This is the best regatta we’ve ever been involved with. The racing is always awesome and the night life is rocking. I can’t think of any other regatta that has the complete package like this one,” Edwards said.

Premiere Racing president Peter Craig said that plans for **Acura Key West 2010** are already underway. It will be held no matter what transpires with the economy and entries.

## Wrapping Up Acura Key West 2009 – *continued*

"This week was typical of the reliable wind conditions we get here. Ten races over five days is one of the main reasons why sailors come to Key West. They know they are going to go racing every day," Craig said. "To end on a picture-perfect day with solid breeze, not a cloud in the sky and the weather warming up was very fitting."

Craig said Premiere Racing has already heard from several Key West regulars who did not make this year's event due to the economic downturn. "They all universally assure they will be back next year. It had to be painful for them to following the regatta on the internet and see the fleet racing in such superb conditions."

You didn't have to be a winner to have a great time at Acura Key West 2009, presented by Nautica. *Team Barbarians*, skippered by Stuart Simpson of the United Kingdom, finished ninth in Melges 32 class. However, The Barbarians routinely won the party and thoroughly enjoyed the caliber of competition and conditions.

"Absolutely, 100 percent," Simpson said when asked if he would be returning to the regatta. "Yacht racing off Key West is simply the best way to spend the third week of January. Christmas is over and it's depressing sitting around waiting for the credit card bills to come in. It's much better to take vacation and come down here for some sun, some fun and some great, great sailing."

The top **J/105s** were racing to name the overall winner down to the last leg of the last race. *Savasana*, Brian Keane's entry from Marion, MA held on to take overall honors.

"We had extremely competitive racing all week long," said Savasana crew member Michael Lague.

Friday's close racing earned the class Acura Boat of the Day honors, with Pat Eudy's *Big Booty* (Charleston, SC) winning the day and that honor.

**J/80s** were the third largest class in Key West, with 14 boats. John Storck, Jr. and the *Rumor* team sailed a consistent series, finishing no less than 4<sup>th</sup> all week. He took class honors and also won Lewmar Boat of the Day on Thursday.

William Rose's *Kicks* (League City, TX) led *Rumor* across the finish line in the 19<sup>th</sup> race and clinched 2<sup>nd</sup> overall. "Those guys on *Rumor* never give up anything," noted Rose. "We're all going back to Texas with big smiles on our faces. And we're going to try and get *Rumor* next year!" he added.

There was no lack of competition in the PHRF classes racing on Division 3.

Steve Stollman's C&C 115 *Primal Scream* (Key Biscayne, FL and Annapolis, MD) won a very hotly contested **PHRF 1** class and the PHRF Boat of the Week honors. With the Key West Trophy in hand, Stollman expressed his delight in winning: "I think that for every racing sailor winning Key West race week is an elusive goal. I know this is a tremendous achievement."

In addition to the beautiful Chelsea Clock trophy, all members of the winning crew received certificates for Sperry Top-Siders.

Last year's overall PHRF winner, Robert Armstrong raced his J/100 *Good Girl* to top honors in **PHRF 2**. The USVI resident's closest competition was Bill Sweetser's J/109 *Rush* (Annapolis, MD) followed closely by Tom Beery and Mark Intyre's J/35 *Man-O-War* (Pascagoula, MS).

"Everybody got a lot tighter as the week went on," noted *Too Sweet* J/109 tactician Pat Burnett.

Gerry Taylor and the Tangent crew fulfilled a long time goal, winning their **PHRF 3** class in their 6<sup>th</sup> Key West attempt. This year it all came together and the Annapolis, MD crew raced the Cape Fear 38 to a string of "bullets" and no worse than 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## Wrapping Up Acura Key West 2009 – continued

"Good sails, good crew work, good tactics," Taylor said succinctly when asked why Tangent was so dominant throughout the week. Fellow Annapolis sailor Bruce Gardner's Beneteau 10M was just 6 points behind.

**PHRF 4** witnessed a bit of a match race with the two S2 9.1s battling for top honors all week. John Nevin's *Elysium* (Milford, CT) edged out David Eames' *Lightning Rod*. The Fort Walton Beach sailor was happy nevertheless. "Key West racing is everything they said it would be and then some," he declared

Philip Davis's B-25 *Lobo Rojo* (Oak Cliff, TX), enjoyed a great ride on Friday winning race ten and earning a third place podium finish.

The International Team Competition for the **Nautica Watches Trophy** has become a very popular, very competitive highlight. This year the two Italian teams took top honors with Italia 2 taking the top prize. Skipper Lorenzo Bressani steered *UKA UKA Racing* to victory in the Melges 24 class while owner Vincenzo Onorato drove *Mascalzone Latino* to top honors in the Farr 40 class. Those two powerhouse programs, aided by Melges 32 *Bitipi*, compiled a low score 25 points better than the second place team.

In addition to their trophies, each of the skippers on the top three teams received beautiful timepieces from Presenting Sponsor Nautica.

Nautica Watches was present on the stage all week. Each Boat of the Day and the Boat of the Week winners were awarded Nautica YachtTimers and Friday's class winners each received a Nautica timepiece.

Boat of the Day winners also received Lewmar "One-Touch" winch handles and on Mount Gay Rum Day, the class winners received engraved bottles of Mount Gay's very special "Extra Old".

Summary Results follow. Full results, complete editions of Race Week News, press releases and the photo gallery with contributing photographers Tim Wilkes, Jeremiah Tamaga-Darr, Sharon Green, and Ken Stanek are on the event web site: [premiere-racing.com](http://premiere-racing.com)

Daily and special event video can be viewed at [t2p.tv](http://t2p.tv) and [JobsonSailing.com](http://JobsonSailing.com).

Bill Wagner and Rebecca Burg contributed to this report.

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### Acura Key West 2009, presented by Nautica Final Series Results – after 10 Races – January 23, 2009

#### IRC 1

1. Ran, TP52, Niklas Zennstrom, Hamble, UK, 1-1-2-1-3-1-1-3-4, 18
2. Rosebud/Team DYT, STP 65, Roger Sturgeon, Hyannis, MA, USA, 3-2-1-2-1-5-4-5-1-1, 25
3. Rio, TP52, Charles Dunstone, Cowes, GBR, 2-4-3-3-4-3-3-2-2-2, 28

#### IRC 2

1. Soozal, King 40, Daniel Woolery, Pt. Richmond, CA, USA, 2-1-2-5-2-1-1-2-2-1, 19
2. Ngoni, Mills 40, Tony Buckingham, Jersey, UK, 1-2-3-6-1-3-2-1-4-3, 26
3. Gold Digger, J/44, James Bishop, Jamestown, RI, USA, 9-5-1-1-3-4-5-6-1rgd-7, 42

#### Farr 40

1. Mascalzone Latino, Vincenzo Onorato, Napoli, ITA, 1-1-2-1-9-10-3-2-2-1, 32
2. Joe Fly, Giovanni Maspero, Como, ITA, 3-2-5-9-2-1-4-5-1-3, 35
3. Barking Mad, James Richardson, Newport, RI, USA, 2-4-3-2-1-2-2-10-5-4, 35

#### Swan 42

1. Vitesse, Jon Halbert, Dallas, TX, USA, 5-2-2-2-2-2-4-3-2-5, 29
2. Arethusa, Phil Lotz, Newport, RI, USA, 4-3-1-4-4-1-3-1-4-6, 31
3. Celeritas, Malcolm Geffer, Newport, RI, USA, 1-1-3-1-6-6-5-2-6-4, 35

## Wrapping Up Acura Key West 2009 – *continued*

### Farr 30

1. Rhumb Punch, John & Linda Edwards, Solomons, MD, USA, 3-2-5-3-2-1-3-4-2-4, 28
2. Mumbbles, Brad Kauffman, Annapolis, MD, USA, 4-1-1-5-45-4-3-1-1, 28
3. Kinetic, David Sutcliffe, Vancouver, CAN, 1-3-2-1-3-3-1-6dsq,5,5 30

### Melges 32 (with discard) – Mid-Winter Championship

1. Star, Jeff Ecklund, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, USA, 1-1-10-1-1-5-11-(12)-4-2, 36
2. Red, Joe Woods, Torquay, GBR, 2-8-3-5-3-1-7-6-(13), 43
3. Argo, Jason Carroll, Larchmont, NY, USA, 3-(13)-5-4-8-11-4-4-2-3, 44

### Melges 24 (with discard) – Mid-Winter Championship

1. UKA UKA Racing, Lorenzo Bressani, Civitanova Marc, ITA, 1-1-(5)-1-1-2-5-2,3,4, 20
2. Blu Moon, Franco Rossini, Lugano, SUI, 4-2-2-2-(7)-6-3-1-6-1, 27
3. Joe Fly, Maspero/Zandona, Como, ITA, (10)-3-3-4-8-1-2-5-7-9 42

### J/105 – Mid-Winter Championship

1. Savasana, Brian Keane, Marion, MA, USA, Brian Keane, 3-2-1-1-2-6-2-3-4-2, 26
2. eclipse, Damian Emery, Mt. Sinai, NY, USA, 2-1-3-2-3-3-3-6-1-5, 29
3. Max Power, Gerrit Schulze, Cape May, NJ, USA, 1-3-5-3-1-1-6-4-3-3, 30

### J/80 – Mid-Winter Championship

1. Rumor, John Storck, Jr., Huntington, NY, USA, 1-1-1-3-1-1-4-1-1-2, 16
2. Kicks, William Rose, League City, TX, USA, 2-2-3-1-3-2-6-5-2-1, 26
3. Angry Chameleon, Kristen Robinson, Annapolis, MD, USA, 4-3-2-6-5-5-5-3-9-6, 47

### PHRF 1

1. Primal Scream, C&C 115, Steven Stollman, Key Biscayne, FL, USA, 1-2-1-1-3-2-3-6-4-3, 26
2. Wairere, Thompson 30, Pete Hunter, Kill Devil Hill, NC, USA, 3-7-6-5-1-3-4-2-1-2, 34
3. Kali, BH 36, Lynn Dell, Pensacola, FL, USA, 5-5-3-4-5-4-2-3-3-5, 39

### PHRF 2

1. Good Girl, J/100, Robert Armstrong, St. Croix, USVI, 2-1-1-1-1-1-1-1-1-2, 12
2. RUSH, J/109, Bill Sweetser, Annapolis, MD, USA, 1-2-3-2-7-2-3-2-2-1, 25
3. Man-O-War, J/35, Tom Beery / Mark Intyre, Pascagoula, MS, USA, 3-3-2-3-2-3-2-4-3-3, 28

### PHRF 3

1. Tangent, Cape Fear 38, Gerry Taylor, Annapolis, MD, USA, 1-1-1-1-3-2-1-1-1-1, 13
2. L'Outrage, Beneteau 10M, Bruce Gardner, Annapolis, MD, USA, 2-2-2-2-1-1-3-2-2, 19
3. Seefest, J/29, Ira Perry, Padanaram, MA, USA, 3-3-4.5-5-5-4-2-3-4-4, 37.5

### PHRF 4

1. Elysium, John Nevin, Milford, CT, USA, 1-3-3-1-1-2-1-3-1-2, 18
2. Lightning Rod, S2 9.1, David Eames, Ft. Walton, FL, USA, 2-1-1-2-5-1-2-1-2-4, 21
3. Lobo Rojo, B-25, Philip Davis, Oak Cliff, TX, USA, 6-7-5-5-6-3-4-2-5-1 44

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### Acura Boat of the Week – The Acura Trophy

Melges 32                      *Star*, Jeff Ecklund, Fort Lauderdale, FL

### PHRF Boat of the Week – The Key West Trophy

C&C 115 (PHRF 1)            *Primal Scream*, Steve Stollman, Key Biscayne, FL and Annapolis, MD

**Paul Washburn Award “For the Love of the Sport”**    John & Linda Edwards                      Solomons, MD

## Wrapping Up Acura Key West 2009 – *continued*

### Nautica Watches Boat of the Day

Farr 40 *Mascalzone Latino*, Vincenzo Onorato, Napoli, Italy

### Sperry Top-Sider Boat of the Day

Melges 24 *Blu Moon*, Franco Rossini, Lugano, Switzerland

### Mount Gay Rum Boat of the Day

King 40 (IRC 2) *Soozal*, Dan Woolery, Pt. Richmond, CA

### Lewmar Boat of the Day

J/80 *Rumor*, John Stork, Jr, Huntington, NY

### Acura Boat of the Day

J/105 *Big Booty*, Pat Eudy, Charleston, SC

### International Team Competition – The Nautica Watches Trophy

Italia 2	Farr 40	<i>Mascalzone Latino</i> , Vincenzo Onorato, Napoli, Italy
	Melges 32	<i>Bitipi</i> , Savino Formentini, YCS, Italy
	Melges 24	<i>UKA UKA Racing</i> , Lorenzo Brassani, Civitanova, Marc, Italy

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