



MAXI NEWS

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Photo: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi

CONTENTS

- [4](#) Coming up in the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup
- [6](#) Strong maxi fleet for Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez
- [8](#) Rolex Middle Sea Race preview
- [9](#) IMA's first Caribbean Maxi Challenge
- [11](#) Update from this season's Mediterranean Inshore and Offshore Challenges
- [15](#) Multihulls and the IMA - a new initiative
- [17](#) Maxi yacht news: *FlyingNikka*, ClubSwan 80 *My Song* and the wallywind range
- [20](#) International maxi racing update
- [21](#) IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge 2023 preview
- [22](#) Looking ahead to the IMA Mediterranean Maxi Offshore Challenge 2022-23
- [23](#) IMA Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge 2023
- [24](#) Complete maxi racing calendar

FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Welcome to the International Maxi Association's first issue of Maxi News. While our IMA Yearbook is published each spring, we felt we should bring you mid-season news from the maxi world, including 2023's maxi racing event schedule. Note that this is a state-of-the-art interactive publication, complete with links and video.

Following the pandemic, the first part of this season has seen a welcome return to normal with maxi teams resuming full programmes and several new maxis being built. Fleet sizes are swelling, especially at our major events.

Saint-Tropez's two-week format has transformed the event for our competitors, opening up premium mooring space in the harbour and a race area on the Gulf of Saint-Tropez. In addition to the IMA's usual business of optimising class splits and other administrative assistance, our input in Saint-Tropez has helped raise the level of the race management, introducing windward starts, etc. All these factors, together with Saint-Tropez's inherent shoreside attractions, have resulted in a fleet size that now rivals that of the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup. Teams are viewing this event increasingly as a serious competition to end the inshore season ([see p6](#)).

The Association has made several firsts this season. We were able to run our inaugural IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge, comprising the RORC Caribbean 600, St Maarten Heineken Regatta, Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille and Antigua Sailing Week, which produced a first worthy winner. As this series becomes established we expect it to flourish, with the RORC-IMA Transatlantic Race and Pineapple Cup, south from the US, acting as feeder races.

Mid-May we held our first IMA Maxi European Championship in Sorrento. This comprised the Regata dei Tre Golfi offshore race, followed by four days of inshore/coastal racing on the Bay of Naples and around Capri, hosted in Sorrento. While there was apprehension over light winds, a full series was nevertheless completed.

From an excellent entry of 25 maxis, an IMA Maxi European Champion was crowned and, like all the best regattas, this went down to the wire, with Terry Hui and *Lyra* securing the title in the last metres of the final race.

We used IRC for this championship as this has proved, time and again, to do an extremely good job and competitors enjoy its simplicity. To determine the IMA Maxi European Champion fairly some compromises were made. The fleet comprised three classes; they started together and sailed the same course but, with IRC TCCs ranging from 1.100 to 1.864, course choice was always going to be difficult, races often being too short for the fastest and too long for the slowest.

The IMA team has been supporting all the regattas with which we are involved, especially those in our trio of challenges, and one of our trickiest jobs is determining class splits in the fairest possible way. We dispensed with the tradition of using hull length and titles like 'racer', 'racer/cruiser', and 'cruiser/racer' as these terms are subjective and created endless arguments. We have since tried to determine class splits using a formula based on hull length and IRC TCC, but this offered no benefit over IRC TCCs alone, which is what we use today. Nonetheless, rating band choice will always be a bone of contention.

Our latest project is to develop racing for the performance maxi multihulls. The fit is good as all seven MOD70s and many former ORMA 60s are now privately owned, while owners of high performance cruising catamarans, such the Gunboats, are increasingly keen to race ([see p15](#)).

I would like to thank my IMA team, our President Benoît de Froidmont and Officers, as well as Rolex for their continued support.

Andrew McIrvine



Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi

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NEAR RECORD ENTRY FOR MAXI YACHT ROLEX CUP

Demonstrating how strongly our part of the sport has bounced back following the pandemic, the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, maxi yachting's premier event, organised by the Yacht Club Costa Smeralda and the International Maxi Association, has 50 entries. This is its second largest fleet ever after the record 53 that competed in 2016.

Stealing the show this year will be Roberto Lacorte's new *FlyingNikka*. The Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup will be the first race for the world's first fully foiling maxi. Created by a team assembled by Lacorte, including designer Mark Mills, *FlyingNikka* resembles an AC75 with twin flip up T-foils to port and starboard and a rudder elevator. However, unlike the AC75s,

she is 60ft long and, to comply with regulations, has a fixed bulb keel in addition to her other foils.

Despite being one of the shortest boats at the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, *FlyingNikka* has a stratospheric IRC rating of 3.831, by far the highest ever allocated to a sailing yacht, reflecting her anticipated performance. While she has been through extensive sea trials, it will be fascinating to see how she behaves in a race environment. Read the latest on her on [p18](#).

The magnificent J Class yachts once again remain the longest entries, and this year there will be four taking part. In recent seasons J Class competition has been a match race between *Velsheda* and *Topaz*, albeit a spirited one, but this year they will be joined

by *Svea*, now campaigned by a trio of Swedish joint owners, and the 'Super-J' *Ranger*. Originally commissioned by John Williams as the recreation of Harold S. Vanderbilt's successful 1937 America's Cup defender, since Williams' death *Ranger* has been sold to a new American owner for whom, remarkably, this is his first yacht. Following an extensive refit in which she was lightened, fitted with improved hydraulics and a simplified deck layout, she raced for the first time at this year's St Barths Bucket and won. She has since competed at The Superyacht Cup in Palma, finishing second to *Svea*.

Rivalling the Js for retro elegance is the Spirit 111 *Geist* of Christian Oldendorff, returning after finishing third to the two Js in the Super Maxi class last year. She will be up against two Swan 115s: *Shamanna*, which finished fourth in 2021, while Juan Ball has traded up from his Swan 90 *Nefertiti* to *Moat 1* (ex-*Highland Fling XV*; a more race-optimised example of the Swan 115). No Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup would be complete without the Frers-designed Maxi Dolphin 118 *Viriella* of Vittorio Moretti, which is also entered.

As in 2021, the 100-footer competition will be fierce. The Wallys joined the Maxi class for the first time last year and filled all three podium spots: Sir Lindsay Owen-Jones' Wallycento *Magic Carpet Cubed* prevailing over Claus-Peter Offen's *Y3K* and David M. Leuschen's Wallycento *Galateia*. However this victory could have gone elsewhere as, after winning the first two races, Lord Irvine Laidlaw's *Highland Fling XI*'s broken forestay in the final race saw her drop off the podium. All four yachts return this year, Offen while he awaits the launch of his new Wally 101 *Y3K*. In fact the Maxi class will be a Wallycento reunion as *Magic Carpet Cubed* and *Galateia* are to be joined by the



107ft *Spirit of Malouen X* (ex-*Hamilton/Open Season*), now owned by experienced TP52 campaigner Jean-Luc Petithuguenin, and with Charif Souki's *Tango* also returning to the race course this season.

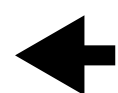
This year we will again witness the unforgettable sight of *Rambler 88* thundering down the seaward side of La Maddalena, only this time she will have Bryon Ehrhart at the wheel instead of George David. They will be facing Wendy Schmidt's ever-improving crew on board her Botin Partners 85 *Deep Blue*.

Among the 90-footers there is another strong showing with Andrea Recordati's newly acquired Wally 93 *Bullitt* up against the Southern Wind 90 *AllSmoke* and Canadian Will Apold, who is returning with his Southern Wind 96 *Sorceress*, which made her race debut here in 2017. To be watched in the lower end of the Maxi class will be Massimiliano Florio's Southern Wind 82 *Grande Orazio*, which won in 2018.

Also making a return will be last year's highly successful Mini Maxi 2 podium, which comprised Alessandro Del Bono's ILC maxi *Capricorno*,



Photos: IMA/Studio Borlenghi



Luciano Gandini's Mylius 80 *Twin Soul B* and Jean-Pierre Barjon, who this year has upgraded from his Swan 601 to a Botin Partners 65, *Spirit of Lorina*.

Up against them, and another yacht making a much anticipated race debut, will be Pier Luigi Loro Piana's new ClubSwan 80 *My Song*, Nautor's first yacht to be built by Persico in Italy (see p17).

Also in attendance from Italy is the latest all-carbon fibre Vismara 80 *Moka III* from designer Lucio Micheletti. She can be compared to the previous Vismara 80, the striking 'Tiffany blue' *MoMi* of Angelo Mario Moratti and Nicola Minardi de Michetti. A third Vismara entered is Luigi Sala's 62 *Yoru*.

Meanwhile two of the longest-serving Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup entrants are also back: Carlo A. Puri Negri and his Farr/Felci 70 *Atalanta II* in which he

won last year's Aegean 600; Carla Comelli's Wally 107 *Kenora* will also attend. Both have been involved with the event for more than a decade.

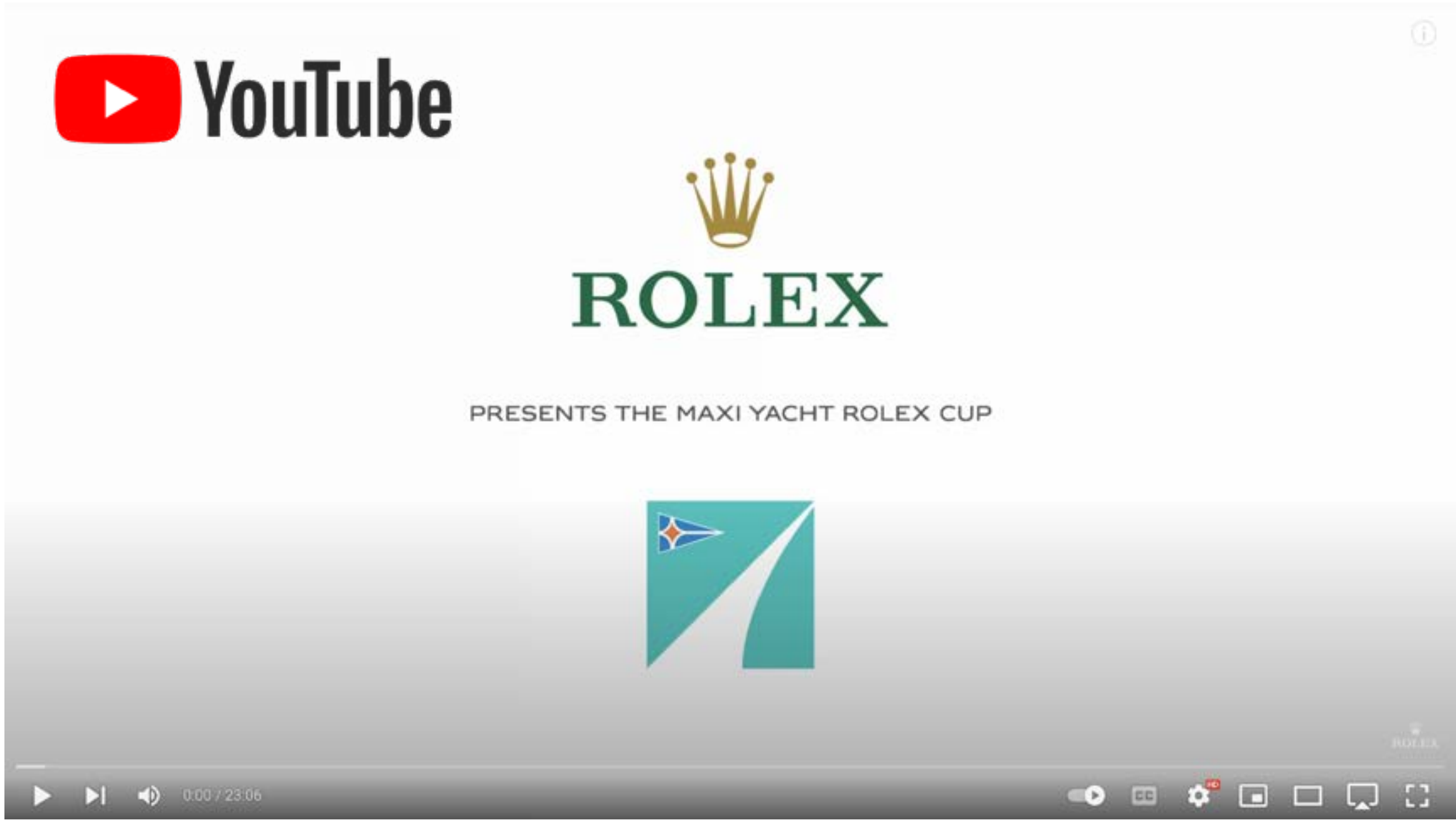
Wally 80s are represented in the Mini Maxis this year by Jean Philippe Blanpain's *Ryokan II*, fresh from this summer's Aegean 600 and *Rose* (ex-*Tango*), entered by Sven Wackerhagen.

Despite all being out of class, former Maxi 72s continue to compete as a group with six on the start line. Favourite is Dario Ferrari's *Cannonball*, which won the last two editions of what is the most hotly-contested class. Fighting hard will be the newest, Hap Fauth's *Bella Mente* - now 74ft long, albeit still not as long as Sir Peter Ogden's 77ft *Jethou*.

In the mix too will be Peter Dubens' *North Star*, which has powered winches, plus American



Photo: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi



regulars: Jim Swartz's *Vesper* (ex-*Momo*, the two-time Rolex Maxi 72 World Champion) and George Sakellaris' *Proteus*, which finished second and third respectively last year.

In addition to *Twin Soul B*, joining the Mylius fleet in the Mini Maxi class is the familiar form of Aldo Parisotto's 65FD *Oscar3*, the 2019 Mylius Cup winner, while the 82ft *Barong II* will also be in attendance.

Among the lower rated Mini Maxis, defending champion Terry Hui's Wally 77 *Lyra* will be a notable absence, having won her class in every edition since 2018. However last year's other podium-placers, Luca Scoppa's Dehler 60 *Blue Oyster* and Riccardo de Michele's repeat class winner, the Vallicelli 80 *H2O*, are back.

Last but by no means least, IMA President Benoît de Froidmont and his highly successful *Wallyño* are naturally returning. The refitted silver Wally 60 missed the podium by a point last year but has had

a successful season, including finishing second to *Capricorno* in the combined inshore-offshore racing of Rolex Giraglia, and coming fourth at the IMA Maxi Europeans in Sorrento in May.

Racing takes place from Monday 5 September to Saturday 10 September, with a layday scheduled for Thursday 8 September. As usual the IMA team is deeply involved with measurement and class splits which today are based on performance rather than length or genre. At the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, the IMA also hosts its AGM and the social highlight of the year, the IMA Members' Dinner.

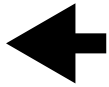


LINKS

[Preview](#)

[Programme](#)

[Entry list](#)



GRAND FINALE IN SAINT-TROPEZ



Photo: Gianfranco Forza

For a third year Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez will continue its two-week format. Week one will focus on the smaller ‘modern’ boats and the magnificent giant classics, for which the event is famous. Week two will then be exclusively for maxis, with racing over 4-8 October as organised by the Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez in conjunction with the IMA. For the first time this will include a fledgling multihull class, enticing large fast cruising catamarans such as the Gunboats ([see p15](#)).

While there was scepticism initially, the two-week format has proved a great success. 2021’s record fleet of 45 maxis was not a post-pandemic aberration - a preliminary entry list this year shows almost 50 entered. This enlarged maxi fleet, combined with it being the season’s last inshore event, plus race management improvements aided by the IMA integrating its own official Ariane Mainemare into the race committee, has also resulted in the level of competition rising. This could be significant as Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez is the deciding event of the 2022 IMA Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge.

Last year George David’s *Rambler 88* came close to winning, but was displaced at the last minute by Sir Lindsay Owen-Jones’ *Magic Carpet Cubed*. This year the 88ft Juan K-design is no longer the scratch boat, with Roberto Lacorte’s fully foiling 60ft maxi *FlyingNikka* entered. While Lacorte’s crew are getting more adept at handling their radical craft, it will be interesting to see how well they change gears in Saint-Tropez’s often tricky conditions.

While no Js are entered, there are three super maxis - the Swan 115 #4 *Jasi* (ex-*Odin*), the beautiful Andre Hoek-designed Truly Classic 108



Photo: Gilles Martin-Raget/www.martin-raget.com





Simba and the all-carbon fibre McKeon-Vitters 108 *Pattoo* (ex-*Missy*).

One of the most impressive groups participating are the 100-footers. Seven are entered - the same as at the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, but with the addition of Francesco De Santis' new Southern Wind 100 *Morgana*. Once again, all four yachts originally launched as Wallycentos will be present, including *Spirit of Malouen X*, the former *Hamilton*, now 107ft. In the mix with them will be *Leopard 3* which rates similarly under IRC to the Wallycentos, and Claus-Peter Offen's *Y3K*, which remains as competitive as ever.

In the 80 and 90-footers, among the strongest competitors will certainly be Lord Irvine Laidlaw's Reichel/Pugh 82 *Highland Fling XI*. Alessandro Del Bono's immaculate ILC maxi *Capricorno* is a

regular class winner, but even her record is outstripped by Canadian Terry Hui's all-conquering Wally 77 *Lyra*, which managed a near perfect scoreline to win her class here in 2021 and was the IMA's first European Champion this year. They will again face Philippe Ligier's Wally 80 *Ryokan 2*, the 2020 winner.


Currently Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez also seems to be the only occasion we see the Carbon Ocean 82 *Aegir* out on the race course; meanwhile Philip Rann's Swan 80 *Umiko* and Paul Berger's Swan 82FD *Kallima* will resume their regular battle, together with the Southern Wind 82RS *Ammonite*. Also returning will be *Black Legend 6*, a 72ft Black Pepper Code 3 from IMOCA/Class40 designer Sam Manuard that was brand new when she competed last year.

Following the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, competition will resume between three former Maxi 72s: Sir Peter Ogden's 77ft *Jethou*, Peter Dubens' *North Star* and the favourite, Dario Ferrari's *Cannonball*, which last raced here in 2018.

No Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez would be complete without *French Kiss*, however this year she is joined by another famous 12 Metre challenger from the 1987 America's Cup – *Kiwi Magic*. Meanwhile, from the fully crewed round the world race is the VO70 *Hypr* (ex-*Camper*) and the Dutch VO65 *For the Next Generation*, which is a potential entry in next year's Ocean Race.

Among the competitive 60ft cruiser racers, favourite must be IMA President Benoît de Froidmont's Wally 60 *Wallyño*, which in 2018 won the IMA's first Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge at this event. However she will be up against the heavily-campaigned Mylius 60 Jean-Pierre Dreau's *Lady First III* and sistership, Maurits Van Oranje's *Sud*, plus Gerard Logel's Swan 601 *@robas* and François Benais' Shipman 63 *Bambo*, IRC 4's winner last year.

Among the slower Mini Maxis is a strong turnout of seven yachts from French manufacturer CNB, including Nicolas Piguet's CNB77 *Aloha*, which finished second to *Bambo* in 2021. Last, but by no means least, are the redoubtable classic Swans of which three are entered, ranging from the oldest, the 1973 Swan 65 *Said* to the 651 *Futuro* from 1982.



LINKS

[Preview](#)

[Programme](#)

[Notice of Race](#)



Photo: Gilles Martin-Raget/www.martin-raget.com





Photo: ROLEX/Kurt Arrigo

ROLEX MIDDLE SEA PREVIEW

Truly one of the ‘classic’ 600 mile offshores, this autumn’s Rolex Middle Sea Race will launch the 2022-23 edition of the IMA’s Mediterranean Maxi Offshore Challenge.

The Rolex Middle Sea Race is dramatic in almost every way: Starting in Valletta’s Grand Harbour with its towering stone ramparts, the course heads anti-clockwise around Sicily, passing two active volcanoes and through the Strait of Messina between Sicily and the ‘toe’ of Italy, before diving south to Pantelleria, 40 miles off the coast of Tunisia, and the turning mark of Lampedusa from where the

fleet heads back towards the finish line in Malta. Starting on Saturday 22 October, the race takes place in the Mediterranean autumn, bringing the potential for anything weather-wise, from flat calms to sudden storms, all in the same race.

Maxi participation in the Royal Malta Yacht Club’s event has been strong since the first race in 1968 was won by Dutch plywood pioneer Kees Bruynzeel’s groundbreaking *Stormvogel*. Line honours have since been claimed by some of the most famous maxi yachts, including Warren Brown’s converted 12 Metre *War Baby* and Enrico

Recchi’s *Benbow*, which had triple back-to-back wins in the mid-1970s. Other winners include Bill Whitehouse-Vaux’s *Mistress Quickly*, Marvin Green’s *Nirvana*, Alberto Roemmers’ *Alexia*, Robert McNeil’s *Zephyrus IV*, Neville Crichton’s *Alfa Romeo-Shockwave*, Carlo A. Puri Negri’s *Atalanta II*, Mike Slade’s *Leopard 3* and Igor Simčić’s *Esimit Europa 2*.

In more recent years the line honours story has mostly belonged to George David’s *Ramblers*. In 2007, David’s original 90ft *Rambler* pulverised *Zephyrus IV*’s 64 hours 50 minutes record, reducing it to a mere 47 hours 55 minutes. Despite David’s best efforts and two subsequent new maxis, this time stood for the next 14 years, until 2021 when *Comanche* reduced it to 40 hours 17 minutes 50 seconds.

Last year the multihull course record of 33 hours 29 minutes was set by Jason Carroll’s *Argo*. The US MOD70 is not returning to defend her title, however three others should be on the start line: Riccardo Pavoncelli’s *Mana* (ex-*Spindrift racing*) and *Snowflake*, which will be US-based Dutchman Frank Sloodman’s first race on his new steed. Gavin Brady continues to run the boat, as he did when she was Karl Kwok’s *Beau Geste*. Giovanni Soldini’s *Maserati* is hoping to make it following some severe damage which occurred ashore in a mid-August storm. Sadly *Ultim’ Emotion 2*, has withdrawn with possibly terminal damage to her crossbeams, sustained during the Newport-Bermuda.

Among the monohulls, line honours favourite will be the Farr 100 *Leopard 3*, which claimed this prize in 2009 under original owner Mike Slade. Although now Dutch-owned, many of Slade’s crew remain on board, including skipper Chris Sherlock.

Leopard 3’s nearest competition will come from the Dutch VO70 *Hypr* and long-term owner Andrea Recordati and the highly experienced crew on

Bullitt. His newly acquired 93-footer, the former *Nahita*, is one of the more race-orientated Wallys and was fourth home on the water at this year’s Rolex Giraglia. Of a similar length is the Vallicelli 92 ketch *Orsa Maggiore*: Owned by the Italian Navy, she is a sail training vessel, however when she was built 28 years ago it was in state of the art composites by an America’s Cup shipyard.

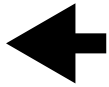
Behind the leaders will be a group including the much-campaigned Swan 82 *Kallima*, entered by Robi Stäuber, and the more highly rated 60-footers such as the canting keel Mylius 60 *Cippa Lippa X* of Guido Paolo Gamucci and Jean-Pierre Barjon’s Botin 65 *Spirit of Lorina*.

Other maxis racing include Jean Philippe Blanpain’s Vismara/Mills 62 *Leaps & Bounds 2*, Jean-Pierre Dreau’s Mylius 60 *Lady First III* and *Hagar V*, the Scuderia 65 of Gregor Stimpfl. All have travelled extensively this season: *Lady First III* having crossed the Atlantic to compete in the RORC Caribbean 600, while *Hagar V* and *Leaps & Bounds 2* finished first and third respectively under IRC in July’s Aegean 600.

Bringing up the rear will be two former round the world race boats. *Grinta* is a Clipper 68, one of the second generation of round the world one designs, and part of a fleet of sail training yachts now operated by Oxygene Sail. Joining them is the Swan 65 *King’s Legend*, which finished second to *Flyer* in the second Whitbread Round the World Race in 1977-78.



- LINKS**
- [Preview](#)
 - [Entry list](#)
 - [Notice of race](#)
 - [2021 Wrap-up video](#)



IMA DEBUTS IN THE CARIBBEAN

After repeated delays due to the pandemic, this spring the IMA was finally able to extend its reach across the Atlantic with the first running of its Caribbean Maxi Challenge. Unlike its two Mediterranean series, this included a mix of offshore and inshore events – the offshore RORC Caribbean 600, followed by St Maarten Heineken Regatta, Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille and Antigua Sailing Week. Of these events it was necessary to compete in at least two to qualify, while the series itself was open to all maxis, not solely those belonging to IMA members.

Although not part of the Caribbean Maxi Challenge, an indication of how the series was going to line up

came in the RORC-IMA Transatlantic Race. Moving its start date to January, deconflicting with the ARC, has worked well and of the 23 entries, six were maxis. Continuing their Rolex Middle Sea Race success was the Mitch Booth-led team on *Comanche*, securing both overall victory under IRC and line honours into Grenada, for which they won the IMA Trophy, presented to them by Secretary General Andrew McIrvine.

Comanche's closest competition, the immense ClubSwan 125 *Skorpios*, was delivered directly to the Caribbean ready for an exceptional ‘clash of the titans’ at the RORC Caribbean 600: the longer *Skorpios* and her crew, led by Fernando Echavarri, up



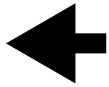
Photo: Laurens Morel

against her shorter, but 100% race-optimised, rival. Leading a strong fleet of 18 maxis from 74 starters, on this occasion the refitted *Skorpios* was first home, but it was again *Comanche* that prevailed on corrected time, winning IRC Super Zero ahead of Deneen Demourkas’ chartered VO65 *Groovederci Racing - Sailing Poland* and the VO70 *I Love Poland*. However there would be no rematch; after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, *Skorpios* was moth-balled, while *Comanche* returned to Australia, having been acquired by Sydney 18ft skiff legend and ‘white goods king’ John Winning. Meanwhile, first across the RORC Caribbean 600 finish line - even ahead of *Skorpios* - was Jason Carroll’s modified MOD70 trimaran *Argo*, establishing a new outright race record of 29 hours 38 minutes 44 seconds, pipping Giovanni Soldini’s *Maserati* to the post by 2 minutes 13 seconds.

The IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge then moved to its first sailing week with the St Maarten Heineken Regatta in early March. Ten maxis took part in CSA

class 1, including an assortment of former Volvo Ocean Race boats plus the much-travelled Farr 100 *Leopard 3*, fresh from the RORC Caribbean 600. Also competing was Wendy Schmidt’s Botin Partners 85 thoroughbred racer *Deep Blue*, newly arrived in the Caribbean. It proved to be a mostly big wind regatta, one race even starting in 35 knots. The round the world boats relished these conditions, with the Marcin Sutkowski-skippered VO65 *Sailing Poland* winning on countback from sistership *Janssen de Jong-DutchSail*, ahead of *I Love Poland* in third, followed by *Leopard 3*.

Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille attracted much of the top US grand prix hardware, with five racing under IRC in the Maxi class, including George David’s *Rambler 88* and Hap Fauth’s *Bella Mente*, newly elongated to 74ft. In this the stand-out performer was Jim Swartz’s *Vesper*, winning all its races, save one, which was claimed by an ever-improving *Deep Blue*. Four additional maxis



competed in CSA 3 where Jim Madden’s Swan 601 *Stark Raving Mad VII* (below) was equally dominant, claiming all but one of their six races sailed.

Five maxis, including the VO65 *Ambersail2*, VO70 *Ocean Breeze* and Adrian Lee’s Swan 60 *Lee Overlay Partners II Ocean*, competed at Antigua Sailing Week with *Ambersail2* winning CSA-Racing 1. However this made no impression on the overall results of the IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge.

With podium finishes in both the RORC Caribbean 600 and St Maarten Heineken Regatta, the first IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge was won by *I Love Poland*. The scarlet and white VO70 started life as Puma Ocean Racing’s *Mar Mostro*, finishing third under Ken Read in the 2011-12 Volvo Ocean Race, but is now managed by the Polish National Foundation, providing a platform on which young Polish sailors are introduced to top level grand prix racing. As skipper Grzegorz Baranowski commented: “Winning the IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge is significant for our team, especially because it is a welcome accolade for the very young Polish sailors we have on board who have

aspirations to become offshore sailors.”
Runners up in the IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge were *Sailing Poland* and *Leopard 3*.

It is hoped going forwards that the Caribbean Maxi Challenge will entice more maxis to the Caribbean to compete in these exceptional events.

LINKS

[VIDEO: RORC-IMA Transatlantic Race start](#)

[*Comanche* wins IMA Trophy in RORC Transatlantic Race](#)

[RORC Caribbean 600: Strong start to inaugural IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge](#)

[St Maarten Heineken Regatta: *Leopard 3* steps on to the IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge podium](#)

[*Vesper* tops Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille](#)

[VIDEO : *Vesper* at Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille](#)

[VIDEO: Best of Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille](#)

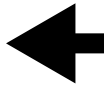
[*I Love Poland* claims 2022 IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge](#)



Photo: Christophe Jouany



Photo: James Tomlinson/www.jamestomlinsonphotography.co.uk



MAXI MAGIC RETURNS TO THE MED

With Europe resuming normal service after the pandemic, the maxi fleets in the Mediterranean have also recovered to pre-COVID levels. This has enabled the IMA to run its two circuits, the Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge and its offshore equivalent, for the first time since 2019, along with the new addition to the calendar of the first IMA Maxi European Championship. For this season the IMA Mediterranean Maxi Offshore Challenge encompassed seven events, up from five, with the addition of PalmaVela's offshore race, La Larga, and the newest of the world's 600 mile offshore races, the Aegean 600.

Outside of these, the IMA supported the Yacht Club Italiano's maxi-only season opener, the Regate di Primavera-Portofino, previously held as the Zegna Trophy and the Nespresso Cup. The 12 maxis competing in this ranged from the Southern Wind 100 *Morgana* to the Mylius 60s: Franz Wilhelm Baruffaldi Preis' *Manticore* and Antonio Romeo's *Jecalu*. Sadly, conditions at the end of April remained wintry and racing was cancelled on two of the four days. Nonetheless, three races were held with both *Morgana* and Luciano Gandini's Mylius 80 *Twin Soul B* managing a perfect scoreline in their respective classes, with the Mylius Yachts' President going on to collect the overall victor's trophy.

The following weekend La Larga set sail from Palma on a 190 mile course, taking the fleet around marks and islands including Dragonera,



Photo: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi

Tagomago and Cabrera. Three maxis competed, the winner being Andrés Entrecanales' Vismara Mills 68 *Pelotari Project* with a crew including double Olympic gold medallist Luis Doreste.

PalmaVela's inshores followed, with four days of racing for the solid turnout of seven maxis. These included four 100-footers – *Leopard 3*, the two Wallycentos: Sir Lindsay Owen-Jones' *Magic Carpet Cubed* and David M. Leuschen's *Galateia*, and the Wally 107, the former *Hamilton/Open Season* that had been recently acquired by 52

Super Series campaigner Jean-Luc Petithuguenin and rechristened *Paprec Recyclage* (*Spirit of Malouen X*). The regatta also saw a welcome return of Andrea Recordati, having acquired the Wally 93 *Bullitt*, launched in 2018 as *Nahita* and, although race-optimised, never raced by her original owner. Impressively *Galateia* won all six races, helped perhaps by pro-sailor Kelvin Harrap steering in the absence of *Galateia*'s owner, who was unable to attend at the very last minute. However, the yacht's winter refit and the tactical skill of Olympic

and America's Cup champions Murray Jones and Jordi Calafat certainly contributed too.

Highlight of the season to date was the first IMA Maxi European Championship, run by the Circolo del Remo e della Vela Italia in conjunction with the IMA. Part of Rolex Capri Sailing Week's successor, Tre Golfi Sailing Week, and now based in Sorrento, the IMA Maxi Europeans comprised the Regata dei Tre Golfi offshore and the Maxi Yacht Sorrento Trophy inshore racing. The series was supported by Rolex as Official Timepiece.

25 maxi yachts took part in an especially light Regata dei Tre Golfi, starting from Naples and finishing off Capri.

For the first time, two 70ft trimarans were entered: Giovanni Soldini's *Maserati* and Riccardo Pavoncelli's *Mana*, but even these speedsters struggled against Furio Benussi's 100ft maxi *Arca SCR* which, despite being crippled with a broken keel ram, ultimately proved faster than them around the race track.

Sir Peter Ogden's Judel/Vrolijk 77 *Jethou* and Peter Dubens' 72ft *North Star* enjoyed their own intense race with frequent lead changes. Ultimately *North Star* won by almost an hour from Alessandro Del Bono's Reichel/Pugh 78 maxi *Capricorno*, with *Jethou* third, ahead of IMA President Benoît de

Froidmont's *Wallyño*. With just a day's respite, the maxis rolled into four days of coastal racing around Capri and the Bay of Naples.

Racing started with a 28 mile course across the Bay of Naples in a light building southerly that would veer into the southwest. *North Star* once again gained the upper hand, partly thanks to *Jethou* suffering a torn kite, as Terry Hui's all-conquering Wally 77 *Lyra* won Class 2, leaving her third overall.

On day two one windward-leeward was held after which just *Lyra* and, in Class 4, Guiseppe Puttini's Swan 65 *Shirlaf* were still unbeaten. In Class 1 Lord Irvine Laidlaw's Reichel/Pugh 82 *Highland Fling XI* gained the upper hand to win under IRC, despite not being optimised for windward-leewards.



Photo: Maria Muiña by SailingShots.es



The tightest competition was in Class 3 where the silver Wally 60 *Wallyño* was leading, but had both Vincenzo Addessi's Mylius 18.35 *Fra'Diavolo* and the Vallicelli 80 *H2O* of Riccardo de Michele within half a point.

The third day of racing proved the hardest, with holes and shifts all over the course that saw the fleet heading deep into the Bay of Naples. At the turning mark here *Highland Fling XI* escaped before the breeze shut down for the former Maxi 72s. The wind later vanished again at the finish line just north of Sorrento, allowing the 72s to catch up, but it was not enough to prevent *Highland Fling XI* winning under IRC.

As wind conditions were set to deteriorate the race committee abandoned the race, but it was reinstated after a jury hearing, with Class 1 being scored at the finish line and Class 2 at the previous mark.

The final race saw the much-anticipated lap of Capri in a light, tricky southerly. Approaching the Faraglioni rocks the wind died, permitting the Maxi 72s to edge ahead of *Highland Fling XI*. Later another wind hole developed short of the finish and at this last hurdle *Jethou* and *Capricorno* came off worst. Impressively the Class 2 boats, Terry Hui's Wally 77 *Lyra* and Guido Paolo Gamucci's Mylius 60CK *Cippa Lippa X*, were third and fourth to finish on the water, winning them the day on corrected time.

A disappointing 11th under IRC for *North Star* and a devastating 19th for *Jethou* dropped them to second and third place respectively on the IMA Maxi European Championship overall podium, paving the way for *Lyra* to become first IRC Maxi European Champion by just 0.75 points.

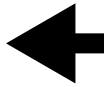




Photo: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi

Ultimately in the Maxi Yacht Sorrento Trophy inshore, *Highland Fling XI* claimed Class 1 while the Class 3 top trio ended up tied, with *Fra'Diavolo* prevailing on countback, as Luca Scoppa's Dehler 60 *Blue Oyster* did over *Shirlaf* in Class 4.

The 13th edition of the 151 Miglia-Trofeo Cetilar saw 14 maxis among a fleet of 250+. The event was usual in seeing especially varied wind conditions, but not at the typical moments. The usual night time shut down off Giraglia was replaced with a light start, the wind then building to 25 knots as they rounded the famous rock, albeit a southeasterly, making it a beat to Formiche di Grosseto.

Conditions favoured the fastest; Furio Benussi's 100ft *Arca SGR* secured her second consecutive line honours and, as the wind went light for those astern, also the corrected time prize under IRC. Overall Aldo Parisotto's Mylius 65FD *Oscar3* finished second in the maxi class, ahead of Giancarlo Gianni's Carroll Marine 60 *Durlindana*.

Inshore racing at Rolex Giraglia was dominated by the front-runners. Organised by the Yacht Club Italiano in collaboration with Yacht Club Sanremo and Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez, the event saw 13 maxis competing in two classes within the 100-yacht fleet.



Photo: IMA/Studio Borlenghi

Racing took place in a near perfect 10-15 knots on day one, followed by two lighter days. In the faster group, *Jethou* posted a perfect scoreline from four races to finish five points ahead of *North Star*, while Charif Souki's *Tango* prevailed in an intense battle to fill the podium ahead of fellow Wallycento, *Magic Carpet Cubed*. In the smaller maxi class *Capricorno* was also unbeaten, finishing five points ahead of *Wallyño* with Adriano Calvini's Felci 61 *Itacentodue* in third.

For Rolex Giraglia's offshore race, the maxi fleet grew, numbering 20 of the 140+ starters. With light winds forecast, the organisers wisely chose to

remove the first leg to La Formigue, thereby shortening the course by 40 miles to 200. Among the strong fleet of 100ft maxis was the 2021 line honours winner *Arca SGR*, which faced the strongest challenge from *Magic Carpet Cubed*, one of the race's most experienced entrants, having won line honours in 2013 and overall in 2015.

In what proved to be a relatively slow Rolex Giraglia, the navy Wallycento managed to hang on to *Arca SGR*'s coattails, rounding the Giraglia overlapped. After the rock the Trieste-based favourite edged ahead, but a brave call by navigator Marcel van Triest to go further east

enabled *Magic Carpet Cubed* to find better breeze, eventually beating her grand prix racer rival by 26 minutes on the water. They were followed in by *Tango* and the Wally 93 *Bullitt*; Andrea Recordati's first offshore race with his new boat.

Ultimately conditions didn't favour the bigger boats and, for a second year, the winner of the maxi class was Adriano Calvini's Felci 61 *Itacentodue*, this year skippered by his grandson Giovanni Chiappano, with Benoît de Froidmont's *Wallyño* second overall.

Four maxis competed in the second Aegean 600 with Gregor Stimpfl's Scuderia 65 *Hagar V* beating Jean-Philippe Blanpain's Vismara/Mills 62 *Leaps & Bounds 2* in the Maxi class, while, significantly, they also finished first and third in the full IRC fleet,

although the smaller Elliott 52 grand prix racer *Rafale* was faster, setting a new course record of 2 days 15 hours 2 minutes 20 seconds. On the water honours went to Adrian Keller's Irens 78 catamaran *Allegra*, which finished in a time of 2 days 5 hours 36 minutes 2 seconds.

The Mediterranean Maxi Offshore Challenge for 2021-22 concluded with August's Palermo-Montecarlo, where conditions in the race were more brisk than usual.

Despite the Austrian-flagged VO65 *Sisi* being the scratch boat in the 37-yacht fleet, Jean-Pierre Dreau's Mylius 60 *Lady First III* claimed line honours in 2 days 11 hours 47 minutes 6 seconds (well outside of *Esimit Europa 2*'s record time). Their success was at least partly down to the

tactical skill of two top Figaro sailors in their crew - Nicolas Berenger and Pierre Quiroga (last year's Solitaire du Figaro winner).

Hugging the west coast of Corsica, as *Sisi* got stuck offshore, saw the Mylius 60 pull out a lead of 40 miles, however they in turn were becalmed approaching the finish.

Lady First III managed to stay ahead on the water, but their fellow club mates from the Société Nautique de Marseille on Dominique Tian's *Tonnerre de Glen* managed to catch up, crossing the finish line just 1 hour 15 minutes after them. This enabled the blue Ker 46 to take the overall prize under IRC, while *Lady First III* had done enough to claim second place, also winning the IMA Trophy and the Giuseppe Tasca d'Almerita Trophy for line honours.

And the 2021-22 IMA MMOC winner is...



Winner of the 2021-22 IMA Mediterranean Maxi Offshore Challenge is France's Jean-Pierre Barjon and his Botin 65 *Spirit of Lorina* (above), new to him this season. Like all of the IMA's series, the MMOC seeks to promote participation. As a result, while others, such as IMA President Benoît de Froidmont's *Wallyño* and Alessandro Del Bono's *Capricorno*, scored higher points, they did not qualify by virtue of not having sailed the minimum of three events.

While they may have missed out on the MMOC silverware, with two events – the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup and Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez - remaining in the 2022 Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge, defending champion *Wallyño* and *Capricorno*, present leaders of the MMIC, still have plenty of race track left to go. However, *North Star* and *Jethou*, sitting in third and fourth overall, will certainly be strong contenders too.

Photo: Fabio Taccola/Studio Taccola



LINKS

- [Regata di Primavera-Portofino report](#)
- [PalmaVela race report: Straight bullets for *Galateia*](#)
- [Video: PalmaVela](#)
- [Regata dei Tre Golfi report: Victory for *North Star*](#)
- [Lyra is the first IMA Maxi European Champion](#)
- [Arca SGR scores 151 Miglia-Trofeo Cetilar double](#)
- [Rolex Giraglia inshore racing report: Straight bullets for *Jethou* and *Capricorno*](#)
- [Magic Carpet Cubed claims Rolex Giraglia line honours](#)
- [Itacentodue defends Rolex Giraglia offshore maxi class title](#)
- [Palermo-Montecarlo: Line honours for *Lady First III*](#)

MULTIHULLS AND THE IMA

Once the sole preserve of the Breton professional offshore racers hell bent on ultimate speed, or family cruisers attracted by their palatial accommodation, multihulls have come a long way in recent years. Although increasingly challenged by the latest foiling monohulls, trimarans remain the fastest yachts on the planet – one covered 908 miles in a day at an average speed of 37.8 knots, and that was 10 years ago. Equally, if you wish to cross an ocean in luxury then they can offer exceptional creature comforts, such as full-sized berths and cabins, giant saloons and dining areas ‘on top of the water’ rather than in it, as well as minimal heel.

But there have been two significant developments that have made the International Maxi Association



wonder whether now was the right time to bring maxi multihulls into the fold.

Ultra-high tech fast cruising catamarans have been around for decades, but it is only in the last two that the genre has come of age, with the advent and growth of Gunboats, since joined by HH Catamarans. Such boats retain the vast interior of traditional cruising catamarans, but their fit-out is ultra-light and their design, construction, engineering and equipment are pure race boat. For example, they are built in carbon fibre, have state of the art foils, lifting daggerboards instead of keels, plus carbon fibre masts and sails, etc.

Inevitably, their owners wish to race them: This season Adrian Keller’s one-off Irens 78ft, *Allegra* (right) was first home in the Aegean 600, also winning the Giorgio Armani Superyacht Regatta against Lord Irvine Laidlaw’s Gunboat 68 *Highland Fling XVII*. Meanwhile at Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille, Kent Haeger’s Gunboat 62 *Mach Schnell* managed a perfect scoreline in the five-boat Offshore Multihull class, ahead of David Welch’s HH66 *Flash*.



Photos: Rick Tomlinson/www.rick-tomlinson.com



Photo: YCCS/Studio Borlenghi





Currently this fleet still lacks numbers, however the IMA hopes to help resolve this by consolidating on certain events until such time as more boats are built. There are several highly anticipated new Gunboat launches. They include two Gunboat 80s (above): *Highland Fling* for long-term maxi owner Lord Irvine Laidlaw and *Elvis 2* for GC32 campaigner and former Melges 32 double World Champion Jason Carroll. Another new Gunboat is in build for a high-profile US maxi owner.

A welcome development for this season is the advent of such multihulls being permitted into 'maxi week' at Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez over 3-8 October.

Aside from the performance cruising cats, another key development has been taking place in the racing trimaran world. Yachts which were previously raced exclusively by pro teams, such as the once one-design MOD70s or the even older ORMA 60s, are today almost all in private hands.

The MOD70s in particular have been enjoying great racing recently, with Peter Cunningham's *Powerplay*, Giovanni Soldini's *Maserati* and Jason Carroll's *Argo* competing in this year's RORC-IMA Transatlantic Race, where *Maserati* won by three hours. In the RORC Caribbean 600 *Maserati* had to settle for second place to *Argo*, beaten on the water by just two minutes. *Argo* went on to claim line honours and set a race record in the 52nd Newport-Bermuda Race.

Many of these high-speed machines have also been changing hands recently. Among the MOD70s the immaculate *Spindrift racing* is now *Mana*, owned by former Swan 65 owner Riccardo Pavoncelli, while *Powerplay* has been bought by French GC32 skipper and long-term one-design multihull and monohull sailor, Erik Maris. The first MOD70, once Steve Ravussin's *Race for Water*, has been acquired by French sailor Eric Defert and

renamed *Axciss*, while the former *Beau Geste* is now owned by US-based Dutchman Frank Sloodman and renamed *Snowflake*.

Impressively, American tech billionaire and businessman Tom Siebel gifted both his MOD70 *Orion* and his J Class *Svea* to the US Merchant Marine Academy. The former is now being campaigned on the US West Coast by Justin Schaffer and a crew led by multihull legend Cam Lewis. Among the ORMA 60s, Franck Cammas' previous *Groupama 2* - perhaps the fastest of the genre - was bought by Donald Lawson and is now called *Defiant*, while Rick Warner is considering taking *Areté* (ex-*Sopra Group*) from her home on the Great Lakes to the US East Coast/Caribbean.

As with the catamarans, the numbers of these trimarans racing together remains relatively small

and a key role the IMA may play is again in consolidating the boats around certain events with the aim of getting the maximum number out on the race course.

During the summer, the IMA hosted well attended meetings, both in person and on Zoom, for these two groups, followed up by a questionnaire looking to establish common ground between the teams.

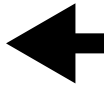
LINKS

[Multihull Cup Mallorca website](#)

[Video of the 2021 Multihull Cup in Palma](#)

[Video of *Argo* setting a new RORC Caribbean 600 record](#)

[Video: On board *Flash* at Les Voiles de St Barth](#)
[Richard Mille](#)



MAXI YACHT NEWS

ClubSwan 80 – Mediterranean maxi weapon

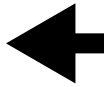
Making its debut at the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup will be the first example of Nautor’s ClubSwan 80, the new *My Song* for Pier Luigi Loro Piana. As with others in Nautor’s ClubSwan racer-cruiser range, this is designed by Juan K, but, significantly, it is the first Swan not to come from Nautor’s yard in

Pietarsaari, Finland. Instead she has been built by Persico Marine in Italy. Following the devastating loss of his Baltic 130, certainly one of the most beautiful sailing yachts ever launched, Loro Piana has replaced his pride and joy with the new 80 and a 51m expedition motoryacht *Masquenada*, launched in Italy last year. Loro Piana has more than four decades of history in yacht racing, but is best known for his maxis – his 130 replaced his well known Reichel/Pugh-Nauta 84 which he had owned since 1999 (subsequently campaigned by Miguel Galuccio as *Vera* and winner

of the IMA Mediterranean Maxi Offshore Challenge in 2018-19). With this comes a depth of knowledge, both personally and within his team. For the last 25 years Loro Piana’s Team Manager has been Giorgio Benussi, although they have sailed together for much longer. According to Benussi, Loro Piana wanted his new yacht to be a race boat, albeit one that he could use as a fun day-sailer too. In their search for a new 80-footer, Nautor’s ClubSwan 80 concept clearly resonated. Loro Piana’s team went on to have a major hand in tailoring the new boat to their precise requirements, after close examination of other maxi yachts of this size, and their own anticipated race programme. The latter will comprise a full schedule of both inshores and offshores in the Mediterranean, including 600-milers like the Rolex Middle Sea Race. A complete weather study of this threw up, for example, an average wind speed of 11 knots, and naturally the requirement for top performance on all points of sail, but especially upwind in light conditions. This then determined many key aspects of the boat, from its foil package to its displacement and beam to the size of its sail plan. The canting keel (which on the new *My Song* has a 6500kg bulb and can be cranked up to 43°) and twin rudders are both features very familiar to Juan K following his successful VO70 race winners, *Speedboat* and *Rambler 88*. Copious research went into the underwater package; under consideration were foiling and skimming options, the C-foil configuration used on other ClubSwans, or twin IMOCA-style foils, etc. They ultimately opted for a single 4m long daggerboard mounted just forward of the keel (rather than a smaller canard further forward). This can be left to its own devices or can be angled using hydraulics by +/- 8° to prevent leeway, ...[Full article here...](#)



Photos: Studio Borlenghi



***FlyingNikka* debuts at Maxi Yacht
Rolex Cup**

One of the most anticipated race boat arrivals is that of the first fully foiling maxi yacht - Roberto Lacorte's *FlyingNikka* - at the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup.

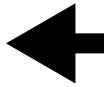
To describe *FlyingNikka* as a 60ft version of an AC75, the genre of flying monohull currently used in the America's Cup, is close, only there are some significant differences. *FlyingNikka* has a conventional mast and rig set-up (rather than the AC75's D-section mast and double skinned mainsail) and a modest keel fitted purely to comply with Offshore Special Regulations (AC75s have no such keel). While AC75s require grinders or cyclists to power their hydraulics, *FlyingNikka* simply has

an engine to drive them and push buttons to operate them. There are less restrictions on what her hydraulics can do and how many of its functions can be automated - such as adjusting the rake of the foils or more generally stabilising and adjusting ride height. Significantly Lacorte's ambition for *FlyingNikka* is to race his awesome machine not just inshore, but offshore too.

To recap a little, *FlyingNikka* has been built by King Marine in Valencia and is the product of a team gathered by Lacorte, comprising North Sails' Alessio Razeto, Lorenzo Bressani, Enrico Zennaro, Andrea Fornaro and Lorenzo de Felice and Fabrizio Turini. The design is led by Mark Mills, with Nat Shaver (ex-Emirates Team New Zealand/ American Magic and now with INEOS Britannia) on foils and Micky Costa project managing. R&D is



Photos: Fabio Taccola/Studio Taccola





Photos: Fabio Taccola/Studio Taccola

being carried out by KND with PURE handling the engineering.

Launched this spring, it was surprising, even for the team, how readily *FlyingNikka* ‘flew’ - this occurred straight out of the box, on their first day of sailing after her launch in Valencia. She was formally unveiled to the public and christened at a ceremony at the end of the 151 Miglia-Trofeo Cetilar in Punta Ala at the beginning of June.

Since then it has been training, training, training for Lacorte and his team as they attempt to work up *FlyingNikka*, developing straight line speed in all conditions, including times when the wind is too light to foil; learning about the all-important transition between foiling and displacement mode sailing; how best to carry out manoeuvres, to ensure they will be able to perform both foiling gybes and tacks in ever less wind; developing the automation systems, etc. And all this is just the tip of the iceberg. “We did a lot of work during July and our training produced a lot of data,” says Lacorte. “Right now we can say that the boat, in terms of performance, is ready. We are trying some solutions regarding sails because we got a lot data



about how we should develop those. And we have to improve managing the boat during tacks and gybes. In flying mode we are very happy, but we have to improve how we sail in displacement mode. We know that that is the worse position for the boat.”

It seems *FlyingNikka* needs around eight knots of wind in order to fly (AC75s need around six) and Lacorte is learning some of the oddities of sailing such a fast boat that will often happily exceed twice wind speed and produces insane amounts of apparent wind as a result. Effectively while she is up on her foils and even sailing downwind, *Flying Nikka*’s apparent wind angle (AWA) will rarely ever be more than 50° and upwind can be as little as 19°.

While fast, *FlyingNikka* is unlikely to achieve the 50+ knot speeds of an AC75, at least not in the mode she needs to be in for racing. To date, says Lacorte “we have touched 35 knots, but we have to approach this step by step. We have to check constantly to understand how we can manage the maximum loads on some parts of the boats where the loads can ...[Full article here...](#)

Wally launches three new supermaxi models

While work continues on Claus-Peter Offen’s new Wally 101 Y3K, due for launch next summer, Wally has announced a new range of supermaxis. The all-carbon fibre wallywind range comprises 110, 130 and 150 models designed by Judel/Vrolijk with the usual strong, creative influence of Wally Founder and Chief Designer Luca Bassani. These models further push the boundaries both of performance out on the race course or for covering miles when cruising as well as comfort even on long passages, all the while incorporating Wally’s typically uncompromising design aesthetics of simplicity and elegance.

The 110 has a discrete deckhouse, enabling a raised saloon area below. However this is disguised externally by the raised bulwarks we have seen on previous Wallys. These enable her to retain a sleek, flush deck profile but have also allowed the cockpit design to be rethought. As a result there is no typical coaming, and this allows the cockpit space to fill the full beam, effectively doubling its size.

The 110 features much of Wally’s successful existing tech such as an underwater anchoring system and its ‘terrace on the sea’ aft deck arrangement.



The wallywind110 comes with twin rudders and three keel options: fixed 4.5m, 3.95-6.1m telescopic or a 4.50-6.8m lifting keel.

The first wallywind110 is already under construction with launch due in May 2024.



MAXI RACING AROUND THE WORLD

Big event anniversaries and celebrations are on the cards in 2023. Part of the IMA's Mediterranean Maxi Inshore and Offshore challenges, Rolex Giraglia will celebrate its 70th edition since it was cooked up over a dinner between Beppe Croce, President of the Yacht Club Italiano, René Levainville, President of the Yacht Club de France and Franco Gavagnin at a Parisian bistro in December 1952. The aim of the race was partly political - to help thaw relations between France and Italy following World War II. The first edition of the Giraglia Cup took place the following year on its present course and since then the event has grown, with three days of inshore racing added before it, plus a feeder race from Sanremo.

In England, the Royal Ocean Racing Club is holding the 50th edition of the Rolex Fastnet Race. The first edition, then known as the Ocean Race, took place in 1925 and at a dinner immediately afterwards the 'Ocean Racing Club' was formed. The record entry for the Rolex Fastnet Race stands at 388 yachts, in pre-pandemic 2019, making it by far the largest of the international 'classic 600-miler' offshore yacht races. This special landmark edition should exceed 400 entries; from the giant French 100ft Ultime trimarans and IMOCA Vendée Globe/Ocean Race entries, to family cruisers and the giant IRC fleet in between, including of course maxis. For a second year the race will finish in Cherbourg, rather than Plymouth. Preparations are also underway for the RORC's centenary in 2025.

This year the RORC, with the Ocean Racing Alliance, introduced another new 600 mile offshore: the Roschier Baltic Sea Race. The course is effectively a giant windward-leeward; starting off Helsinki, Finland and rounding Gotland, off Sweden's east coast, before returning to Helsinki to finish.

In the first edition, the IMA's Caribbean Maxi Challenge winner *I Love Poland* took line honours from the VO65 *Ambersail2*, skippered by American regular maxi yacht charterer Clarke Murphy. From here the race will be held biennially, with the next edition in 2024. A trip to the Baltic for this can be made more worthwhile by also entering the Baltic's most famous offshore race, the Gotland Runt. Now starting from Stockholm, this follows an initial leg out through the Swedish archipelago before rounding Gotland and returning north to Sandhamn. Over the years plenty of famous maxis have claimed Gotland Runt line honours.

This is also the case with the Cape to Rio Yacht Race which was to have celebrated its 50th birthday in 2021. Due to the pandemic this will next take place in 2023. Line honours in its first edition in 1971 were taken by Les Williams and Robin Knox-Johnston's 71ft *Ocean Spirit*. Many famous maxis have since won it including Huey Long's *Ondine* and Hasso Plattner's *Morning Glory* (overall in 1993 and line honours in 1996). Bob McNeil's *Zephyrus IV* won the double - line honours and overall - in 2000, a feat repeated by Giovanni Soldini with his VO70 *Maserati* in 2014. In 2009 *Rambler* won the race overall when *ICAP Leopard 3* claimed line honours.

There should be a significant return to strength in maxi yacht entries in the Transpac next year after Roy P. Disney's VO70 *Pyewacket* won line honours in 2021's pandemic-depleted fleet. The present monohull course record of 5 days 11 hours 14 minutes was set by Jim Cooney and Samantha Grant's *Comanche*, line honours winner (known as the Barn Door Trophy) in the 2019 edition. At the time of writing, nine maxis were already entered in the 2023 edition, the favourite being Manouch

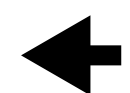


Photo: ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi

Moshayedi's *Rio100* (ex-*Zana*) with Jason Carroll's MOD70 trimaran *Argo* gunning for multihull line honours. Several individuals have expressed a desire to set up a new regular event in Hawaii following either the Transpac or the Pacific Cup.

Meanwhile maxi racing is growing again in Australia with serial Rolex Sydney Hobart winner *Wild Oats XI* back in action. The added return of

Comanche to Australia, having been acquired this year by 18ft skiff legend John Winning Jnr and renamed *Andoo Comanche*, means the Aussie maxi fleet is once again up to strength with an expanding race programme that includes the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's inaugural Australian Maxi Championship, which takes place over 2-6 December.





IMA CARIBBEAN MAXI CHALLENGE 2023

This spring the IMA extended its reach beyond the Mediterranean, holding for the first time its latest circuit, the Caribbean Maxi Challenge. For its second edition in 2023 this will comprise three events: The RORC Caribbean 600, St Maarten Heineken Regatta and Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille. This will be open to all maxis, not just those of IMA members.

In 2022 IMA staff were present at all these events, working with organisers to improve racing for maxis, such as fine tuning class splits. From 2023 maxi racing at all these events will be held under IRC.

For 2023 there will be two feeder races to the Caribbean Maxi Challenge. The RORC-IMA Transatlantic Race starts in early January from Puerto Calero, Lanzarote bound for Camper & Nicholson's Port Louis Marina in Grenada. Meanwhile maxi teams descending from the US East Coast should consider the biennial Pineapple Cup Montego Bay Race on 22 January. From Miami, its course runs south, east of the Bahamas, past the eastern tip of Cuba and then on to the

finish in Montego Bay, Jamaica. First held in 1961, the race has a strong maxi history with past champions including *Kialoa*, *Condor*, *Zephyrus V*, *Prospector* and George Sakellaris' *Shockwave*. Tom Hill's Reichel/Pugh 75 *Titan 12* holds the present record of 2 days 10 hours 24 minutes.

The IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge itself will start with the RORC Caribbean 600. A regular, strong entry in this, along with maxis not only winning line honours, but the race overall under IRC too, is one of the reasons the IMA decided to start its Caribbean series. Since its first edition in 2009, past overall winners have included *Beau Geste*, *Rambler 100*, *Rán 2*, *Shockwave*, *Proteus*, *Bella Mente*, *Wizard* and *Rambler 88*. With brisk trade winds and waves rolling in from the Atlantic, the 600 mile course winds its way between 11 Caribbean islands, as far north as St Maarten and as south as Guadeloupe, taking in Barbuda, St Kitts and Nevis, Saba and St Barth. Despite the best efforts of *Skorpios* and *Comanche* this year, neither bettered the present monohull record of 37 hours 41 minutes 45 seconds set by George David's *Rambler 88* in 2018.

Next up is St Maarten Heineken Regatta, run by the Sint Maarten Yacht Club. Like Antigua, St Maarten is well connected, with an international airport and direct flights from the Netherlands, France and the USA. Maxis sail either a coastal course or up to four inshore races daily, and its organisers are amenable to setting up maxi-tailored courses. The maxi line-up usually includes a strong entry of former Volvo Ocean Race yachts.

Photo: Christophe Jouany



Photos: Laurens Morel; Michael Gramm; RORC/Tim Wright/www.photoaction.com

From St Maarten it is a short jump to Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille in late April. This event comprises five days of racing for maxis under IRC on a variety of courses around the French island paradise, plus an inviting social programme including live music every evening in the event village, a Crew Party and a layday. Today St Barth is one of the favourite Caribbean spots for the 'jet set' and it is easy to see why its main annual regatta is proving to be one of the best-attended in the Caribbean by the maxi fleet.

IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge 2023

- RORC Caribbean 600
20 February
- St Maarten Heineken Regatta
2-5 March
- Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille
16-22 April

Winner

2022 *I Love Poland* Polish National Foundation



IMA MEDITERRANEAN MAXI OFFSHORE CHALLENGE 2022-23

First run in 2015-16, the aim of the IMA Mediterranean Maxi Offshore Challenge (MMOC) is to grow participation in offshore maxi racing.

Today it comprises seven events, from which competitors must sail at least three. All are 'IMA supported' with prizes for maxi class winners and the top IMA member. George David's *Rambler 88* won

the first edition, while the reigning champion for 2021-22 is Jean-Pierre Barjon with *Spirit of Lorina*.

The series doesn't fall over a calendar year, but starts with the Rolex Middle Sea Race before running into the next season. This permits the winner to be presented with the MMOC's silver trophy at the IMA Members' Dinner every September.



Photos: Nico Martinez; Fabio Taccola; ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi; ROLEX/Kurt Arrigo; Nikos Alevromytis-Alen

The Rolex Middle Sea Race has one of the most intriguing courses among the world's classic '600-milers'. Last year's extraordinary forecast set up *Comanche* to score the ultra-rare 'triple': first monohull home; the overall win under IRC, albeit under controversial circumstances; and setting a new record of 40 hours 17 minutes 50 seconds – a time unlikely to be bettered for some time. Read more about this year's line-up on [page 8](#).

The MMOC resumes in 2023 with La Larga, the offshore race of PalmaVela. From Palma the course rounds Ibiza and Formentera but the Real Club Náutico de Palma fine tunes its 225-350 mile length to suit conditions. In 2022 Andrés Varela Entrecanales' Vismara Mills 68 *Pelotari Project* scored both line honours and corrected time victories.

Following this is the Regata dei Tre Golfi. In 2023 this will again be the offshore component of the IMA Maxi European Championship (part of Tre Golfi Sailing Week). This will start early evening from off Naples' Castel dell'Ovo, heading north to Ponza, returning south to round Li Galli off the Amalfi coast, then to the finish off Capri's Marina Grande.

IMA Mediterranean Maxi Offshore Challenge 2022-23

- [Rolex Middle Sea Race - 22 October 2022](#)
- [La Larga - 30 April 2023](#)
- [Regata dei Tre Golfi - 13 May 2023](#)
- [151 Miglia-Trofeo Cetilar - 1 June 2023](#)
- [Rolex Giraglia \(offshore\) - 14 June 2023](#)
- [Aegean 600 - 7 July 2023](#)
- [Palermo-Montecarlo - 22 August 2023](#)

Past winners

2021-22	<i>Spirit of Lorina</i>	Jean-Pierre Barjon (FRA)
2018-19	<i>Vera</i>	Miguel Galuccio (ARG)
2017-18	<i>Atalanta II</i>	Carlo A. Puri Negri (ITA)
2015-16	<i>Rambler 88</i>	George David (USA)



Photo: Fabio Taccola/Studio Taccola

The fourth event is the 151 Miglia-Trofeo Cetilar, which continues its ascent thanks to the support and verve of its founder and sponsor Roberto Lacorte. Starting from Livorno, this rounds the Giraglia rock, heads south to a turning mark off Grosseto and on to the Punta Ala finish. The race is renowned for having some of yacht racing's best parties.

The oldest event in the MMOC is the Rolex Giraglia, first held in 1953. For 2023 this will run on its traditional course from Saint-Tropez, round the Giraglia rock and then on to Genoa, where for the maxis there can be a highly tactical finish (in 2022 *Magic Carpet Cubed* pipped *Arca SGR* to the post, sailing around her on the final approach).

The Aegean 600 is the newest addition to the MMOC. This starts and finishes off the Temple of Poseidon in Sounio, Greece and provides the unique opportunity to race in the southern Aegean, the course following a winding anticlockwise lap around its many picturesque islands.

As usual the MMOC concludes with mid-August's Palermo-Montecarlo. The only IMA race visiting Sicily, this takes place in midsummer and can be light and tactical, with competitors passing a gate off Porto Cervo midway before deciding whether to leave Corsica to port or starboard.



The IMA launched its Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge (MMIC) in 2019. Proving that inshore remains the favourite style of maxi racing in the Mediterranean, this inaugural event was hotly-contested, with IMA President Benoît de Froidmont and his Wally 60 *Wallyño* emerging victorious in the last race of the final event – Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez.

In 2023, the MMIC will comprise six events with competitors having to complete a minimum of three (if they sail more, the worst results can be discarded).

Again the MMIC will start with PalmaVela. This year the Real Club Náutico de Palma's season opener enjoyed a resurgence, especially thanks to the Wally fleet, and it is hoped this will continue in 2023. The Bay of Palma remains one of the world's top racing grounds and maxis have been racing on it since the class' earliest days.

For a second year the Maxi Yacht Sorrento Trophy, the inshore part of the IMA Maxi European Championship, will be the MMIC's second event. Run by the Circolo del Remo e della Vela Italia in conjunction with the IMA, this will comprise four days of inshore/coastal racing around the Bay of Naples/Capri. This race area, especially the lap of Capri, is a favourite among maxi owners.



Photos: Nico Martinez; ROLEX/Studio Borlenghi, Gilles Martin-Raget/www.martin-raget.com

IMA MEDITERRANEAN MAXI INSHORE CHALLENGE 2023

The MMIC's third event will be a special one as it will be the 70th birthday of the Yacht Club Italiano and the Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez's Rolex Giraglia. The inshore component of the event takes place over three days, with racing for the maxis on the Baie de Pampelonne, prior to the start of the main offshore race.

Photo: Maria Muiña by SailingShots.es

Traditionally the number one multi-class big boat regatta in the Mediterranean, the Real Club Náutico de Palma's Copa del Rey MAPFRE offers racing on the Bay of Palma at the height of the season. The event is notable for the attendance of His Majesty King Felipe VI who both participates and then hosts the prize-giving.

IMA Mediterranean Maxi Inshore Challenge 2023

- PalmaVela - 3-7 May
- Maxi Yacht Sorrento Trophy - 16-19 May (part of IMA Maxi European Championship)
- Rolex Giraglia (inshores) - 11-13 June
- Copa del Rey MAPFRE - 29 July-5 August
- Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup - 3-9 September
- Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez - 1-7 October

Past winner

2019 *Wallyño* Benoît de Froidmont (BEL)

The Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, held every September in Porto Cervo, Sardinia, is a favourite among maxi owners, no surprise given the beautiful race area around the La Maddalena archipelago and 'Bomb Alley', down which the prevailing northwesterlies funnel. It is also the most historic maxi class event, the first ICAYA World Championship for the day's IOR maxis, having been held in Porto Cervo in 1980. Hosted by the Yacht Club Costa Smeralda, social events include the IMA Members' Dinner and the Rolex Gala Dinner at the Cala di Volpe hotel.

The final event of the series will be Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez which today attracts a fleet as large as the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup. The maxis will have 'their own' week here again which may be why, along with berthing available in Saint-Tropez's Vieux Porte, it has seen maxi participation significantly rise. The IMA's involvement in the race management has helped improve the quality of the competition with, for example, the race committee now mostly using windward starts.

The winner of the 2023 MMIC will be presented with the series' silver perpetual trophy at Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez's prize-giving.

INTERNATIONAL MAXI EVENTS 2023

IMA CHALLENGE EVENTS AND ASSOCIATED RACES

8 January	RORC & IMA Transatlantic Race	Lanzarote-Grenada
20 February	RORC Caribbean 600	Antigua - Antigua
2-5 March	St Maarten Heineken Regatta	St Maarten
16-22 April	Les Voiles de St Barth Richard Mille	Saint Barth
27 Apr-1 May	Regate di Primavera a Portofino	Portofino, Italy
30 April	La Larga (offshore race of PalmaVela)	Palma - Palma
3-7 May	PalmaVela	Palma de Mallorca
13 May	Regate dei Tre Golfi (IMA Maxi European Championship)	Naples - Capri, Italy
16-19 May	Maxi Yacht Sorrento Trophy (IMA Maxi Europeans)	Sorrento, Italy
1-3 June	151 Miglia-Trofeo Cetilar	Livorno - Punta Ala, Italy
11-13 June	Rolex Giraglia inshores	Saint-Tropez, France
14 June	Rolex Giraglia offshore	Saint-Tropez, France - Genoa, Italy
7 July	Aegean 600	Sounio - Sounio, Greece
29 Jul-5 Aug	Copa del Rey	Palma de Mallorca
22 August	Palermo-Montecarlo	Palermo, Sicily - Monaco
3-9 September	Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup	Porto Cervo, Sardinia
1-7 October	Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez	Saint-Tropez, France
21 October	Rolex Middle Sea Race (2023-24)	Malta - Malta

OTHER MAXI EVENTS IN 2023

2 January	Cape2Rio	Cape Town, South Africa-Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
21 January	Pineapple Cup	Miami, USA-Montego Bay, Jamaica
28 April	75th Newport-Ensenada	Newport Beach, USA -Ensenada, Mexico
29 April-5 May	Antigua Sailing Week	Antigua
9-11 June	NYYC Annual Regatta	Newport, RI, USA
June - TBC	Trophée Bailli de Suffren	Saint Tropez-Malta
1 July	Transpac	Los Angeles-Hawaii, USA
2 July	Gotland Runt	Stockholm-Sandhamn, Sweden
22 July	50th Rolex Fastnet Race	Cowes, UK-Cherbourg, France
22 July	Chicago-Mackinac	Chicago-Mackinac, USA
August - TBC	Sydney-Gold Coast Yacht Race	Sydney-Main Beach, Gold Coast, Australia
August - TBC	Hamilton Island Race Week	Hamilton Island, Australia
September - TBC	RoundItaly	Genoa-Trieste, Italy
8 October	Barcolana	Trieste, Italy
25 October	Hong Kong-Vietnam	Hong Kong-Nha Trang, Vietnam
October - TBC	Venice Hospitality Challenge	Venice, Italy
26 December	Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race	Sydney-Hobart, Australia

FURTHER AHEAD

2024

[Pacific Cup \(San Francisco-Hawaii\)](#)

[Newport-Bermuda](#)

[RORC Baltic Sea Race \(Helsinki-Helsinki\)](#)

[Rolex China Sea Race \(Hong Kong-Subic Bay\)](#)

2025

[Transatlantic Race \(Newport, USA-Cowes, UK\)](#)

[RORC centenary Rolex Fastnet Race](#)

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Key to IMA Challenge events ● CMC ● MMOC ● MMIC

