

QLD Beneteau Cup: French owners invited to join in grande competition

16 Jul 2011

Queensland French yacht owners are invited to compete in this year's Ensign Yachts Beneteau Cup and French Yacht Challenge on the weekend of 1st and 2nd October 2011.

Organised by the Queensland Beneteau Owners Group and hosted by Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron, the annual regatta is being held off Manly and is open to all monohull French-built yachts.

The format for this year's event will be the Ensign Yachts French Yacht Challenge on Saturday and then the second part of the Beneteau Cup on the Sunday. Racing will be under PHS with entrants nominating for the spinnaker or the non-spinnaker division.

Event organising committee member Stuart Markwell said "last year's format was very well received so we have chosen to keep it the same this year; great racing and great parties."

The French Yacht Challenge is open to all French production yachts. Jeanneaus, Beneteaus, Dufours and more will compete against each other in a passage race on Saturday. The day will open with a relaxed breakfast on the lawn in front of the Squadron building and end with a prize giving dinner and party that night.

After another pleasant breakfast, this time on Sunday, the Beneteaus will be back out on the water again to compete in the final two races of the Queensland Beneteau Cup. Once the fleet have completed the two windward/leeward races they will return to the Squadron for more regatta celebrations.

Last year 34 yachts competed in the French Yacht Challenge with trophy going to Michael Schmidt's Sun Odyssey 32, Flight Deck. Schmidt plans to be back in 2011 to defend his title. "We had fun last year and it was such a well organised event, probably the best organised event we did all year.

"Having all the French yachts on the same track is a bit of fun. Looking at the fleet, I don't think there was any one of us trying to kill each other and it didn't look like we upset the Beneteau Cup entrants. We have since gone around and talked to a few other French yacht owners and told them about the event to see if we can encourage a few more people to come along and have a bit of fun."

In the Beneteau Cup last year it was the little second-hand First 34.7, Gary McCarthy's Brilliant Pearl hailing from Mooloolaba, that beat the likes of the brand new First 50 The Matrix and Tam Faragher's First 44.7 Ultimate Positioning, to take out overall honours.

McCarthy hopes to successfully defend his title. "Over the next two months I will be campaigning the Pearl up north. Most of the crew from those regattas, that is Airlie Beach and Magnetic Island, will also be on board for the Beneteau Cup. We have a title to defend and a point to prove; small boats rule."



Photographer – Tracey Johnstone. Event – 2010 QLD French Yacht Challenge

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The Notice of Race and online entry is available from the event website, www.sailing.rqys.com.au

Entries close 16 September 2011.

For more information, please contact event organiser, Jane Virtue on jane.virtue@bigpond.com

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