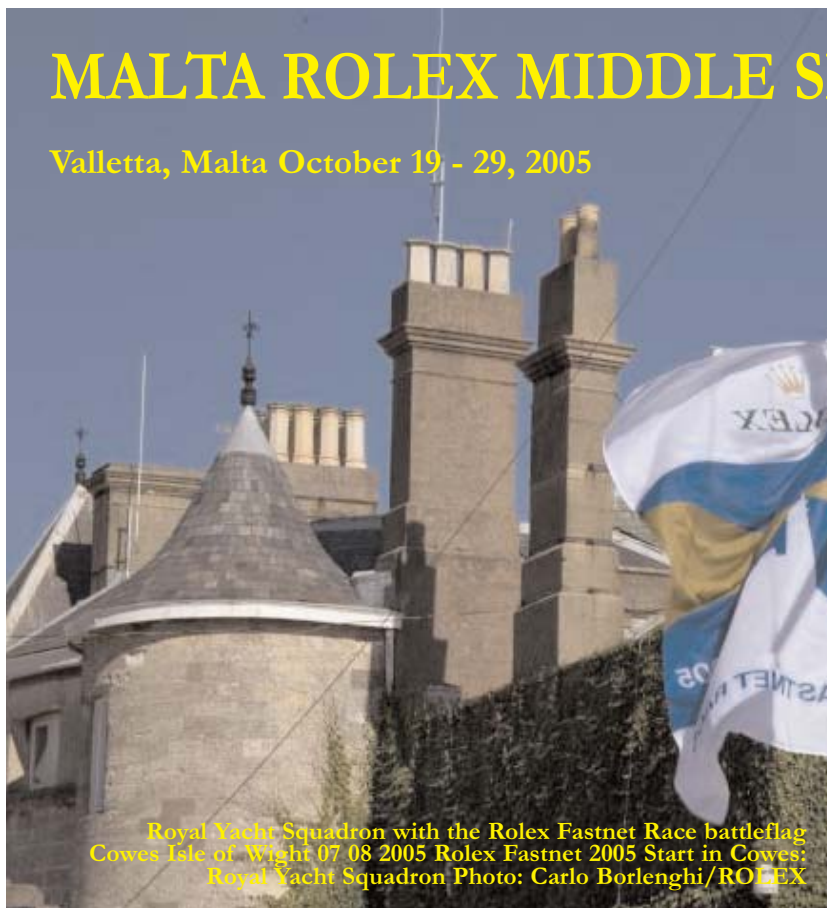


MALTA ROLEX MIDDLE SEA RACE

Valletta, Malta October 19 - 29, 2005



Royal Yacht Squadron with the Rolex Fastnet Race battleflag
Cowes Isle of Wight 07 08 2005 Rolex Fastnet 2005 Start in Cowes:
Royal Yacht Squadron Photo: Carlo Borlenghi/ROLEX



SKANDIA WILD THING,
Grant Wharington, Australian entry
Photo by: Daniel Forster/ Rolex

The 2005 edition of this highly rated offshore classic looks set to be an intriguing contest. With the entry list currently standing at 23 yachts the organisers - the Royal Malta Yacht Club (RMYC)- are quietly confident it might match or better the record fleet of 51 yachts that gathered last year for the 25th Edition.

Headlining the entries at present is the British all-black carbon-fibre Swan 601, Spirit of Jethou, owned by Sir Peter Ogden. She has just competed at the Rolex Swan European Regatta in Cowes, where there was talk of more 601s heading to Malta in October for this 608-nautical mile Mediterranean challenge. Spirit will have company with Fenix, a Swan 60; though less race oriented, she will certainly be a threat in this race where tactics are critical to make the most of the prevailing wind.

The trophy for the Rolex Middle Sea Race is an impressive bronze and brass sculpture in the shape of the city of Valetta, with a lateen sail flying overhead from a mast that has a set of spreaders with the Maltese flag flying. The trophy was designed by Chevalier Envin Cremona and commissioned by the RMYC and the Mal-

ta Government Tourist Board (now the Malta Tourism Authority). Vying for the honour of winning this trophy could be any number of yachts including some former overall and class winners.

Maltese yacht, Jammin, which won in 2003 as Market Wizard, is back for a fully crewed attempt after Andrew Calascione and Darius Goodwin raced two-handed in 2004. Strait Dealer, the J-125 double winner (Handicap and Line Honours) from 2002, will hope to fare better this year after a disappointing retirement in the difficult conditions of last year's race. Sonke Stein's Elan 37 O2 made an excellent debut and Stein, who had a Class win in 2003 on Oh Jee, will hope to go one better this time and capture overall victory. Commodore Georges Bonello DuPuis is returning for a second time following a successful initiation aboard his Prima 38, Primadonna, and a successful but hard fought battle to be the first Maltese yacht home with Sandro Musu's Aziza and Alfred Manduca's Allegra.

Although not yet formally entered, enquiries have been received from the supermaxi, Maximus, which recently won

the Grand Prix Division of the Rolex Transatlantic Challenge and took line honours in the JP Morgan Round the Island Race; from Steinlager II, the maxi ketch that won the Whitbread Round the World Race in 1989/90, and, from the owners of the 80-foot Maxi One Design fleet.

The Rolex Middle Sea Race 2005 starts from Marsamxett Harbour, Malta, on Saturday 22nd October 2005. The Malta Rolex Cup, a two-race inshore series on the 19th and 20th October, will precede the main race.

Entries close on 15th October. The final prize giving is at noon on 29th October.

For further information:

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