



NEWS RELEASE



Top Women Sailors in the World to Compete at the Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County Santa Maria Cup supported by the MD Sports Commission
-- Organizers announce slate of competitors coming to America's Sailing Capital from six nations --

ANNAPOLIS, MD -- Excitement continues to build in the worldwide sailing community after organizers of the Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County Santa Maria Cup introduced the competitors of its 2023 Women's World Match Racing Tour regatta. Female sailors from Australia, Denmark, Great Britain, New Zealand, Sweden and the USA will race J/22s on the Severn River in Annapolis from May 1 through May 4.

The 2023 Women's World Match Racing Tour marks a significant milestone in women's match racing; for the first time women are competing on a recognized world-wide stage. EYC Commodore Mark Jones expresses his admiration for these accomplished competitors: "These sailors are forces to be reckoned with on the water. Their skill and determination are truly impressive."

Annapolis is the second stop in the tour; it starts in San Francisco late April. After Annapolis it heads to Le Havre, France, and then wraps up in Skovshoved, Denmark.

Hosted by the Eastport Yacht Club (EYC), the Visit Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Santa Maria Cup, supported by the Maryland Sports Commission, boasts a rich tradition of female competition dating back over two decades. Past winners include Olympic Gold medalists JJ Isler and Anna Tunnicliffe, Americas Cup veterans Dawn Riley and Liz Baylis, US Sailing Rolex Yachswoman of the year, Cory Sertl, Betsy Allison, Jodi Swanson-Starck and Sally Barkow among other international stars of women's sailing.

In celebration of its long-standing impact on competitive sailing for women around the world, organizers decided to revive this prestigious event after a 10-year hiatus. Annika Carlunger, a part of two previous Santa Maria Cup winning teams and a part of the Swedish team this year says "I am very excited to be coming back to Annapolis to sail in the Santa Maria Cup. Annapolis is a lovely sailing venue, and EYC are incredible hosts."

This year's talented slate of competitors includes:

Bridget Groble USA began match racing in 2015 and formed Bow Down Racing in 2018, competing in the U.S. Women's Match Race Championship in 2019 and 2021. Tactician Morgan Collins has been match racing for roughly a decade and Kate Klempen is an excellent team racer and college sailor. Samantha Foulston is bringing her keelboat expertise to match racing this season.

Celia Willison NZL is from a Kiwi sailing family and began sailing in an Optimist dinghy at Sandspit Yacht Club when she was seven. Currently, she is in her third year of the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron (RNZYS) Youth Training Program as a helm, and in 2022, she won the J/70 Worlds and Cape 31 UK Nationals. This year, Celia has signed up to her first season sailing for Black Star Racing in the 44 Cup.

Anna Östling SWE is part of Team WINGS, which has been in and out of the No. 1 spot on the women's match racing rankings in the world for the last 10 years. In 2014, they became Women's Match Racing World Champions and 2016 they did it all over again and also won their first WIM Series Championship. The team has since worked hard to develop women's sailing with introducing catamarans and new arenas to women's sailing.

Megan Thomson AUS and her RNZYS Performance Programme team 2.0 Racing have been one of New Zealand's premier match racing teams for the past few years. The 2.0 Racing team campaigned throughout the 2022 World Match Racing Tour's US Grand Slam and impressing against some of the world's best open (male & female) Match Racing teams.

Nicole Breault USA is a four-time US women's match race champion who hails from San Francisco, California. She is a regular top competitor in regional and national open match racing events, and has made several competitive forays into the women's international scene, most notably finishing 1st and 2nd in the 2015 and 2019 Nations Cup Finals, respectively.

Sophie Otter GBR leads Team Otter, consisting of skilled individual sailors with titles such as Women's Match Racing World Champions, who debuted on the World Match Racing Tour in 2021 and are set to compete in the 2023 Women's World Match Race Tour.

Kristine Mauritzen DEN helms Those Seagulls, formed in 2022, with a diverse sailing background and high ambitions to improve on their 7th place finish at the 2022 Women's Match Race Skovshoved, Denmark.

Brooke Wilson AUS and her team, Amphitrite Racing, founded in late 2022, have experience in various classes, offshore racing, and team racing, and are set to compete in the John Messenger Women's Regatta and New Zealand Women's Match Racing National Championships.

Janel Zarkowsky USA is skipper for Team As One, named for the mantra of the Georgetown University Sailing Team. "As One" means everyone has a part in the success of the team; everything you do to make yourself better makes the team better. We are excited to participate in the 2023 Women's World Match Race Tour, and build upon our 7th place finish at the 2022 World Sailing Women's Match Race Worlds in Auckland NZ.

Allie Blecher USA Leads Team BAAM which consists of four sailors whose collegiate sailing background brought us all together. As a team we won the 2019 and 2022 US Women's MR Championships. We've been active WIM Series racers and are excited to be on the Women's WMRT this year and beyond. Be sure to say it with emphasis, Team BAAM!!"

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Santa Maria Cup

Santa Maria Cup is the second stop on the 2023 Women's World Match Racing Tour. Returning after a 10-year break, the 2023 regatta will be the 22nd running of this event. Past competitors in this series include Olympic sailors, Rolex Yachswomen of the Year, and other international stars of women's sailing. Some of the American past winners are JJ Isler, Dawn Riley, Julia Trotman, Jody Swanson, Betsy Alison, Cory Sertl, Sally Barkow, and Anna Tunnicliffe. Originally a minor offshoot to the Columbus Cup

professional match racing regatta series in Baltimore, Santa Maria Cup relocated to Annapolis in 1993 when Eastport Yacht Club (EYC) became the organizing authority. www.santamariacup.org

Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County

Visit Annapolis and Anne Arundel County (VAAAC) is a nonprofit, membership-based Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) that generates revenues for the local economy by promoting Annapolis and Anne Arundel County to business and leisure travelers across the country and around the world. Anne Arundel County's official DMO executes strategic marketing, sales, and media campaigns that position the destination's portfolio of brands in key markets to bolster the economy and enhance employment opportunities. www.visitannapolis.org

Maryland Sports Commission

The Maryland Sports Commission is the go-to resource for the sports events and sports tourism industry in Maryland. Our mission is to enhance Maryland's economy, image and quality of life through the attraction, promotion, retention and development of regional, national and international sporting events.

Women's World Match Racing Tour

The Women's World Match Racing Tour was launched in 2022 to continue the hugely successful legacy of the WIM Series (Women's International Match Racing Series) providing a global match racing series for female sailors. The name of the series was re-launched as the Women's World Match Racing Tour with its continued mission to expand and strengthen global match racing and promote opportunities for competitive women's sailing at every level. The Women's World Match Racing Tour is the world's first and only professional sailing series for women providing a valuable pathway for aspiring female world champions in the sport of sailing. womenswmrt.com

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