



DE LA A ROMA

SPECTACULAR SURROUNDINGS AND EXHILARATING SAILING KEPT ALL WHO RACED IN THE LORO PIANA SUPERYACHT REGATTA SUPREMELY HAPPY.

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In June a fleet of 19 'beautiful ladies' assembled at the Yacht Club Costa Smeralda for the first Loro Piana Super Yacht Regatta. Organised in conjunction with Boat International Media and the Yacht Club Costa Smeralda Yacht Club, the 2nd annual running of this event was voted a resounding success by all who participated.

Open to Superyachts over 24 metres, this year's regatta enjoyed four days of near-perfect sailing conditions. There were both modern and classic designs in the fleet - the newest boat on the start line was Indio, a Wally 101 that was launched just a month before the regatta. Owner Andrea Recordati said, "It was a fantastic event, a perfect testing ground for the yacht - and a serious workout for us as well." Other Wally yachts racing in the regatta were Magic Carpet 2, Open Season, Saudade and Y3K. Luca Bassani, CEO of Wally, sailed in the regatta, and described Costa Smeralda as "the perfect place for a Superyacht regatta."

His thoughts were echoed by designer Ed Dubois who said, "The variety of boats all racing together, the location, the weather and the atmosphere all made for a unique occasion. The world-class race management makes this a top Superyacht regatta."

Immediately prior to the Loro Piana Superyacht Regatta was the Dubois Cup, where six Dubois yacht rallied to compete against each other. It was the 39m Ganesha that took the silverware, just head of Moonbird, with third place going to Kokomo. All three boats stayed on to compete in the Loro Piana Superyacht Regatta, with Moonbird eventually taking fourth place. Of course the Dubois Cup includes racing, but the social side of the event supports the charity SPARKS, a children's

medical research programme.

A stroll down the pontoon at the YCCS was like walking through a catalogue of the world's very best designers and builders – a living showcase of the great and the good afloat. Fado, Farandwide and Farewell all came from the yard of South Wind Yachts. Perseus, by Perini Navi, was there, and so was White Lie (Nautor's Swan). Moonbird and Ganesha represented Fitzroy Yachts, a 'Gold Sponsor' of this impeccable event, and all the way from 'Silver Sponsor' Alloy Yachts' yard in New Zealand came Kokomo. Classic yachting was represented by the Royal Huisman built 51.6m Meteor; a reproduction gaff rigged Gloucester Schooner launched in 2007.

The very smallest yacht in the fleet, a mere 25.6m from Cookson's of New Zealand, was title sponsor Pier Luigi Loro Piana's own My Song. Asked how he enjoyed 'his' regatta, Pier Luigi enthused that "it would be impossible not to! We have had such fantastic sailing conditions, and it is a real joy sailing with and against my good friends - such as the Commodore of the YCCS, Riccardo Bonadeo, who was sailing on Magic Carpet with the owner Sir Lindsay Owen Jones, and Thomas Bscher who is here with his boat, Open Season. This is sailing with both competition and camaraderie, and it is perfect for me."

The serious business of racing started each day at a leisurely 1200hrs. Edoardo Recchi, Director of Sport for the YCCS, said, "The pursuit style of racing was chosen to ensure safety on the starting line. Boats start at two-minute intervals, with the slower cruisers starting first. This means that the faster yachts have a chance to catch up to the slower ones, but it is still a race against the clock,

CLOCKWISE, FROM OPPOSITE TOP LEFT:

Pier Luigi Loro Piana's My Song; the newly-launched Wally, Y3K; Farandwide from South Wind Yachts; Moonbird (Fitzroy Yachts); White Lie (Nautor's Swan); the fleet racing in the azure waters of La Maddalena Archipelago



and the handicap result is still the one that counts.”

The first day’s racing served up ‘picture perfect’ conditions, with sunshine, blue skies and 15-18 kts of breeze to chase the ‘beautiful ladies’ around the racecourse. The 30nm track through the La Maddalena archipelago saw My Song take victory on handicap, with the 37m Moonbird in second place and Hamilton II coming third. Albert Buell, owner of Saudade, enjoyed the fact that “there is much less swell amongst the islands as compared to other courses, so you can sail much closer together”.

Day two saw the Mistral winds keep the skippers and their crews busy. The fleet wound their way through the islands on a 35nm race, and several boats recorded over 30kts of wind speed. Ganesha, at 52m the largest in the fleet, found that there was just too much wind for them to fly a spinnaker. That probably lost them two to three places, but it was still “a great day’s sail” according to Ganesha’s Australian owner, Lang Walker. “I am quite sure that Porto Cervo is one of the very best places to sail in Europe,” he said.

The strong conditions suited the 32m Fitzroy yacht, Moonbird, right down to the gunwales. And with the day’s racing sponsored by Fitzroy it was an especially fitting win! Blown home in style for a second place was Gliss, a Royal Huisman, and Pier Luigi Loro Piana’s My Song was third. Claus Peter Offen’s magnificent Wally, Y3K, revelled in the conditions to sweep over the finish line in a mere 2 hrs 20 min.

It was a very full day on the water, but Mediterranean hospitality extends until well after dark, so after racing (and a short pause

for sailors to ‘catch breath’) owners and VIPs made their way to a sumptuous beach party at the Romazzino Hotel. After sampling the delights of Sardinian cuisine, and Louis XIII brandy, many of the owners and their guests even found some extra energy, and took to the dance floor.

On the score sheet, and going into the third and penultimate day of the regatta, it was My Song in the lead with Gliss a close second. Only four points separated the top three yachts, and with no discards there was everything to play for. Racing was delayed for two hours as the Race Committee waited for the boisterous Mistral winds to calm down a little, and then the fleet set off on a 29nm course. According to PRO Peter Reggio, the breeze was “fresh, but not frightening.” Once again it was My Song who took the race on handicap.

That evening the owners and guests assembled poolside at the YCCS, and were treated to the very best that the Club has to offer. Cocktails and champagne preceded the three course Gala dinner accompanied by fine wines, and renowned Italian pianist? made for a memorable evening. The yacht crews were also well looked after by the sponsor with their own party held at Phi Beach, courtesy of Loro Piana.

The final day on the water brought with it some shifty wind conditions. The majority of the fleet started racing in 12kts, but this fell to a weak 8 kts during the start sequence. As the sailors say, ‘the breeze was all over the place’, shifting through 130 degrees and generally making life very difficult for the Race Officer and the competitors. Positions changed constantly during

OPPOSITE: Classic and Contemporary - the reproduction Gloucester Schooner, Meteor, paces Saudade (Wally 45m) through the islands and islets

THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Edoardo Recchi, YCCS Director of Sport; Pier Luigi Loro Piana at the helm of My Song; 100% concentration at the skippers’ briefing

low-res



DRESSING ALL NATURAL

The name of Loro Piana is synonymous with superior quality fabrics, and over the years the company has produced articles that combine natural fibres with technological innovation, creating a unique range of products dedicated to the world of the sea and sailing.

Latest creation from this famous marquee is the Defender line, originally worn by Team New Zealand during their successful defence of the America's Cup in 2003. Further and more recent research has produced another important breakthrough through utilising silk in the Storm System® fabrics. The Storm System is the registered Loro Piana mark indicating natural fabrics that have been made totally waterproof and wind resistant by combining natural fibres with the most advanced technology. The new range replaces nylon with a superfine filament of silk, (the finest in the world) which is twisted together with natural fibres (fine wools, cashmere and linen) of varying counts to achieve a strand that is both ultrafine and extremely durable. The resulting fabrics are used in

a wide range of iconic garments designed for the needs of the most active men and women.

Pier Luigi Loro Piana and the crew of My Song were field-testing this new range of clothing during the Superyacht Regatta. "I am so excited about this development... we have used only natural fibres and achieved a superior product," says Loro Piana. "Whether you are sailing or skiing, these sports are very physical and so you need a very lightweight, warm and comfortable product. The whole crew has been wearing the new Storm System products during the regatta, and even the bowman is happy. It is a nice feeling for me to be using resources that are sustainable for the world, and not having to rely on synthetic products. Our family business has always been focused on providing the absolute best of the best, and with this system I believe that we have not only produced a functional product but also a beautiful one, and I am considering calling the range the 'Porto Cervo Super Racer' line in honour of this beautiful sailing area."



the race, but the eventual winner was Thomas Bscher's Open Season, just ahead of Gliss and Magic Carpet II. Bscher was delighted with his boat's performance, and with the organisation of the event. "It was all absolutely first class," he said, "and we will definitely be back next year." But for My Song it was 'not her day'. Veteran America's Cup sailor, Tommaso Chieffi, was the tactician on board My Song. "We were unlucky today... just after our start the wind swung from Mistral to Sirocco, and we more or less stopped along with five other boats that started at the end of the sequence. But never mind - we have had a good week and this is a beautiful event, it's just a shame about the last race for us." With no discards, My Song's chance of victory was dashed, and

it was Gliss who was the eventual winner of the regatta. Her owner, Marcho Vogeles, was another enthusiastic promoter of the event: "The location is magnificent, the organisation is impeccable, and the use of the natural markers (island and rocks) makes racing here absolutely second-to-none." With comments like that ringing in his ears, maybe Pier Luigi Loro Piana was a winner after all! There is no doubt that the regatta will be even bigger next year, and the title sponsor will be back again to try to win 'his' event! Following on from the success of the first year of collaboration with Boat International and YCCS, the luxury Brand Loro Piana intends to continue title sponsorship for next year and the proposed dates are June 8-12, 2010.

CLOCKWISE FROM OPPOSITE TOP LEFT: Gala Dinner at the YCCS pool; Commodore Riccardo Bonadeo with Laura and Pier Luigi Loro Piana; the victorious Gliss crew and owner, Marcho Vogeles (with trophy); Beach Party at the Romazzino Hotel; dancing the night away; the Silver Jubilee Cup