

**Cruising Rally Association
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Tortola to Bermuda Rally Set to Depart May 3

Atlantic Cup Brings Winter Cruisers Home

HAMPTON, VA (January 23, 2009) - The Cruising Rally Association announced today that the Atlantic Cup Rally will depart from the Nanny Cay Marina on Tortola, May 3, and finish in Bermuda 4-5 days later. The Atlantic Cup is the companion rally to November's Caribbean 1500 and offers the opportunity for returning cruisers to enjoy the camaraderie, competition, and adventure of an 850-mile rally. Pre-start festivities and skipper briefings will begin on May 1.

"Over the years, we have found it best to split the return trip from the BVI to the States into two legs. In the spring of the year, two shorter weather windows seem to be more frequent than a single longer one," said Steve Black, founder and president of the Cruising Rally Association. "The Atlantic Cup is an organized rally from Tortola to Bermuda, complete with radio call schedules, professional weather routing, transponders, social events, and awards. The passage often takes advantage of the easterly trade winds. And then, we wait for the next weather window to leave for the second leg. At that point, smaller groups of boats head off for different destinations and informally continue the radio call-ins as they go."

The Atlantic Cup is open to sailors with well founded offshore boats at least 38 feet long and crews of two or more. It is not limited to veterans of other Cruising Rally Association events. Skippers may elect to join the Cruising Class or the Rally Class for the event. Boats in the Cruising Class are not scored and participate to enjoy the adventure and camaraderie of cruising-in-company. Boats sailing in the Rally Class will be assigned PHRF handicaps and will compete in several classes. Awards for Rally class participants will be presented in Bermuda.

Satellite transponders are mounted on each boat and send positions to the Cruising Rally Association website (www.carib1500.com). During November's Caribbean 1500 Rally, tens of thousands of visitors from over 50 countries watched the progress of the fleet on the web site.

The Cruising Rally Association rallies retain some of the competitive elements of traditional sailboat races, but offer social, educational and technological enhancements that broaden the appeal of the event to couples and families, as well as racers – both experienced and first-timers.

Other Cruising Rally Association events in 2009 included series of three Ocean Sailing Seminars and the Caribbean 1500 Rally. The seminars will be held in Newport RI (March 7-8), Annapolis MD (March 14-15), and Hampton VA (September 19-20).

The 2009 Caribbean 1500 Rally will be the 20th annual running of this event making it the largest and longest-running offshore cruising event in The Americas. Black anticipates a record entry of returning Ralliers for the anniversary activities. The Caribbean 1500 is slated to start November 2, 2009.

The Cruising Rally Association is widely supported by leading companies in the marine, tourism, and financial industries. . These include Davenport & Company LLC, Nanny Cay Hotel, Marina, and Boatyard, West Marine, Blue Water Sailing, World Cruising Ltd., Island Packet Yachts, Switlik, ICOM, Quantum Sail Design, Gill, Hydrovane, OCENS, Bluewater Yachting Center, Hampton's Towne Bank and Towne Mortgage, Hampton Roads Convention and Visitors Bureau, , Mount Gay Rum, and Reed's Almanac.

For full information on future rallies and Ocean Sailing Seminars, visit www.carib1500.com.

About the Cruising Rally Association:

The Cruising Rally Association, founded in 1990 by Steve Black, manages a year-round calendar of offshore cruising rallies and seminars. Over 1300 boats with 5000 ralliers aboard have met the challenge of the CRA sailing events in its 20 year history. Tens of thousands of armchair sailors from over 50 countries come to the web site each year to watch each satellite-tracked event in progress. Black has sailed in all parts of the Atlantic, including three solo transatlantic races and more than 40 rallies. He served as executive director of the US Sailing Association before founding the Cruising Rally Association.