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**2009 MARBLEHEAD-TO-HALIFAX OCEAN RACE PROVIDES NEEDED
"DOWN TIME" and "STRESS RELEASE" FOR SKIPPERS AND CREWS
DURING CHALLENGING TIMES**

***Host Boston Yacht Club Establishes "Race Buddy" Program for First
Time Participants and "Race Concierge" for Visiting Skippers
and Families***

MARBLEHEAD, Mass. (March 19, 2009) – Citing a need to "de-stress" and spend time with families and friends, registered skippers for the upcoming Marblehead-to-Halifax Ocean Race, scheduled to depart July 5, are using the upcoming historic yacht race as a way to take a break from today's challenging economy, while taking a needed vacation. In addition, to streamline the race preparation process and travel logistics, the Boston Yacht Club, which has hosted the event for over 100 years, has established the "Race Buddy" program and is introducing the "Race Concierge." Race Buddy pairs first time participants with experienced skippers that provide tips for maximizing budgets for race preparation. The Race Concierge provides help to skippers, their families and crews, with regard to any travel needs prior to and while in Marblehead.

"These are different times, and we have recognized this with our new initiatives," said Vice Commodore Charlie Garrard and chairman of the race.

"We know that race preparation can be time consuming, not only with boat logistics, but also, in organizing ground arrangements. The Race Buddy program partners race veterans with skippers new to the race giving them insights on ways to make the detailed preparation efficient and less costly. The Concierge lends a hand for skippers needing suggestions for family activities while in Marblehead, such as where to stay, the easiest way to get to Marblehead from Logan Airport, and restaurants, etc. We are doing all we can to make this race a family-friendly event, especially for those not racing."

"It's a great race--not too short and not too long--with a great destination," said John Brim, skipper of *Rima 2* (Reichel Pugh 55). "The tactical challenge of the currents at Brazil Rock, together with the beauty of the Gulf of Maine, keep me coming back. Times are tough, but this one is the one to keep on your calendar."

"We look at this year's race as an opportunity not to miss," said Fred Madeira, skipper of *Resolute* (J/44 from Cumberland, Maine). "The economy is affecting us in our work and personal lives. However, the benefit of time spent with our teenage sons and close friends in preparation and during the race are well worth the effort and the cost, and deliver a payback that will last well beyond the challenges of today's tough economic times."

"The Marblehead-to Halifax Ocean Race is one of the ocean racing classics, offering a challenging course and great racing," said Michael Hennessy, skipper of *Dragon* (*Class 40*). "A skilled fleet, tricky currents, variable wind and even fog make for an interesting, beautiful and difficult race to Canada, a race that is a test of boat and sailor."

"With a 360 mile course, and a return delivery that spans some of the most beautiful cruising grounds in the world, this event provides the perfect way to spend an affordable summer vacation of racing followed by cruising.

I can not wait for July 5th," he continued.

David Bows will be heading up the Race Buddy program and can be reached at DavidBowsJr@yahoo.com. Chris Ann Goddard is leading the race concierge program and can be reached a chris@cgprpublicrelations.com or 781-639-9015.

About the 2009 Marblehead-to-Halifax Ocean Race: The running of the 2009 Marblehead-to-Halifax Ocean Race (MHOR) is preceded by a long and prestigious history. The race began in 1905 as an informal competition among sailors from the Boston, Eastern, and New York Yacht Clubs. Since that time, the Marblehead-to-Halifax Ocean Race has run regularly on alternate years from the Newport Bermuda Race, as one of the pre-eminent ocean races of the North Atlantic. For more information: www.marbleheadtohalifax.com

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