

2011 ORC GP CLASS RULES NOW POSTED

Changes to GP26 and GP42 Class rules to reflect evolution of recent designs and future trends

1 March 2011 – The Offshore Racing Congress (ORC) is pleased to announce the **2011 Grand Prix class rules** for the **GP26**, **GP33**, and **GP42** classes have been finalized and posted on the ORC website at www.orc.org. While the GP33 rules have remained unchanged from 2010, the GP26 and GP42 rules have some new features in response to requests from designers and sailors in these classes, reflecting the evolutionary trends seen in similar offshore-capable keelboats of these sizes.

This is the last set of ORC rules to be finished for 2011, and will remain in effect until new rules get approved and published in 2012. Any modifications or interpretations will be administered within each class.

Each GP class rule has been designed to create custom or semi-custom boats within very tight shape and construction controls. Designers may exercise some design freedom within the parameters expressed in each class rule, while the opportunity exists for them to pursue optimizations in design within the designated boxed parameters.

In the GP26 rules, changes include a lower minimum rig weight, allowance of 2-spreader alloy masts, and allowance of a carbon fibre keel blade, with a corresponding adjustment in the keel bulb weight parameters. Designer **Jim Donovan**, a technical advisor to the class as well as the designer to two new GP26's designs, has said "These changes help better capture the spirit of the class having a proper balance between ease of construction and cost, but with no loss in performance and innovation."

In the GP42 rules, the maximum crew weight has been reduced by 80 kg to 720 kg, bowsprits are now allowed, as well as square-top mainsails seen on so many offshore boats in this size range. Class Manager **Paolo Massarini** says "The GP42's have always had plenty of power, but these new features will help keep the existing boats and any new designs in fashion with the current trends, as well as make them even more competitive under the existing IRC and ORC rating rule paradigms."

For more information on the 2011 ORC GP class rules and links to the GP class websites, visit the ORC homepage at www.orc.org.

***About ORC GP classes:** Within each set of box rules, the ORC GP class promotes a light displacement racing yacht, with a simple fractional rig with non-overlapping jibs, no running backstays and generous sail area so that GP class boats will have phenomenal performance at relatively affordable cost. It is the intention that the rules and specifications for the ORC GP classes provide close racing without time allowance in Grand Prix-level competition, and that the yachts designed to this rule be fast, sound and seaworthy, thereby retaining, with a minimum of modification, good value beyond their competitive life as Grand Prix racers.*

Currently there are 21 GP26 boats built or under construction in 8 countries around the world, 4 GP33's built in 3 countries, and 15 GP42's in 8 countries.