

## Boat races return to Destin with new name

### ■ Destin World Cup to begin Oct. 31

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Last November, the roar of offshore boats in the Gulf of Mexico could be heard all over Destin — and they'll be heard again this fall.

The Destin World Cup, formerly the Merrick World Cup Classic, is scheduled to return to the waters off Destin.

The race will be the world championships for the Offshore Super Series Powerboat Racing Association and will go off this year with help from a new corporate sponsor.

Greg Featherston, vice president of property management with Legendary Inc., said the races will be held Oct. 31- Nov. 4 with Legendary playing a major role in facilitating the race, including hosting the race village at

Destin Commons and craning the large boats into the water at Legendary Marine.

Featherston said the race course, which was behind Silver Shells Condominium last year, may be moved 300 feet or so to the east to give spectators a better vantage point.

"We want to move one of the turns down by Henderson Beach State Park to give the little guy staying at Henderson Beach State Park a

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chance to watch the races," he said.

Though offshore powerboat races are making their second appearance in the waters off Destin in

consecutive years, Featherston said Legendary and other sponsors are treating the Destin World Cup like a first time event.

"This is the first Destin World Cup and we want to see this thing grow larger and larger," he said.

In the hopes of making the Destin World Cup an

annual Destin tradition, Featherston said the winner of the race would win a "very large trophy" that would remain in Destin, perhaps at the Destin Area Chamber of Commerce and other locations around town, and would be engraved with the names of the winners.

Misty Velasquez, executive director of the OSS, said given the great time had by race crews and drivers last year, a return trip to the Emerald Coast seemed like a no-brainer.

"Destin is such a wonderful family destination that parallels what we're about with the OSS," she said. "Given that this is our Worlds, it should be the premiere offshore event of the season."

Featherston said with the potential of the race to generate a small profit, race organizers have designated the Destin Fire Rescue Foundation, a 501(c)3 organization in support of Destin Beach Safety, as the beneficiary.

Other sponsors of the race include: The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office, Destin Harbor Association, ABEC Resorts - The Palms, Florida Fish and Wildlife, Holiday Isle Properties Inc., Newman-Dailey Resort Properties, Destin Commons, Max Howell of Max'd Out Radio, hookedondestin.com, Destin Charter Boat Association, Destin Air Charters, Destin Area Chamber of Commerce, and ResortQuest.

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