

Line up for the ICRA National Cruiser Championships 2009

The Irish Cruiser Racing Association's 'National Cruiser Championships' is now just a week away, for the first time ever it is being hosted on the West Coast by Tralee Bay Sailing Club which are well used to giving a warm welcome to sailors, they have hosted events on all levels from Club to World Championship's in this beautiful idyllic part of our coast line.

Over seventy boats will contest the right to become the 'Irish National Cruiser Champion' in each of the Divisions and the spoils will be Irish Sailing Association Medallions and a place at the ISA All Ireland Sailing Championships at the end of the season for their achievement.

Last years Division Zero winner Dave Dwyer's 'Marinerscove.ie' is presently preparing on the solent for the UK IRC Nationals taking place at the weekend but with Dave's commitment to defend his closely won title at last years National Cruiser Championships in Howth has put his crew on a tight schedule to get the boat back in time for the first gun in Tralee. Eamon Rohan King 40 Blonde IV will be one of Marinerscove.ie main competition finishing a very creditable third at last year's event. Strong competition in this Division will also come from Kieran Twomey's Corby 38 Gloves Off, Tim Costello's Mills 43 Tiamat, George Sisk's Farr 42 WOW flying under the burgee of the Royal Irish Yacht Club and the host club where he has being sailing on and off for years giving him an advantage over the rest of the fleet outside of Rob Allen's Corby 36 Mustang Sally from the Royal Western Yacht Club.

In Division One Mike McCarthy Ker 32 Checkmate will be one to watch but in this division there are plenty of diverse competitive boats, Barry Cunningham Corby 33 Contango, two J109 - S&J Tyrell's Aquelina and Pat Kelly's Storm, Anthony O'Leary from the Royal Cork Yacht Club has entered a modified 1720 Antix Beag, Denis Hewit is bringing his Mills 30 Raptor from the Royal Irish Yacht Club and some local boats are Martin Reilly's Corby 29 Esperanto, Eddie Barry's 40.7 Caolila & Dan Counihan's First 36.7 Galileo. X- Yachts are out in force in this Division, X332's - Ian Gaughan Xena, Thomas & Kieran Whelan's Chaos, Team Foynes Dexterity and host club boat Donal Brown's Excuse Me, X362's – David Scott's Eos & Derry Good's Exhale and Donal O'Leary's X35.

Attracting the greatest number of entries is Division Two and the hot favorite must be Colwell/Murphy's Corby 25 Kinetic from Howth Yacht Club winner of this Division last year but that's not to say that they will get it all their own way, some of the boats that will be trying to take the their title away is current West Coast Champion Conor Ronan's Corby 26 Ruthless, Corby 25's - Vincent O Shea's Yanks & ffrancs, Denis Coleman's Thunderbird, Denis Ellis's Corby 27 Kodachi, Sigma's 33's -, Commodore of the host club Liam Lynch's Powder Monkey, Peadar O' Laughlin 's Reconnaissance, David Buckley's Boojum, Finbarr O Connell's Treyona, Dehler 34's – Raymond Mc Gibney's Disaray, David Griffin's Egalite, Derrick Dillon's Big Deal to mention a few.

Division Three is as competitive as ever with Vincent Gaffney's Albin Express Alliance topping the bill, being a past Division Champion and current West Coast Champion from Howth Yacht Club, but plenty of competition to make this Division very competitive indeed – Paul Mc Gibney's J24 Virgin on the ridicules will have his first outing at National Level, but as we saw at last years event the J24's were the ones to beat, three HB31's are also in this Division – John Buckley's Headhunter, Gary Fort's K Vector, Mark Prendiville's Rooster, two shamrock's – C Mac Donncha's Sliver Foam from Galway & JP Buckley's Battle, Jackie Ward's Parker 27 Hallmark, D Losty very successful ¼ Tonner Woody to name but a few.

Race Officers Alan Crosibe, Rob Lamb and Liam Dinneen with their formidable teams will ensure competitors exhilarating sailing over a variety of courses over the three days racing.

ICRA National Cruiser Championships Tralee Bay Sailing Club 11th – 13th June 2009

For more information & results next week – www.traleebaysailingclub.com