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New Class of Powerboats Join Their “Big Brother” of the F-2 Superleague Circuit to Form Powerful Day of Racing at 2022 Bradenton Area River Regatta

BRADENTON, Fla.—A new sleeker, but fierce, class of powerboats—the SST-45s—will join their “Big Brother” F-2 counterparts in classic Superleague Powerboat racing this Saturday, Feb. 12, when the **ALL-FREE** Bradenton Area River Regatta returns to the challenging surf of the Manatee River.

These lighter but mighty speed vessels, referred to as the “Formula Lights,” may be smaller and lighter than the F-2s, but they nearly produce the same menacing roar and excitement as the ferocious F-2s. Combined, these two classes promise a spectacular and dramatic day of racing, creating the largest single-day racing event on the APBA Circuit.

Five of the nation’s Top 10 SST-45 contenders are participating: Jose Mendana Jr.; J.W. Nelson; Ricky Sober; Thomas Schlarb; and Randy Partch. Mendana, Sober and Partch are from the greater Bradenton area.

Meantime, the F-2s of the Powerboat Superleague, the oldest and most respected racing circuit in the F-2 division, are the staple of Regatta’s past and this year they will bring the same level of power and agility. The racing is an electrifying demonstration of speed and maneuverability in watercrafts capable of climbing from 0-100/mph in less than four seconds, all of which leads to another promising day of breathtaking drama in one of the most explosive spectacles on water.

Many of Superleague’s F-2 pilots, including former-champion Ashton Rinker of Tampa, FL, and Bradenton’s Mike Quindazzi, who moved from Arizona to Bradenton, Fla., right after the 2020 race because he loved the Bradenton area, return to Regatta to battle for the day’s championship. Coming out of retirement to race against his son Ashton and other highly regarded pilots, is Terry Rinker Sr., also a former Bradenton Area River Regatta champion. It will take all their highly honed skills and instincts to negotiate the tight turns and tricky Manatee surf to win the day.

Fans also will be able to see these incredibly designed watercrafts up close at the Powerboat Village near the Palmetto Riverside Park area all day.

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add one...powerboat racing

A series of qualifying runs (from approximately 10:30-noon) precede time trials, beginning at 1 p.m. (F-2s) and 2 p.m. (SST-45s). Championship racing starts at approximately 4 p.m. for the F-2s and 5 p.m. for the SST-45s.

“It is great to be coming back to Bradenton for the seventh annual River Regatta, after a year’s absence.” said Sherron Winer of Powerboat Superleague. “Each year, Powerboat Superleague works to create an exciting and diverse race program for the Regatta, and we are especially excitement about this year’s racing lining.

“The SST-45 class, the `Formula Lights,’ add a unique perspective,” Winer added. “There is a visible difference between the engine, horsepower, speed, and size of the boats, and while the SST- 45 crafts are smaller, their impact on the water is impressive.”

A day-long slate of fun-family activities begins at 10 a.m., along both shores of the Manatee River in Bradenton and Palmetto. Kicking off the festivities is the De Soto Little Anglers Fishing Derby (at Palmetto Fishing Pier). A ballistic array of pyrotechnics, produced by the world-renown first family of fireworks, Zambelli International, brings the day’s events to a climatic end, beginning at approximately 7 p.m.

Full details, schedule and additional information are available at: bradentonarearegatta.com. Follow all the fun and activities on Facebook: www.facebook.com/RiverwalkRegatta.

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The Bradenton Area River Regatta is produced and managed by ISM/USA—a sports event management and marketing firm with offices in Pittsburgh, PA and Lakewood Ranch, FL.

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