

IT'S TIME TO FLY

Barcelona's waterfront and the golden sands of the nearby St Miguel, Barceloneta and Somorrostro beaches are currently awash with spectators vying to capture a glimpse of the high-octane action of the Louis Vuitton 37th America's Cup.

It's Formula One on the water, with rock star sailors completing jaw-dropping manoeuvres on super high-tech equipment developed specifically for those competing for the 'Auld Mug' – sailing and international sport's oldest trophy.

As the most iconic yacht racing event globally, the America's Cup attracts the best of the best from the world of sailing. To be involved, you have to be at the very top of your game; there is no second place.

Unassailable excellence applies to the boats too. And this is why when the new America's Cup Women's and Youth Regatta teams take to the water this September, they'll be flying the AC40, built by McConaghy Boats – a scaled down version of the AC75 America's Cup boats.

Underpinned by over 50 years' boat building experience, McConaghy Boats' dedication to excellence across its range of high-performance racing yachts, fully customisable luxury multihulls and powercats is unparalleled.

Consistently at the forefront of composite (carbon) technology, McConaghy worked with some of the world's best race yacht designers to build some of the most technically advanced race yachts in the world, before being approached by Emirates Team New Zealand (ETNZ) to build the AC40 for the 37th America's Cup teams.

With speed predictions of close to 50 knots on the water in front of the revitalised Port Olímpic, this One-Design foiling monohull demanded a design and build which

would withstand loads and stresses that would have been unthinkable in a 40-foot yacht a few years ago. Battery power replaces the need for multiple grinders, and with a self-tacking headsail the yacht is sailed by just two helmsmen and two trimmers, while an autopilot control system maintains stable flight so the crews can focus purely on speed and tactics.

Showcasing the absolute forefront of sailing technology, the standardised controls, sails, foils, and mechanisms ensure a level playing field, placing the spotlight on crew coordination, strategic maneuvering, and foiling technique – as opposed to which teams have the biggest budgets.

After proving their might as America's Cup training vessels and being the designated class for the preliminary regattas, the pioneering AC40s will be raced by the teams competing in the UniCredit Youth and inaugural Puig Women's America's Cup.

Poised to be standout features of the Louis Vuitton 37th America's Cup in Barcelona, the UniCredit Youth (17-26 September) and Puig Women's America's Cup (5-13 October) have attracted the finest youth and female sailors from around the globe, from Olympians to ocean racers.

Twelve teams will do battle to make history as they strive for victory in intense fleet and head-to-head match racing at these groundbreaking events, in groundbreaking boats.

Representing Great Britain in one of these remarkable foiling craft will be the Royal Yacht Squadron affiliated team, GBR Athena Pathway.

"The AC40 is really unlike any other boat I've sailed," says Hannah Diamond, AC40 Trimmer onboard GBR Athena Pathway, competing in the Puig Women's America's Cup. *"The boat reaches 40 knots effortlessly, and you soon feel*

at home reaching those speeds from the comfort of your seat.

"The hydraulic trim controls mean you have total control of the sail shape at the touch of a button, and the unique set-up with two drivers and two trimmers separated by the mainsail is a new and fun challenge to ensure you are working as one group."

And if flying across the water at incredible adrenaline-inducing speeds sounds appealing, it's now infinitely possible.

McConaghy Boats, in partnership with Emirates Team New Zealand (ETNZ), is offering individuals the opportunity to fly with the purchase of an AC40, bringing the cutting-edge technology and unparalleled performance synonymous with the America's Cup to private owners for the first time in sailing history.

With interest already expressed by numerous private owners and the first build contract signed, an exhilarating one-design race series is in development. So instead of having to vie for a glimpse of the high-octane on-water action – yacht racing thrill-seekers could be right there in the middle of it.

McConaghy is represented in Europe by Ancasta International Boat Sales, offering the AC40s as well as McConaghy's extensive range of semi-custom performance power and sailing catamarans.

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