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## Come One, Come All – The Charleston Attitude

**Sperry Top-Sider Charleston Race Week** has always been an inclusive event. Since its inception in the mid '90s, the regatta has welcomed all comers. (Well, almost all; multihulls remain on the outside, but we're working that.) As a consequence, the spectrum of participants who materialize in Chucktown every spring is amazingly broad. From mom-and-pop teams to professional crews; from clunky cruisers to stripped-out speed machines; from the uber-intense competitor to the *laisse-faire* participant – you'll find them all in Charleston mid April.

Let's meet a few of the folks who'll be here this year: Say hello to Chris Chambers, a real estate broker from Sandpoint, Idaho. Chambers, a first-timer, will be sailing in the Ultimate 20 Class. So, why is he traveling 2,700 miles – basically all the way from the Canadian border to the Carolina Lowcountry? "We heard that Charleston is a great venue for racing with really good conditions, and we know we'll see a reasonably big fleet of Ultimate 20s at the regatta, so for us, it's definitely worth making the trip.



At home, Chambers (pictured here) races on Lake Pend, so he'll be in for bit of a learning curve regarding Charleston's tricky tidal current. But at least he's keeping the logistics simple. He and his crew have arranged to charter a local boat, so they'll be flying in for the regatta. "We're keen to use this event as a tune-up regatta for our upcoming season, and the timing is perfect because our events out West don't begin until late April."

Another first-time skipper will be Hakki Etem, who plans to bring his Beneteau Oceanis 461 *Layla* up from St.

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<p data-bbox="250 142 1365 226">Augustine, Fla. Etem has raced here before, but only as crew on board a friend's boat. This time he's bringing his international team to town (Etem is Turkish, one member is Swedish, and another is from Italy) to participate in the Pursuit Class. "We love racing under spinnaker, and that's somewhat restricted at our home club, so we're heading to Charleston to have some fun."</p> <p data-bbox="250 401 1365 569">And fun is definitely the emphasis for Catharine Evans, a Melges 24 skipper who is among the throngs of Chesapeake Bay Area sailors who will be making the trek to Charleston. For this Annapolis-based IT professional, it will be her second year in a row competing here. In 2012, she and her crew on board <i>Mojito</i> finished 22<sup>nd</sup> in this class.</p> <p data-bbox="250 625 1365 909">So what draws her back? "Charleston is probably the friendliest regatta I've ever been to. There are a lot of regattas that are fun, but it's so easy in Charleston. You get there and you feel like you've got welcoming friends instead of obligations.... I wouldn't call myself a great sailor, but I like to sail in fun places, and we always have a good Melges 24 fleet there." As a bonus, the event falls on Evans' birthday, which she says is always fun as well. Of course, having the Melges 24 National Championship as part of Sperry Top-Sider Charleston Race Week this year is also a bonus.</p> <p data-bbox="250 961 1365 1077">Now, what's your story? Let us know why you and your team are headed to Charleston this spring – again, or for the first time – and the team that offers the most compelling story will be rewarded with some race week swag.</p> <p data-bbox="250 1129 1365 1203">As always, you can follow the regatta online at <a href="http://www.charlestonraceweek.com">www.charlestonraceweek.com</a>, or on <a href="#">Facebook</a> and <a href="#">Twitter</a>.</p> <p data-bbox="505 1287 1117 1318" style="text-align: center;"><a href="#">follow on Twitter</a>   <a href="#">friend on Facebook</a>   <a href="#">forward to a friend</a></p> <p data-bbox="250 1360 675 1413">Copyright © * 2013 * All rights reserved. *Charleston Ocean Racing Association*</p> <p data-bbox="500 1486 1122 1518" style="text-align: center;"><a href="#">unsubscribe from this list</a>   <a href="#">update subscription preferences</a></p>			