

Fred Meyer, Vice-Commodore of the SNG, comments:

The Société Nautique de Genève (SNG) is pleased to announce that less than three weeks after Alinghi beat Emirates Team New Zealand to win the 32nd America's Cup, two more teams have joined the Challenger of Record, Club Náutico Español de Vela, in challenging Alinghi for the 33rd America's Cup. Last week, South Africa's Team Shosholoza (Royal Cape Yacht Club) had its challenge accepted. On Monday, it was TEAMORIGIN (Royal Thames Yacht Club), marking a return to the America's Cup for the United Kingdom.

'We are delighted that these teams have challenged, they will bring much in the way of competition to the 33rd America's Cup and will contribute to making this next event even greater than the 32nd edition.'

This good news comes off the back of a disappointing reaction from the Golden Gate Yacht Club (GGYC) represented by BMW Oracle Racing and Larry Ellison, which it has been reported in the press, is contesting the validity of the CNEV in the New York Supreme Court.

'It is disappointing that the GGYC appears to be devoting its energies to disrupting and damaging the America's Cup by attempting to secure an exclusive match for the trophy having failed to obtain the right to challenge through normal competition on two successive attempts, first in the 31st and then the 32nd America's Cup. The GGYC is attempting to hold the event hostage to its demands for a private match race in catamarans and the SNG will never negotiate with GGYC under these circumstances and, as trustee of the Cup, will strongly defend all attempts by the GGYC to disrupt and damage the America's Cup.'

Most surprising of all is that the GGYC expressly demands to race an exclusive match race against the Defender in 90ft catamarans on 4 July 2008. There will thus be no Challenger Selection Series, nor pre-regattas. The Swiss Yacht Club stands by the validity of the challenge from the CNEV, the Challenger of Record, in all respects and cannot consider another Challenger of Record without breaching the terms of the Deed of Gift.

Accordingly, SNG rejected the GGYC's challenge on behalf of BMW Oracle Racing and continues to hope that it will abandon its misguided action and join other challengers now entering the 33rd America's Cup under the terms of the Protocol governing this event.

It has been widely acknowledged, including by the GGYC, that the 32nd America's Cup was superb. By hosting and developing the event in Europe and by delivering some of the most exciting and competitive racing for a growing fan base and TV audience, the America's Cup is now firmly established as a truly global sporting event. This GGYC action, contrary to their claims, returns the America's Cup to litigation, adverse publicity and poor sportsmanship, precisely the same situation which marred the America's Cup in the late 1980s.

Following the tremendous success of the first competition for the America's Cup to be held in Europe since 1851, the Société Nautique de Genève looks forward to an even better 33rd America's Cup involving competitive challengers from around the world and providing a bright future for the sport of yacht racing.

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