



J/Boats Asia Storms Hong Kong With 1-2 Finish at Championship Regatta

HONG KONG, November 21, 2007 – Dust has settled on the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club after last week's exciting Maersk Asian International Sports Boat Championship, with J/Boats President Jeff Johnstone claiming the title of Asian Sports Boat Champion! Johnstone and an all-Hong Kong crew raced one of two out-of-the-box J/80 yachts to victory in the week-long affair, narrowly edging out another J/80 for the victory. Johnstone's colleague and J/Boats Asia President Jeff Brown sailed the second race boat to a 2nd Place, ahead of a mixed fleet of custom and production sportboats built in China, Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand, and a handful of other Pacific Rim nations.

“This was my first time sailing in Asia, and my first visit to Hong Kong. With beautiful scenery, amazing hospitality, and perfect sailing conditions, it was an ideal place to hold this kind of event.”

J/Boats are widely regarded as some of the best designed and built production keelboats in the world. A second-generation family-owned business, J/Boats focuses on high-performing, durably-built yachts that are family-friendly and easy to sail. The J/80 class, introduced to the Asian market last week, is one of the most successful racing classes in the worlds. The recent J/80 World Championship in La Trinité-sur-Mer, France had 124 competing teams – a record for the Class, and momentum continues to build. “The J/80 is a solid all-around performer, and even the most intense racers have realized that,” Johnstone said. “It's more stable than most sportboats, and so attracts and rewards sailors of a wider age and ability range. The J/80 is comfortable, dry, and as proven here in Hong Kong, it gets around the buoys pretty quickly, planing in as little as 13 knots of breeze.

The J/80's stability is one of its best attributes. The deep, fixed keel provides enough righting moment to reduce broaches while keeping the racer competitive upwind, even with small or shorthanded crews. Johnstone proved this in the big winds that Day 2 brought to the Championship, performing well despite sailing with only three crew, more than 100 kg lighter than the Class's maximum crew weight.

Jeff Brown of J/Boats Asia was equally enthusiastic about the J/80's Asian debut. “We see Hong Kong, China, and Asia as great opportunities for J/80 sailing and for the J/80 Class,” said Brown. “There is no better small keelboat for new sailors - the J/80 combines the speed and responsiveness of a small boat with the comfort and stability of a larger yacht. With the Class' momentum so strong around the world, we're hoping to host the J/80 Pacific Rim Championship in a few years!”

The J/80's successful debut coincided with the opening of J/Boats Asia's new office in downtown

Hong Kong. Brown, along with local manager Joey Liao, are poised to build the Asian J/80 fleet quickly. "J/Boats Asia parent company JK3 Yachts has been one of the top J/Boats dealers worldwide, with sales and service being the focus of our efforts," Brown said. "We've led the market in both used and new sales for several years, and JK3 is proud to be a big part of the success of various racing fleets of J/boats throughout Southern California. We're ready to emulate the kind of fleet-building we were so successful with in the States, and with a top-notch sales and service team in Asia, we're on the right track."

J/Boats Asia Plans Mainland Office Next

Brown and Liao aren't stopping there - in early 2008, the firm's new office will open in Xiamen, Fujian Province, China. J/Boats Asia has partnered with successful entrepreneur Hudson Wang, regarded as a true leader in the rapidly developing Chinese boating industry. Along with the rest of the team, Wang's expertise will help J/Boats Asia meet the huge pent-up demand for quality sailboats on the mainland. The team will bring the J/80 to April's Shanghai International Boat Show, and is already working with local officials who are keen to see a fleet of J/80's racing in Xiamen's scenic harbour. Liao is sure that the high-performance J/80 will be a hit in the area. "Xiamen is already developing numerous marinas in the area to service the rapidly growing recreational boat market in South China," he said. Liao has been living and sailing in the region for over 15 years and has extensive experience sailing and racing on J/boats. He also brings extensive knowledge of the Hong Kong and South China market and culture to the team.

With more big sailing events coming to the region in 2008 than ever before, and the 2008 Olympics just months away, J/Boats Asia will continue along the same successful path as its European and U.S. counterparts - look for the first J/80 fleets there soon!

For more information about J/Boats Asia, visit www.jboatsasia.com. Photos, race reports, and more about sportboat racing in Hong Kong is available at www.sportsboats.hk.

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