

Caribbean Boating/Newport Sailor

(Caribbean in winter, Newport in summer)

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Newport chosen over Baltimore to host 2014/2015 Volvo Ocean Race

Baltimore may have just won the Super Bowl but it was outmatched this week by Newport in its bid to be the sole U.S. host port for the 2014/2015 Volvo Ocean Race (VOR). For Newporters the decision by VOR organizers brought back an unpleasant memory: In December 2010 Oracle Racing was on the verge (or so it seemed) of rejecting San Francisco's bid to host the 2013 America's Cup and returning the Cup to Newport after 27 years. But on Dec. 31, 2010 Oracle announced that both the Challenger Series and the America's Cup Finals would be held on San Francisco Bay. But now, in 2013, Newport has demonstrated that in the world of yacht racing it can more than hold its own against a major city. The success of Newport's bid – spearheaded by Sail Newport's Executive Director Brad Read – was due in no small part to Newport's much praised hosting of last summer's America's Cup World Series.

The 2014/2015 Volvo Ocean race will reach Newport in May 2015, bringing Newport Harbor to life well before the usual start of the busy season over Memorial Day Weekend. And, the nearly two-week stopover will feature more than inshore racing among the new VOR 65s; there will be a nonstop schedule of events on shore as part of what organizers describe as a “festival”.



The first VOR 65 (above), designed by Farr Yacht Design, will be launched in June.

The fleet of VOR 65s in the 2014/2015 Volvo Ocean Race will start off Alicante, Spain, eventually arriving in Newport from a Brazil stopover, then racing across the Atlantic for the final legs around Europe. In persuading race organizers to choose Newport as the U.S. Port for the 12th edition of the round-the-world race, Sail Newport's Brad Read noted Newport's longtime role as a starting point for trans-Atlantic races.
