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**SAILING: GOODBODY URGES PEOPLE OF ALL AGES TO GIVE THE SPORT A TRY**

# Dun Laoghaire Regatta set for record entry numbers

● **NICK FITZGERALD**

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“THIS is the largest Regatta in Ireland and on the Western sea board of the British Isles,” Tim Goodbody, Chairman of the Volvo Dun Laoghaire Regatta 2017, tells Gazette-Sport, confirming it is all hands-on deck for this biennial event.

The event is now in its seventh edition and will feature its largest entry to date with 461 boats entered with over 2,500 competitors, competing over four days, beginning on Thursday, July 6 and running through to Sunday.

Within the Volvo Dun Laoghaire Regatta 2017 are 35 different classes of yacht or dingy. They represent 75 different yacht or sailing clubs. Competitors come from the four provinces of Ireland, Scotland, the Isle of Man, Wales, the West Coast of England, South Coast of England and one even hailing from the Netherlands.

Some of the country’s top-class sailors will be participating in this year’s regatta, including Olympic silver med-

allist Annalise Murphy.

For Goodbody, it represents a special year and one which will be celebrated in style.

“This year is the bicentenary of the commencement of the construction of Dun Laoghaire Harbour which became a port of refuge and to celebrate that we are hold-

ing our inaugural classic yacht regatta.

“We have an excess of 100 classic yachts. Of course, there’s a lot of discussion of what a classic yacht is but we’re looking at yachts that were designed over 75 years ago and were built of timber.”

He anticipates the event to act as a showcase for the sport and urges people of all ages to have a go at sailing, stating that The National Yacht Club in Dun Laoghaire – his home club – is all inclusive.

“We need more people to go sailing. There are more yachts, they need crews, they need active people of both

sexes. We have guys and girls aboard this boat.

“In fact, our age span is for myself down to my grand-

son who is 13 and my granddaughter who is 11 who comes out. Another set of grandchildren come out when they’re over from England. They are five or seven.

“All ages can participate and if someone is interested they should go to one of the clubs.

“They do look a bit foreboding when you walk outside and you see this very old, historic building but knock on the door and ask about sailing or even go to the INNS, the Irish National Sailing School which is located on the West Pier.

“They run tremendous programmes and from that one gains an experience of sailing and you can then go to one of the clubs and become a regular crew member. It’s great fun, it’s safe, not discriminatory, all people are welcome.”

*\*\* For more information see [www.dlregatta.org](http://www.dlregatta.org) or find Volvo Dun Laoghaire Regatta on Facebook and Twitter.*



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Over 460 boats will converge on Dun Laoghaire for the biennial regatta