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EMBARGOED UNTIL MAY 4, 1PM BST SailGP Season 2 rescheduled for 2021

LONDON - May 4, 2020 - With a continued emphasis on protecting the health and safety of its national teams, global staff, partners and event communities, SailGP has determined that its racing must remain suspended for the remainder of 2020. Consequently, SailGP Season 2 events will be rescheduled for 2021.

Two of the four impacted events have new dates for 2021 – San Francisco on April 17-18 and New York on June 4-5. SailGP also intends to return to the U.K. and Denmark during the rescheduled Season 2, replacing racing previously planned for August 14-15 and September 11-12 of this year.

Season 2 is set to be expanded from five to a minimum of seven events during the year-long period beginning in April 2021, spanning to the early months of 2022. Results from 2020 Sydney SailGP – the first and only completed event of the year – will be null and void.

SailGP CEO Sir Russell Coutts said: “This terrible pandemic has led to the tragic and ongoing loss of hundreds of thousands of lives, and first and foremost, our thoughts go out to those victims, and their grieving families and friends.

“The global nature of our league is one of our strongest characteristics, as we bring together top talent from all over the world to both organize and compete in a new form of professional racing. As we face this health emergency, our geographic diversity unfortunately becomes a potential liability both to ourselves and those around us.

“Our focus must necessarily shift to returning at a time when our events do not present undue internal or external risk.

“We’ll use the coming months to focus on important initiatives to make both our racing and broadcast even more attractive – including through further development of our F50 catamarans, simulator and gaming platform, as well as enhanced data integration via artificial intelligence – while continuing to work toward our ambitious target of carbon neutrality by 2025. I’m confident that our rescheduled second season will go beyond what we would have been able to deliver this year, and we’re extremely fortunate to have the ongoing support of partners including Rolex, Oracle, ROCKWOOL and our many broadcasters to help us get there.”

Two months ago in Sydney, teams representing Australia, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Japan, Spain and the United States took to the water in the world’s fastest sail race boats for what was anticipated to be the first of five events in 2020. There, four-time Olympic gold medalist Sir Ben Ainslie led the British entry to victory in his SailGP debut, overcoming the local favorite and defending season champion Tom Slingsby and his Aussie crew.

Ainslie said: “This has of course been a huge challenge for the entire world, and in particular for healthcare workers on the frontline of this crisis. At the end of the day, this is sport, and we’ll get back out there when it’s safe for everyone involved. Of course, it’s tough not to be out on the water, especially after I got my first taste of SailGP in Sydney a couple months ago. Racing these boats is a privilege, and I know we’ll have that moment again. In the meantime, I’ll be looking to find ways to be even better when we are up and racing again next year.”

Slingsby said: “Of course we’re incredibly disappointed to have to press pause on our bid to be back-to-back SailGP champions. We wish we could be out there straight away and get some payback, but there are greater concerns across the world at the moment. We’ll be ready when the time is right, and SailGP will be bigger and better than ever.”

SAILGP

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In a bid to protect the organization throughout this unpredictable period, Coutts has temporarily forfeited his salary in its entirety, while remaining employees have voluntarily taken salary reductions effective through the end of the year. The overall workforce has been tapered proportional to the current modified requirements, while the contracted athletes are being compensated for more than 50 percent of the planned season activity.

The rescheduled Season 2 events will continue to be showcased around the world via partnerships with top-tier broadcasters in more than 100 territories, including in each team market: SKY Sports (U.K./Ireland), CBS Sports (U.S.), Fox Sports (Australia), Canal+ Sport (France), TVE and TV3 (Spain), TV 2 Sport (Denmark), and DAZN (Japan).

Audience figures from the 2020 Sydney SailGP (February 28-29), represented a 27 percent growth from the 2019 event that served as the global league's world premier. Among that growth was a 16 percent expansion of the total broadcast audience, along with an 83 percent increase in social media video views and 234 percent jump in social media impressions.

In Q1 of this year, more than 13 million minutes of content were consumed across the league's Facebook and YouTube channels, while SailGP's new marketing campaign film *It's Not What You Think* reached nearly 6.5 million people in the month prior to the season opener.

During the league's inaugural season in 2019, fans embraced the SailGP concept, as the championship's five events garnered a television audience of 256 million. In addition, more than 133,000 spectators watched the live events, 138,000 downloaded the award-winning mobile app and more than 100,000 eF50s raced in the debut of the league's first-generation gaming platform.

In the months leading up to the 2020 start of Season 2, the league added national teams from Denmark and Spain, signed team title partners INEOS and ROCKWOOL, announced a new event in Copenhagen and brought on Endeavor as a minority shareholder.

Coutts said: "We've created a lot of growth and momentum from our first six events, and are 100 percent committed to becoming a leading rights holder and advancing the sport in a way that has never been done before. We'll prioritize innovative improvements during this interim period, and then refocus on live events in early 2021."

ABOUT SAILGP

SailGP is racing redefined. Established in 2018 and headquartered in London and New York, SailGP is an annual, global sports championship featuring bold, cutting-edge technology and awe-inspiring athleticism. The fan-centric, inshore racing that is powered by nature takes place in some of the most iconic harbors around the globe and culminates with a \$1 million winner-takes-all match race. Rival national teams battle it out in identical supercharged F50 catamarans, engineered for intense racing at electrifying speeds exceeding 50 knots (nearly 60 mph/100 kph). Visit [SailGP.com](https://www.sailgp.com) for more information.

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