



# Richard Worth & Craig Thompson to run 34<sup>th</sup> America's Cup

## Champions League pioneers to transform America's Cup

**VALENCIA, Spain (October 8, 2010)** – Two of the most distinguished figures in world sport will lead the regeneration of the America's Cup.

Richard Worth will be Chairman of the America's Cup Event Authority (ACEA) Management Board. He has specific responsibility for the commercial, media and television aspects in one of sports most iconic events.

Craig Thompson has been appointed CEO of ACEA and is charged with bringing his skills to the rejuvenation of the oldest trophy in international sport. He will work closely with Richard to re-position the America's Cup to attract more fans and commercial interest, while delivering the events in new and exciting formats.

The 34<sup>th</sup> America's Cup, staged in 2013, will feature the best sailors in the world on the fastest boats. Foremost amongst many innovations is a new wingsailed 72ft catamaran, a new World Series annual championship and the new Youth America's Cup.

Amongst their long list of achievements, Worth and Thompson are recognized for their pivotal roles in the phenomenal growth of the UEFA Champions League, one of the most successful properties and most watched competitions in world sport.

Each also has worked closely with the governing bodies for the Olympics, soccer and athletics – the IOC, FIFA, UEFA and IAAF plus other leading sports federations and rights holders.

Worth forged an enviable partnership with Thompson at the highly regarded sports marketing agency, T.E.A.M. During their leadership as Chief Executive and Managing Director respectively, T.E.A.M. marketing developed an unrivalled model of sales success, event delivery and partner servicing.

Prior to that, Thompson was Vice-President at another respected sports marketing agency, ISL, and Worth lead sports producer at Britain's ITV network.

Commenting on the key appointments Jérôme Valcke, Secretary-General of FIFA, soccer's world governing authority said:



*"Richard brings an intimate understanding of how to balance the conflicting needs of different stakeholders to generate overall growth and success for a major event, from his history in the sports marketing industry at the top level."*

Tom Liston, Managing Director T.E.A.M. Marketing commented:

*"Craig Thompson, with his 11 years of experience as Managing Director of T.E.A.M. Marketing, has the necessary leadership, vision and insight to develop, add value and enhance the America's Cup as a brand and a commercial property."*

The appointments were made by BMW ORACLE Racing, winners of the 33<sup>rd</sup> America's Cup. CEO Russell Coutts explained:

"We studied best practice in the world's top sporting events. Now we are fortunate to have secured two of the best practitioners."

On September 13 2010, Coutts outlined the ambition for the 34<sup>th</sup> America's Cup: an event where uncertainty has now been replaced with certainty thanks to a fair competition managed by a neutral and independent body, and a stop-start business cycle replaced by sustainability.

Australian businessman, Olympic competitor and four-time America's Cup participant Iain Murray was appointed to head the independent sporting and logistics administration, America's Cup Race Management (ACRM).

Thompson and Worth head-up the counterpart commercial organization, ACEA. A key objective is offering the best-ever fan experience with social media, on-line coverage and broadcast television integrated into innovative and compelling content.

"The America's Cup has a wonderful past, but it is the potential of its future that is exciting," said Thompson. "The unique nature of the America's Cup has allowed the current holder to take bold but sensitive steps to equip this iconic event for the future and impact all of sailing."

Worth added: "The America's Cup is one of the most recognized events in the world. The challenge is to develop the event to a commensurate level."

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*The America's Cup, first contested in 1851, presently resides at the Golden Gate Yacht Club in San Francisco, the home club of BMW ORACLE Racing. On February 14, 2010, off Valencia, Spain, BMW ORACLE Racing defeated Team Alinghi 2-0 to win the Cup. Intensive planning for the next edition is underway, with the 34th Cup Match to be staged in 2013 at a venue to be determined by the American team.*