

For Mid-America Boating

CEDAR POINT SHOW ALREADY IN SIGHT

The Progressive North American In-Water Demo Show at Cedar Point may still be months away, but plans are already shaping up for this year's event slated for August 23-26.

"There is no doubt we will be expanding the show footprint this year," revealed Bryan Ralston, president of the Lake Erie Marine Trades Association. "The boating industry continues to see increasing sales nationwide and especially here in Ohio, and that's already generating early requests from dealers for more display space this year, particularly dockside space.

"Boat manufacturers continue to come out with new models at a pace not seen in many years," continued Ralston, "so dealers already know they'll be presenting a first-look at many 2019 models at Cedar Point in increased display space."

One area getting careful study is the dock space available for boat demos. Based on the appeal and success of the recent Progressive Catawba Island Boat Show where sea trials and demos were available on all boats, the design of the show at Cedar Point that must use hundreds of feet of temporary floating show docks doesn't permit all boats to access open water. Many are simply pinned in the show marina.

"We're taking a hard look at possible designs that could allow more boats to accommodate sea trials for qualified customers," said Ralston. "Fortunately, elsewhere in the show, available space is never a problem, meaning the adjacent land space is virtually unlimited and the accessory tents can grow to whatever size is needed to meet exhibitor demand."

The show at Cedar Point, now in its 46th year, remains the oldest, largest and most popular in-water show held annually on the Great Lakes. More than 300 boats are expected to be on display this August, the majority in-water, when the event docks up for its traditional 4-day run.

Ralston contends that to be successful today, shows must offer more than just a great line up of boats and accessories. "These days, no one seems to have as much time to do the things they want," Ralston contends, "so boaters want to be assured of an enjoyable experience if they're going to take time to come to the show. It's all about the experience – and we get that! So, we're also examining programming, too."

Among the amenities for show visitors being considered are more daily live musical entertainment and special performances; creative food and beverage offerings; seminars and hands-on clinics on selected boating topics; fishing seminars; special events and displays; among other new ideas.

Updates and details will become available during the summer at: www.cedarpointboatshow.com

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