

America's Cup to be shown live on Internet

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BMW Oracle racing's giant trimaran sails during a training session off Valencia's coast. The 33rd edition of the America's Cup, which is set to take place in Spain next month, will be shown live and for free over the Internet for the first time, organisers announced Monday.

The 33rd edition of the America's Cup, which is set to take place in Spain next month, will be shown live and for free over the Internet for the first time, organisers announced Monday.

The event is to be a three-leg multihull duel between the catamaran of Swiss defender Alinghi and US challenger Oracle's massive trimaran in the Spanish Mediterranean port of Valencia from February 8-12.

But legal procedures in New York mean the event remains in doubt just two weeks before the start.

The local organisers, "Consortio Valencia 2007", said in a statement that "for the first time the races will be broadcast live and for free on the site www.americascup.com" in order to allow as many people as soon

possible to watch them.

The two teams have been training for the past week off Valencia, but have been stuck in port since Sunday due to bad weather.

Concerns had already been raised about holding the event in mid-winter in the Mediterranean, when it risks being disrupted or delayed by rough weather.

The last America's Cup, won by Alinghi in Valencia in July 2007, took place over two months and included an elimination round.

The next edition will be "more compact and also more exciting", said Michel Hodara, an official of the organising team.

But access for spectators will be more difficult as the boats will be racing over "an area that is up to six times larger than that used in the 32nd edition", the Consortio said.

Alinghi and Oracle have been arguing over the rules of the America's Cup for two-and-a-half years.

The New York court ruled in April that the Cup should be settled by a one-on-one multihull duel between the two sides in February instead of the traditional fully-fledged regatta involving several teams.

But Oracle earlier this month asked the Supreme Court of the State of New York to rule on whether Alinghi had infringed nationality rules by allegedly using US-made sails for its catamaran, and a decision in that case is still pending.

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