

Posted 6/26/18 by Mark Salerno

DIYC and the 2018 Newport Bermuda Race

Hi Folks.

Well, "some" of us are back from our sea adventure, and others are still bringing their boats back from Bermuda.

The 2018 edition was an interesting, and challenging race.

The start saw reasonable breeze, but had a significant current pushing over the start line.

Many announcements were made over the radio, to "Be Conservative" on the starting line due to current.

Unfortunately 2 boats in different classes did Not heed that warning, and "Hit" the Committee Boat !

I'm not a genius, but I would not want to be the one to try to explain to my insurance company "How" I hit the Bruce King 105' Custom Ketch "White Hawk" that is listed in the "Yachting Hall of Fame" and was recently back from a complete refit, and overhaul !

http://www.nshof.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=762:whitehawk-105-bruce-king-custom-ketch&catid=173:visiting-boats&Itemid=2

OOPS !!!

I would imagine there was a bit of "Heightened Discussion" taking place on the deck of these boats, at that moment ?

The breeze held "reasonable" for the first day or so, and then we got to the Gulf Stream.

The call is usually to try to hit the Gulf Stream at the narrowest part, to try to minimize any negative effects.

We managed to get through the stream in good shape, but a high pressure zone swept over the area just past the stream, and we became "Becalmed".

The weather reports we were getting said that these conditions may last for approximately 36 hours !

We had virtually no boat speed, and were more or less "drifting" a couple of hundred miles off shore !

Seems most of the fleet were in similar conditions.

In preparation for potentially adding a day or two to the trip we had begun to implement a food & water rationing system !

The good news was, it "only" lasted for about 13 hours or so, and we did not have to go with rationing very long.

Once past the zone of high pressure, the breeze began to slowly build.

Unfortunately, we were also starting to have to deal with some significant foul current.

We saw current run between 1.2 and 3.6 knots, against us!

The breeze continued to build, (thank goodness) and we were slowly able to begin picking off our competition one at a time.

The breeze held in the 16 - 20 knot range, and was a bit shifty.

As the breeze built throughout the next day or so, we had to do numerous sail changes.

I think the final count was about 14 - 15 head sail changes, plus a reefed Main at one point.

The "Flying Lady" (Swan 46) was modified over the winter, to have a short stout Fixed Bow Sprit.

The Symetric chutes, and the Spinn Pole were all left home, and we used A-Symetric spinnakers.

This was certainly a bit less work for the crew, as manhandling a Big Symetric Chute, and the massive pole for it, requires all hand on deck, where as the A-Sym can be usually managed by the watch crew of 4 or 5 people.

The final 24 hours or so, we were on the #3 Jib, and the Full or Single Reefed Main.

The boat was staying with boat speed of 8.5 to 9.2 consistently, as we slowly passed various boats in our class, eventually moving from 13 th (last) up to a final position of 7th.

So.....

At the Finish there were many of our "Ducky" Friends.

Dick Marsh on Gadzooks took a 10th place

Mark Konracky on Shearwater took a 4th place

Larry Hennessy on Dire Wolf took a 4th place (many Duckies on this boat)

Doug Carlisle on Cecilie Viking took a 10th place

Mark Salerno on Flying Lady took a 7th place

AND.....

The Big Deal for the entire regatta was ORCA !

Hal & Mary Guidotti, with help from Past Commodore Dave Gilmore, took a 1st Place in Class 11

They also managed to take the Overall 1st Place for the entire Finisterre Division!

Probably the Best overall finish, buy a Duck Island Boat in the 100+ years of the Regatta!

For those of you who are not familiar with this Regatta, there are 4 Divisions.

1) St Davids Light Division.

These are the "Regular" Spinnaker boats, like Dire Wolf, Flying Lady, Shearwater, Cecilie Viking etc...

2) Gibbs Light division.

These are the " High Performance" boats such as the J-121, Volvo 70's, Farr-40's etc....

3) Open Division.

These are the very large "Super Yachts" all are custom builds.

4) Finisterre Division is the Non-Spinn Class

Hal, Mary, and Dave only beat out 40 other boats in their Division, to win this award, that was presented to them by the Governor of Bermuda !

ORCA participated in the 2016 edition of this race, but with 50 miles to go, the breeze died, they were low on supplies, and the forecast was for no breeze to come for several days.

In Hal's own words. "I had to withdraw from the race, or I would have had a 'Mutiny' on my hands !"

To come back in the 2018 edition of the race and place as "Top Dog" makes the Victory that much Sweeter !

Well Done, Hal, Mary, Dave and Crew !

I could not be happier for you !

Here is a Link to the ORCA Story on the Bermuda Race Web Site:

<http://bermudarace.com/finisterre-division-winner-orca-sweet-surprise/>

See you on the Starting Line !

Kind Regards, Mark S.
