

Nor Easter Regatta Report
May 3rd and 4th 2008
Newport Rhode Island

Even though the regatta did not officially begin until Saturday, most arrived Friday afternoon to cloudy skies, Easterly winds and temperatures in the mid 50's. The plan was to set a practice course so sailors could experience the layout before racing began on Saturday. FT Adams State Park has two fixed docks that extend East about 175' into the harbor. One is straight and the other has a "T" head. The docks are about 15' off the water so visibility while racing is excellent and course options are many. Floating docks line the inside of the "T" on both sides so there was plenty of room to launch and recover your boat. Bruce Walton and I elected to rig our boats for some practice as this was the forecasted wind direction for the entire weekend. We had so much fun, we sailed till after 6pm. We really had no idea what was in store for us.

There were no formal activities planned for Friday night but competitors were invited to a commissioning party for the latest generation Volvo 70 "Puma" (of the sneaker fame) courtesy of Dave Van Cleef. Dave's company supplies all the Carbon rigging for these extraordinary race boats. These boats are capable of speeds in excess of 30kts and carry a crew of 10. The Volvo Ocean Race is a race that starts in Spain in October and the competitor's travel from port to port spanning 9 months circumnavigating the globe. Pretty exciting stuff and for those who joined the fun at the party, they got to see one of these boats up close and hear a bit about what makes one of these things tick. Thanks Dave!

Saturday was much like Friday afternoon with breeze again out of the East at about 10-15kts. Cloudy skies and temperatures in the 50's kept most in their foul weather gear.

Ken Shaw did not bring his boat as it was not completed in time to make the regatta. He did however, drive all the way from VT, and volunteered to help Jake Leo with RC duties. Thanks Ken, you are a true sportsman.

The wind was out of the East which put us on a lee shore with a long fetch for the seas in the harbor to build. The waves were about a foot high and breaking at times which meant keeping your boat moving and in control was quite a challenge. Rounding the weather mark was about as hard as it gets (until Sunday) as you could not tell if you were making it or not until it was too late. Downwind was exciting to watch and there were surprisingly few wipeouts. I have never seen an EC12 get up on a wave and run at and beyond hull speed and remain in control like that. Very cool!

As the racing got underway, lead changes were frequent. Nearly everyone experienced some kind of gear failure on Saturday. No one was immune. Water intrusion, collisions, and electronic failures of all kinds, plagued the fleet. The real race was how fast you

could repair your boat and get back on the race course. DNS's were handed out like loosing lottery tickets and the points on the score board swelled as a result.

The scores after Saturday's racing were as follows:

- 1 Dave Brawner 23pts
- 2 Rick West 31 pts
- 3 Chuck Luscomb 32 pts
- 4 Bruce Walton 33 pts
- 5 Brian Jobson 35pts
- 6 Phil Tonks 39pts
- 7 Robert Greer 40pts
- 8 David Van Cleef 47pts
- 9 Scott Todd 60pts
- 10 Larry Mazoway 77pts
- 11 Kevin Mclellen 122pts
- 12 Gorge Greenlaugh 123pts
- 13 Jim Linville 126pts

The group gathered for dinner at the Coddington Brewery and Ale house in Newport for a much deserved break, a pint, and a chance to talk about the days sailing. After dinner, some actually went back to the hotel and bed while others burned the midnight oil repairing, retuning and preparing for whatever lay ahead on Sunday.

Sunday morning greeted us with a steady rain and a light breeze out of the Southeast. A postponement was issued by the RC as the rain was expected to end and the breeze fill in from the South. The target was to try to get nine races for the last to reach a goal of 20 for the event which would allow three drops.

For the 9 Skippers that remained, the rain ended, the breeze died to nothing and the thought was that this was going to be it. But, in true New England fashion, the breeze came back up out of the South, then Southeast then East then Northeast finally settling on North at about 8-10kts. The courses were set, adjusted and readjusted, boats were rigged and we were back in action by 10am. The course, ~~was~~ now parallel to the end of the dock, meant a longer course could be set with sailors walking the full length of the "T". As the races were completed, the wind slowly increased. By noon, the wind had increased to just under 12 knots, the waves were back with an added bonus for the sailors who stuck it out this long. Tide. The tide was flooding which meant that not only did you have to fight your way to the weather mark in the waves, you had to compensate for the tide which was lending a hand to the wind to keep you below the weather mark. Just like Saturday, lead changes were frequent. 360's were common and a few raft ups kept the fleet busy. By days end, nine more races had been completed for a total of 20 races for the event. Three throw outs were awarded to each skipper which helped keep some in the trophy positions. Dave Brawner was able to stay up near the front both days

which turned out to be the winning formula with 48 points as firsts were hard to come by. Bruce Walton continued to defy logic with his vintage Treasure Tooling 12 and place second with 59 points. In third, region 3's Bob Greer with 61 points. Bob, who sailed exquisitely both days, proved once again that laparoscopic surgery can be useful for many things, including bow blocks! The scores after two very difficult days of sailing are as follows.

- 1 Dave Brawner 48pts
- 2 Bruce Walton 59pts
- 3 Bob Greer 61pts
- 4 Rick West 61pts
- 5 Chuck Luscomb 69pts
- 6 David Van Cleef 75pts
- 7 Brian Jobson 77pts
- 8 Phil Tonks 103pts
- 9 Larry Mazoway 151pts
- 10 Scott Todd 162pts (Did not sail Sunday)
- 11 Kevin McLellan 234pts (Did not sail Sunday)
- 12 George Greenlaugh 235pts (Did not sail Sunday)
- 13 Jim Linville 238pts (Did not sail either Saturday or Sunday)

Regattas like this are a testament to the depth of the EC12 class. Not a harsh word was spoken and 360's, if required, were done without argument as the days races progressed. Conditions at this event tested all your skills and your ability to bounce back from failure. My hat is off to those who held their ground and would not take no for an answer.

Thanks again to all for joining us and I hope that those who could not be with us this year, will consider pushing yourself to the limit next year.

Chuck Luscomb
#84