

THE HOG ISLAND SPECIAL

What a race! Sailors will always tell you that they want more wind but you've got to go with what there is, and we've had a lot less in the past. The turn out was twenty-two boats. When the fleet crossed the start line a cheer gathered momentum to a rousing pitch. Twenty-two boats: that's over 50 sailors participating in our regatta. Smart money was on Ashley Tobin's Lightning, followed by Meszaros' Dutchman and the Wiley Wabbit one way or another. They must have forgotten about Kim Desenberg.

Some were thinking of Emile Kempf on the Hobie 18 if the wind held. It didn't, but where it did, there's something thrilling about seeing an 18 foot boat lift and fly along with a hull three or four feet above the water, crew standing out on the trapeze. It's the fastest boat in the fleet. Ron Buono was sitting in the RIB, coiling the anchor line and outta nowhere, "Whoosh!" the Hobie flew by so close he said he could have stood and touched the thing.

Emile pretty much led the fleet up the bay, followed by the Dutchman and the Wabbit, sailed by a friend of the Desenbergs, Jim Malloy. It's a narrow 24 footer with ballast about half the weight of the boat with one crew on a trapeze--in other words, it's capable of speed. But it needs wind for optimum performance. Two Johnson 18s were in the lead for most of the race, sailed by Darley and Dean. Consistently up there was a boat with 350 pounds of lead ballast--Hinkley's 110, and together with his crew Sean, in spite of, or maybe because of the fact that Sam's been sailing these races since 1971, he was fifth to cross the line.

The Noble brothers took their dad in a Scot, the Wells took to their Scot like days past, the Moseleys, Lassetters, Peters family, the Ackley family, Ned Congden, Janet Kirby and the Desenberg posse completed the attending Scots. The Ackley family must have been testing their strength, because they broke the boom but that didn't prevent them from putting the spinney up and sailing back to the Club.

The Billers showed color is immaterial for hull speed, and Steve Brock showed you don't need no stinkin' badge to sail a 110 (he single-handed). Actually, we'll quote him: "Despite my late start, everything was fine until I tried to lower myself on the trapeze and in a burst of effort, the tiller extension grip flew off, and I literally lost my grip, the boat swerved into the wind, I was dumped in the water on the leeward side with the sails filling, but fortunately the main sheet is never too far and I released it and was back on my way before the boat filled. Then several tack later, the clovis pin holding my side stay let go, and quickly realizing that I could damage the rig sailing by just the trapeze, I set about to fix it, taking a pin from another part of the boat, but my first attempts failed and the replacement fell in the water, so I tried tying it off, changing my mind, found the pin, and eventually slipped it in...I considered hanging it up, but once I was sailing again, I thought how could I, it was a beautiful day!"

Jeff Hutter splashed in the water his Zepher, a boat, not a wind, the lack thereof made a slow go of it; when we dropped by to offer a cold beer, he replied that he was doing well and still had one.

The first across the line was Meszaros, followed by the Wabbit, then Kempf, Ashley Tobin, Desenberg, Hinckely, Congden and the Wallace Raven. There's considerable animation among the finishers about how it'll correct out and until the numbers are crunched, it's speculation. Congrats to Ashley, not seen too much on our racecourse, but someone to be reckoned with. (To learn more about those sailors, check out the Gin Fizz race on the web site.) The top ten placements after handicapping:

1	Desenberg	Flying Scot
2	Tobin	Lightening
3	Meszaros	Dutchman
4	Hinkley	110
5	Congden	Scot
6	Malloy	Wabbit
7	Lassetter	Scot
8	Kempf	Hobie 18

9 Dean
10 Well

Johnson 18
Scot

Thanks to John Longstreth for starting and recording the race, to John and Barbara Chase in their boat for watching over the fleet, and to Tom Fox in helping to right an overturned boat. According to Mark Darley there's a whole new trophy for the Hog Island race.