



Suddenly, It's The Middle Of August!

By JANET BURT CHALMERS

Friday, August 14, 2009

Glad to be home from the H Class Regatta at Buzzards Yacht Club in Pocasset the first weekend in August, Quissett sailors reveled in the beauty of their own waters and the excitement of their week's competitions there.

Undeterred by zero visibility, the RC and 10 Herreshoff crews sniffed their way out of the harbor to compete in a blanket of fog late Wednesday afternoon. Rather than use the regular starting buoy, the RC replaced it with an orange ball just outside the light buoy at the harbor mouth where all the racers would be sure to notice it, and posted course A to Woods Hole's Stony Beach. The theory was that even in the thickest fog the racers would be able to beat up the rocky Gansett shoreline, tacking as land came into view. Flying the yellow and black code flag L, the RC called all the competitors alongside Cornelia Carey for an equipment check to show that each boat had a compass and fog horn or whistle. Since this was the first inspection in many years, those who didn't have the required equipment were given a warning and allowed to race.



Quissett Herreshoff skippers sniff their way through pea soup fog to the finish line in Wednesday twilight series action last week. Mike and Emma Garfield won the race in Phoenix (#183), followed by Bill and George Armstrong in Adajio (#3). On the left, Nina Hocker and Sheila Gordon in Dory Too (#350) finished fifth behind Chuck and Tommy First in Allie Rose and David Burt and Andy Buckingham in Tag Along. Photo by Janet Chalmers.

Much to the disappointment of the race committee and perhaps the racers, the fog thinned before the start, allowing all hands to see the shoreline around to Penzance Point. Conditions were open and shut throughout the race, thickening pretty much by the finish and really shutting down by the time the race was over and the sailors had to sniff their way back to their moorings. The race featured tacking duels up the shoreline with Bill and George Armstrong in Adajio, Mike and Emma Garfield in Phoenix, and David Burt and Andy Buckingham in Tag Along vying for the lead. Hot from their fine racing at the H Class Regatta, the Armstrongs rounded first in Adajio, followed by the Garfields in Phoenix. Nina Hocker and Sheila Gordon were next in Dory Too, followed by Steve Chalmers sailing solo in Sea Breeze, and David and Andy in Tag Along. Mike and Emma overtook Bill and George to take the winner's horn and Chuck and Tommy First came from behind in Allie Rose to cross third.

Fraught With Challenges

Following a picture-perfect morning for Quissett Watersports, Saturday afternoon was fraught with challenges for both race committee and racers. The dreaded dying northerly had fizzled and seemed unwilling to give way to some sort of southwesterly that gave hints of coming in. The competitors were casual as well, many not leaving their moorings in time to work their ways to the racecourse in time for their starts. What to do? During the next hour it became the consensus of the race committee that equipping Cornelia Carey with a defibrillator and a supply of Valium would be a good move.

Thank heaven for Douglas and Henry Jones who showed up in a QYC Whaler with smiles on their faces and an offer to move race marks! After setting up drop marks for a south-southwesterly and then shifting them for a southwesterly, the RC was happy to let the Jones boys do their final bidding.

We Should Have Listened To Paul

What we should have done was listen to RC guest Paul Ferris Smith, who, when asked by Carol Suitor when he thought the wind would fill in, answered, “three o’clock.” But we didn’t. The S Boats’ warning signal was scheduled for 2:15 and the 12½ footers’ for 2:30. With very few exceptions, the Quissett race committee starts its races on time.

With reasonable hopes that a westerly was filling in, the RC started the three Herreshoff S Boats on time on a course to the Weepecket nun. No sooner was the starting sequence underway than the wind fizzled out again. Ten minutes later, frazzled by the uncooperative nature of Old Mother West Wind and the sight of only five Herreshoff 12½ footers in the starting area and seven more stalled in the outer harbor, the RC sounded a recall for the S Boats and a postponement for the 12½ footers. Paul had been right. We had to wait.

Too bad we hadn’t planned on three o’clock to start with. Once under way at 3:00, the S Boats had a great race to the Woods Hole bell and Racing Beach while the 12½ footers sailed a double header with a windward-leeward I course and a triangle-windward-leeward Gold Cup course. Weatherly Dorris and Patty Keating got a great start in the first race and led all the way, posting the win in Pani Baba. Tommy and Timothy First finished next in a dead heat in Olivia with Steve Chalmers and Cipperly Good in Sea Breeze. The RC couldn’t show favoritism, so called out, “520, 291!”, awarding Olivia second place. Three boats finished with protest flags flying, but none of their skippers followed through by filing their protests.

While the S Boats were rounding the bell and heading toward Racing Beach with Doug and Kathy Cooper and Chuck First leading in recently-launched Radiant, the RC got off the second Herreshoff start. Bill Armstrong and David Burt got great starts in this one in Adajio and Tag Along, but it was Bob Suitor in Will O’ The Wisp who got to the windward mark first. Bob and crew Dave Kent, however, were no match for David and ace crew Domingo Vasquez who flew past in Tag Along, spinnaker drawing flawlessly. David and Domingo posted the victory in Tag Along, followed across by Commodore Mort Saunders and granddaughter Weatherly Saunders in Found It, and Bob and Dave in Will O’ The Wisp.

Another Shuffling

Next came an interleaving of 12½ footers and S Boats crossing from opposite directions with Steve Chalmers and Cipperly Good in Sea Breeze and Weatherly Dorris and Patty Keating in Pani Baba having Alan Haigh and Ham Lord in Teaticket finish between them. S Boat Radiant finished between Herreshoffs Adajio and Ida Barry, as did Olive between Olivia and Buttercup. The defibrillator and Valium sound better and better.

An 11-boat Herreshoff fleet competed in a very competitive and unusual race for the Mabel Whiteley Trophy on Sunday afternoon. A true southerly was blowing about 10-12 knots offering the opportunity for the race committee to set a course none of the Herreshoff racers had sailed. QDA sounded fun and straightforward. It featured a short beat to the Quissett light buoy, an almost one mile spinnaker broad reach to a mark to the northwest of the harbor mouth, a 1.23-mile beat to the mark off Woods Hole’s Stony Beach, and a mile-long spinnaker broad reach to the finish. Everything was going well until the boats approached the light buoy and it became apparent that skippers were confused about which way to round it. Weatherly Dorris was leading in Pani Baba with Ali Rodin close behind. As Weatherly set up to round to port she noticed that Ali was coming in to round to starboard. Who was right? Weatherly did some quick thinking and bore off to round to starboard. The next several boats followed suit, but gray matter was working overtime aboard Olivia, Allie Rose and Phoenix. Could all the leaders be wrong?

Tommy First decided that the proper way to go was to port, but he wasn’t quite sure and sailed back and forth before actually committing to a port rounding. His father, Chuck First in Allie Rose, rounded to port too, then thought better of it and rounded to starboard; he didn’t unwind his port rounding, so technically he never rounded at all. Mike Gar-

field rounded to starboard in Phoenix, sailed downwind about 100 yards, then beat back to round to port. Like Chuck , Mike didn't unwind his first rounding, so never really rounded in any direction.

Meanwhile, Weatherly and the Lord twins Julia and Olivia made it first to the leeward mark in Pani Baba and rounded up for their beat to mark A. Bill and George Armstrong were second in Adajio, followed by Doug and Kathy Cooper in the just-launched True Blue, Ali Rodin and Steve Chalmers in Sea Breeze and David Burt and Domingo Vasquez in Tag Along. The fleet split with Adajio and Tag Along going towards Penzance Point and Pani Baba, True Blue and Sea Breeze going back towards Quissett. Though she tried to cover everyone in Pani Baba, Weatherly was overtaken by Doug and Kathy in True Blue. They rounded mark A first, quickly set their spinnaker and moved out to win. David Burt rounded A behind Pani Baba but also overtook Weatherly to take second place. Pani Baba finished third followed by Sea Breeze, Adajio, Penguin, Buttercup and Found It. Then came the final three who still wondered if they had been correct about their rounding choices at the light buoy. Chuck First crossed the finish line saying that he didn't think he ever corrected himself, and Mike Garfield said, "I went the right way first then doubted myself." In the harbor Bill Armstrong congratulated the RC for the great course.

Unbelievably, it is already the middle of August, the much anticipated weekend of the Quissett Yacht Club Ball! Friday afternoon Juniors and Corinthians compete for the Harrington and Woodriff trophies, then repair to the Quamissett Beach Club for a cookout. Saturday evening all ages will don their finery to dine and dance at the Woods Hole Golf Club. Watersports winners will mount the Olympic podium to be awarded their ribbons to much applause and camera flashes, and Andy Maness and his Four Guys in Tuxes will play rousing music for all the special dances including the beloved mop dance and potato dance. On Sunday, Handicap class boats will compete for the Founders' Trophy, sailing a long-distance race. If conditions are favorable, the RC will send the competitors around Naushon and Pasque islands through Woods Hole and Quicks Hole; racers will choose which direction they want to sail.

Cutline: Quissett Herreshoff skippers sniff their way through pea soup fog to the finish line in Wednesday twilight series action last week. Mike and Emma Garfield won the race in Phoenix (#183), followed by Bill and George Armstrong in Adajio (#3). On the left, Nina Hocker and Sheila Gordon in Dory Too (#350) finished fifth behind Chuck and Tommy First in Allie Rose and David Burt and Andy Buckingham in Tag Along. Photo by Janet Chalmers.

Exchange Boat Trophy

Wednesday, July 29

Herreshoff 12½ footers

RC: Janet Chalmers, Ed Jackson, Samuel Gardiner

Course G

1. Sea Breeze, Betsy Hunt & Bill Armstrong, George Armstrong, 54:18

2. Jezebel, Randy Evans & Lynn Evans, 58:54

3. Adajio, Jeffrey Keith & Martha Adams, 59:16

DNS Penguin, Steve Chalmers & Jancy Grayson

August Wednesday Series – Week 1 – Aug. 5

Herreshoff 12½ footers

RC: Janet Chalmers, Ed Jackson, Amy Saunders, Weatherly Saunders, Teddy Saunders, Samuel Gardiner

Course A

1. Phoenix, Mike Garfield & Emma Garfield, 33:31

2. Adajio, Bill Armstrong & George Armstrong, 33:33

3. Allie Rose, Chuck First, & Tommy First, 34:49

4. Tag Along, David Burt & Andy Buckingham, 34:50

5. Dory Too, Nina Hocker & Sheila Gordon, 34:51

6. Sea Breeze, Steve Chalmers (solo), 34:52

7. Jezebel, Jeffrey Keith & Martha Adams, 35:14

8. Pani Baba, Weatherly Dorris (solo), 35:28

9. Will O' The Wisp, Carol Suitor & Bob Suitor, 35:50

10. Penguin, Betsy Hunt & Ben Eischer, 37:06

August Saturday Series – Week 1 – Aug. 8

RC: Janet Chalmers, Carol Sutor, Sheila Gordon, Paul Ferris Smith

Handicap Class

Course BH – 4.55 miles

Elapsed Time

- 1. Teaticket (201R), Alan Haigh & Ham Lord, 1:18:13**
- 2. Radiant (201R) Douglas Cooper & Kathy Cooper, Chuck First, 1:18:39**
- 3. Olive (201R), Josh Bernstein & Molly Bernstein, Emily Bernstein, 1:20:08**

Herreshoff 12½ footers

Race 1, Course I

- 1. Pani Baba, Weatherly Dorris & Patty Keating, 26:17**
- 2. Olivia, Tommy First & Timothy First, 27:21**
- 3. Sea Breeze, Steve Chalmers & Cipperly Good, 27:21**
- 4. Found It, Mort Saunders & Weatherly Saunders, 27:40**
- 5. Will O' The Wisp, Bob Sutor & Dave Kent, 27:51**
- 6. Ida Barry, Chris Olsen & Mike Phillips, 28:11**
- 7. Buttercup, Mike Fenlon & Linda Sallop, 28:14**
- 8. Adajio, Bill Armstrong & George Armstrong, 28:30**
- 9. Tag Along, David Burt & Domingo Vasquez, 38:36**
- 10. Penguin, Randy Evans & Lynn Evans, 28:52**

Race 2, Course G

- 1. Tag Along, David Burt & Domingo Vasquez, 30:50**
- 2. Found It, Mort Saunders & Weatherly Saunders, 31:13**
- 3. Will O' The Wisp, Bob Sutor & Dave Kent, 32:01**
- 4. Sea Breeze, Steve Chalmers & Cipperly Good, 33:06**
- 5. Pani Baba, Weatherly Dorris & Patty Keating, 33:18**
- 6. Adajio, Bill Armstrong & George Armstrong, 33:22**
- 7. Ida Barry, Chris Olsen & Mike Phillips, 33:53**
- 8. Olivia, Tommy First & Timothy First, 34:12**
- 9. Buttercup, Mike Fenlon & Linda Sallop, 35:30**

Whiteley Trophy – Sunday, Aug. 9

Herreshoff 12½ footers

RC: Janet Chalmers, Amy Saunders; Bill, Cathy, Ashley & Liesel Ferguson

Course QDA

- 1. True Blue, Doug Cooper & Kathy Cooper, 1:01:57**
- 2. Tag Along, David Burt & Domingo Vasquez, 1:02:21**
- 3. Pani Baba, Weatherly Dorris and Julia & Olivia Lord, 1:02:27**
- 4. Sea Breeze, Ali Rodin & Steve Chalmers, 1:03:27**
- 5. Adajio, Bill Armstrong & George Armstrong, 1:04:31**
- 6. Penguin, Randy Evans & Graham Armstrong, 1:05:37**
- 7. Buttercup, Mike Fenlon & Linda Sallop, 1:05:40**
- 8. Found It, Mort Saunders & Weatherly Saunders, Phillip Lynch, 1:05:53**
- DNF Allie Rose, Chuck First & Elizabeth Olsen, 1:09:33**
- DNF Olivia, Tom First & Kristan First, Timothy First, 1:09:53**
- DNF Phoenix, Mike Garfield & Emma Garfield, 1:09:59**