



Singlehanded Sailing Society
sfbaysss.org

Shorthanded Racing in San Francisco Bay

Winter 2003 Newsletter

THREE BRIDGE FIASCO

Fast Forward and Freedom take the Overall Victory !!!

The Three Bridge Fiasco has been fielding over 200 boats for some years now and 2003 didn't dissappoint. 215 competitors entered this classic Bay Area event. For complete results see the SSS website at sfbaysss.org.

A View from the Race Deck

The forecast didn't look promising: light and variable in the morning with a 3-knot ebb about the time of the first starts. And a couple of boats did drift helplessly into a 20-minute over-early penalty, but soon a decent northerly filled in and stayed with us for most of the day. Most boats opted to head for Blackaller first with the current, but beyond that point there was a clear divergence of opinion.

After most of the fleet had departed, the race committee had time for a nap or a short novel before Freedom, the C class cat rating -99, started. This looked like the boat to beat, even though as far as we could see they never bothered to unroll their jib.

Sure enough, not long after lunch Freedom appeared around the corner, dawdled through a dead spot off Fishermans Wharf, then zipped across the line less than 3 hours after starting. Auspice showed up soon afterwards as the first monohull, then the madness of 3BF rush hour was upon us. Apologies to those who deserved a gun and didn't get one.

As darkness fell, so did the wind, and the last couple of boats on the course opted to take a DNF. It was a beautiful day on the race deck, and looked even better for those out on boats.

Thanks to race committee volunteers Jan Brewer, Jay Chase, Bob Dietrich, Jeff Dunnavant, Mark Halman, Sachi Itagaki, Mike Jefferson, Terry McKelvey, and Bob Wessel.
- Max Crittenden

Racer's Stories

If you missed today's race you missed a grand example of the "Fiasco!" A special THANKS to the SSS Race Committee for a great job of Race Management and for providing such a wonderful day of sailing. Here's the race from a Santana 22 Perspective:

The Santana 22s had the "honor" of staring first this year. Pretty much as a group and I think we almost all decided the current and wind dictated Blackaller as the first mark to round. "Elaine" followed Bud in "Shazam!" and Stephen in "Tchoupitoulas" around Blackaller, with Bruce in "Auggie", Heidi in "Dominatrix," and John Slivka's "Fiddlers Green" following. I lost track of "Tackful" and I think Frank must have gone the other way? Anyway, we close reached back up the beach, dodging out around Anita Rock, passing the GGYC, trading the lead, depending on who went in and who stayed out. Off Ft. Mason the wind moved aft and we got our chutes up. It was "pass" and "re-pass" with every boat in the lead at some point, I think. At Pier 39 things stalled when the wind and current equalled each other. Tomi and I looked around and it appeared the Moore 24s that were farther out were doing better, so we headed out, away from the pack at Pier 39. Of course, by the time we reached the point where we had seen the Moores, they had moved on, and so had the wind. After a few minutes of going nowhere and observing that the boats ahead (those against TI and up along Yerba Buena) didn't appear to be moving and the pack in closer to Pier 39 was growing, we decided to turn our day into a REAL

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Racers Stories Continued.....

FIASCO!!!!. So, we doused the chute, hoisted the Genoa, and headed for Red Rock! That's all I can tell you about the Santana contingent until much later in the day. It was 3 hours before we saw another one. We sailed close hauled (155% Genoa) up behind Alcatraz and toward Richmond. We caught up with some of the boats that had originally decided to go that way after Blackaller, but they were mostly bigger and much faster and pretty soon we were sailing our race all alone. We just continued sailing up past Southampton and reached the Richmond shore at the entrance to the Richmond Channel. By this time the Moore 24s and similar boats that had gone around TI caught up with us and we spent the rest of the way to Red Rock trading tacks with Moore's, Expresses, Js, Olsons, and other speedsters. I bet they wondered where we came from! After being chased away from the Richmond Long Pier by the SF Police launch, we rounded Red Rock to port and set the chute for the long drag back down to TI. There was still lots of ebb up that way, and we hit 7 over the bottom for part of the time. We jibed several times to more or less stay headed directly toward TI. We encountered Heidi on "Dominatrix" about 3/4 mile south of Red Rock on her way upwind and said "Hello." That's my next-to-last report on what the other Tunas were doing. We got the chute down behind Yerba Buena after passing under the east side of the Bay Bridge, the Genoa up again, and started beating our way under the west side of the Bay Bridge toward the City Front. We figured only about 3 or 4 boats sailed the course this way. We had a Hobie 33, an Ericson 38, and another larger boat trading tacks with us as we sailed into the City Front and then tacked back out around the piers. By this time we were threading our way through lots of big, fast boats who had finished on their way back to Alameda, but we didn't see any smaller ones. Finally we cleared Pier 39 and cracked out the laundry as we reached our way down toward the GGYC. The radio was crackling with boats announcing their approach to the Finish Line. At Ft. Mason we called in, and a few minutes later met Stephen in "Tchoupitoulas" who had already finished (I hope). We found John in "Fiddlers Green" sailing in front of us, but we were gaining on him. About the time we spotted "X" we saw "Auggie" coming from the opposite direction with their chute up. We passed "Fiddlers Green" a few dozen yards before the Finish Line and (I think) crossed from our direction a few seconds before "Auggie" crossed from theirs. We forgot to look at our watches, but we think we finished about 4:25. As we started sailing back for Sausalito, Heidi in "Dominatrix" came in from the Red Rock direction, and a little later we heard Frank in "Tackful" call that he was finishing. I don't know where the rest of the boats were. I've sailed the "Fiasco" many, many times over the years since the race was "invented." Today was one of the most exciting and best for me. Tomi and I really joined in the spirit of a fiasco. Our course: Start-Blackaller-Red Rock via Pier 39- the east side of Alcatraz- spinnaker to TI-beat to Finish. What a fun boat! I can't tell you how much I'm enjoying "Elaine!" Next year I hope lots more Tunas

will turn out for the 2004 Edition of the Fiasco. You just can't have more fun! - *Pat Broderick "Elaine"*

We initially thought counter clockwise would be the best plan, then second guessed and thought clock wise because that is what most boats were doing, then thought Blackaller - T. Island - Red Rock to avoid the ebb around Angel but went back counter clockwise, ignoring the vast majority of boats who simply didn't know any better. We got past Alcatraz and saw the boats headed off toward the bridge barely making headway against the ebb to get around T. Island so (second guessing again, or third or fourth) we turned left to stay in the wind. If you followed all that we did Red Rock, T. Island and finished with Blackaller. Don't think we could have sailed a longer course. I knew we blew it when a thousand boats were emerging out of Raccoon Straight as we passed Angel. The highlight of the day was rounding Red Rock and getting the kite up without mishap, shedding down to a T-shirt and running all the way down and around Treasure Island without a jibe, coming up to a reach and dousing without incident. All in all our boat speed was decent, we had a great day and finished, even if we did sail an extra 10 or so miles. Live and learn. - *Jon "Risky"*

Well, impossible as it sometimes seems, we actually finished the race this year, and by lucking out on the direction (clockwise) we finished up among the leaders from what I can tell. I never saw Redux, Stinkeye or Enigma at the start, but saw my fellow 911 sisterships Borderline, Risky and Dreamtime. If Redux and Enigma were there we may have set a record for the largest turnout of this design in history. Power Play also sailed with the fleet, while Slim elected to race PHRF. We got a decent start and went with the current to Blackhaller, then at the last minute made the decision to head to Red Rock as the second mark because the winds looked good all across. I should have kept the boat sailing higher, but was indecisive as to which side of Angel Island mad the best route. I eventually settled for Raccoon Straits and had to beat up towards Yellow Bluff to get a layline. After that we stayed left down the Straits while most of the other boats stayed right. I never got the counter current I was hoping for, but it looked like the right decision at the time and didn't hurt us. Once we spit out of the Richmond side of the Straits it was pretty much just a boatspeed race to Red Rock with a bunch of short tacks along the Richmond waterfront. We turned, set a light chute and roared down the Bay to TI (catching the end of the ebb until mid-Bay and then picking up the new flood to push us the rest of the way), dropped the chute and went back to the No. 1 to round the island and stayed with the 1 all the way to the finish line riding a countercurrent up the City Front. We were done by 3:15. A great day on Jane Doe. My

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Racers Stories Continued.....

brother Luther crewed with me and did his usual superb job of trimming and driving. - *Bob Izmirian "Jane Doe"*

Overall we had a great sail and an exciting finish. We went counter-clockwise, hoisted the chute on the way to Treasure and had great fun passing a bunch of boats that were stuck in a huge hole outside of Aquatic Park. I think we were the tenth boat under the Bay Bridge. We then got eaten on the upwind leg to Red Rock - Flying Tiger is not fast upwind in the light air (tiny, old headsail on a masthead rig). A great spinnaker run from Red Rock to Blackhaller. We approached Blackhaller, all ready to drop the chute and head upwind - then the spinnaker would not come down. I cursed, yelled, pulled - nothing. The halyard was jammed at the masthead. &%"\$DG%^&*!!! After nearly getting pulled off the boat trying to wrestle the jammed spinnaker, I let loose the windward clew. I then realized that Tiger would sail upwind with the spinnaker up if one clew is loose - like a very big flag. We proceeded towards the finish line with our big blue and white flag flogging away. We were somewhat distracted and rounded the wrong finish mark, and sailed back down near Anita Rock to deal with the jammed spinnaker. We then realized we rounded the wrong finish mark, sailed back upwind to finally finish. After we finished, we motored over to Sausalito and anchored - the whole way over, I was waiting for the spinnaker to shred as it flogged away. My crew winched me up the mast on the main halyard At the masthead (50 feet up) the spinnaker shackle had jammed between the forestay and the mast. I could not pry it loose. A knife was only option to free the spinnaker. I cut the webbing holding the spinnaker head to the jammed shackle. I ran a line from the jammed shackle to the deck and the next morning used the winch to free the badly jammed shackle. I was very lucky - I got off with only a minor tear in the spinnaker, some nasty bruises from my makeshift bosun's chair and a much better understanding of how to handle serious spinnaker problems. I am glad I was not singlehanding - good crew was very helpful. See you out there for the next race. - *Kirk Miller & Christian Dahlen "Flying Tiger"*

Important Dates & Events

The **Three Bridge Fiasco Trophy awards meeting** will be on Wednesday February 12th at Oakland Yacht Club at 7:30 PM. Please come out and pick up a possible trophy and a T-shirt for your participation in the Three Bridge Fiasco.

The next SSS race, the **Singlehanded Farralones Race**, is on April 5th. A loop around the islands singlehanded! Be sure to get your entry in sooner instead of later. Also a 2003 PHRF certificate is required for all SSS races going forward. I would recommend that all potential participants attend the skippers meeting on Wednesday April 2nd at Oakland Yacht Club.

For the 22nd year Island Yacht Club is running the **Doublehanded Lightship Race**. For more details call (925) 254-5384 or visit them on the web www.iyc.org.

A pre-cursor to the SSS Singlehanded Farallones is the always challenging **BAMA Doublehanded Farallones Race**. This year the race is on Saturday March 22nd. Visit them on the web -www.wingo.com/bama for more details.

Oakland Yacht Club is running the 15th annual **Rites of Spring Regatta** on Saturday March 29th. This is a great in the bay race that has both a singlehanded and doublehanded division. For more details give them a call at 510-522-6868 or visit them on the web - www.oaklandyachtclub.com

2003 is the year of the **LongPac**. This 400 mile race outside the Golden Gate Bridge also serves as a qualifier for the Singlehanded Transpac. This time around it starts on June 25th. Alan Hebert is the race chairman. He can be reached via email at ah Herbert@california.com or through the SSS.

2003 OYRA series - Offers a mix of offshore races with a shorthanded (SHS) division. They have ten races with the first one, a loop around the Lightship on March 29th. The SHS division allows boats to be sailed with one or two crew and a +12 second/mile credit is given to singlehanded entries. For more details go to www.yra.org