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The Curved Mast

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Narragansett Bay Herreshoff S Class Association
Newsletter

S Class National Championship Special Edition



Firefly (7) and Aquila (51) at the finish of Race 2

2013 S Class Championship Regatta

Narragansett Bay Teams Take Championship in Home Waters!

Western Long Island Sound and Quissett Fleets Show Strong Performances in a Competitive Regatta.

Sep. 21-22, 2013 Newport, RI

The 2013 S Class Championship Regatta brought crews from Western Long Island Sound S Class (LIS) and the Quissett S Class (Q) to Newport for an exciting weekend of racing, socializing, and celebrating. Special thanks to Commodore Stephan Sloan for organizing the event, to Race Committee Peter Gerard for a well organized professional administration of the races, and to Ida Lewis Yacht Club, our gracious host for the entire weekend. Three races were held: two windward-leeward courses around racing marks on Saturday, and one 11 mile distance race around Narragansett Bay government marks on Sunday.

LIS was represented by Team Bill Simmons and Team Sean Park. Quissett was represented by Team Alan Haigh and Team Doug Cooper. Narragansett Bay was represented by Team Sheldon Whitehouse and Team Stephan Sloan.



Argument before Race 1



Mischief before Race 1

RACE 1: The first race was a W-4 (windward-leeward-windward-leeward) set between Gould Is. and the Newport Pell Bridge. The wind was a steady SSW 8-10 kt breeze. The skies were clear and the temperature an autumnal 68. Even before the race could get underway, there was an unfortunate breakdown when *Whistler's* gooseneck fitting failed. This left Team Sheldon Whitehouse boat-less. When asked how they were feeling, the response was, "We came to race!" Fortunately, *Firefly* was waiting in the wings ready to go. Reminiscent of the 1983 America's Cup when *Liberty* suffered a jumper strut failure in Race 4, and the tender, *Rhonda*, sped back into Newport Harbor for a replacement, Fred Roy and Mike McCaffrey sped back to Brenton Cove and reappeared quick as a wink at the helm of *Firefly*. At least they were in time for Race 2.

At the start it was Q-B, Cooper on Papoose (53), NB-B, Sloan on Mischief (27) and LIS-A, Simmons on Argument (22) at the pin end of the line with LIS-B, Park on Surprise (5) and Q-A, Haigh on Aquila (51) to windward. The yachts tacked vigorously to weather. Unfortunately,

confusion at the weather mark led to *Surprise* and *Aquila* missing the off-set buoy, resulting in disqualification. Only three boats had valid finishes: *Papoose*, *Mischief*, and *Argument*. After one race, Quissett-Cooper was in the lead, followed by NB-Sloan, and then LIS-Simmons.



The start of Race 1

RACE 2: With the arrival of *Firefly*, there were six boats on the line for race 2 as planned. The course and wind conditions were the same as race 1, but an additional finishing leg to windward was added. *Aquila* (Team Simmons) and *Firefly* (Team Haigh) led the fleet on the upwind beat. After rounding the windward mark, *Argument* (Team Whitehouse) was first to set the chute and first to gybe to port, at which point she took off and moved into third place behind *Aquila* and *Firefly*. On the next beat, *Argument* was able to get above *Firefly* and then engaged *Aquila* in a tacking duel. Meanwhile, *Surprise* (Team Sloan) turned on the turbo on the second upwind leg, passing three boats to finish second. At the finish, it was *Argument* (Whitehouse); *Surprise* (Sloan); *Aquila* (Simmons); *Papoose* (Park); *Firefly* (Haigh); *Mischief* (Cooper).



Approaching the finish of Race 1

RACE 3: Sunday morning started with a heavy downpour as a low pressure center sprinted eastward. By noon the sun broke through. The wind was northwest with shifts to the north and west. The course was a recreation of Ulysses' (Odysseus) odyssey: north to Rose Is., south to Hammersmith Farm, then west to Kettlebottom, east to Ft. Wetherill, north past the Dumplings and Clingstone, through the Newport Pell Bridge, finally round mark V east of Gould Is., and then back around Rose Is., underneath the Caribbean Princess, and finish in Newport Harbor. The long way round from Troy to Athens.

The start was in the shadow of the Caribbean Princess, anchored outside Newport harbor. It was *Firefly* (Simmons) at the pin end who took the lead, tacked onto port and rounded the first mark at Rose Is. ahead of the fleet. *Aquila* (Whitehouse) was quick with her chute and overtook *Firefly* as she was sorting things out. *Papoose* (Sloan) made a move but *Firefly* was able to get her spinnaker pulling and held her place behind *Aquila* around the mark at Hammersmith Farm and the next mark at Kettlebottom Rock.

Next was the treacherous ebbing current at the Dumplings. It seemed Poseidon set the outgoing tide so strong, Clingstone, the house on the rock, would be pried loose, stone and all. It was just as the fleet entered these waters that Aeolus sealed the wind in a bag and the breeze failed. Ah, the Sirens called and the boats were dragged to lee. Eventually *Aquila* broke free, then *Papoose*, *Mischief* (Park), *Firefly*, and *Argument* (Haig). Only *Surprise* (Cooper) managed to escape by sailing free to the east, crossing the current to Ft. Adams, and sailing behind the Cyclops, who

appeared in the form of the Caribbean Princess. There, she was confronted by more current east of Rose Is. and less breeze.

When the moon is full, the bay can fill with frustration. From here it was follow-the-leader all the way to the end of the odyssey: *Aquila* (Team Whitehouse); *Papoose* (Team Sloan); *Mischief*; (Team Park) *Firefly* (Team Simmons); *Argument* (Team Haigh); *Surprise* (Team Cooper). [Apologies to Homer's *Odyssey*.] ■



At the windward mark of Race 3



Firefly and Papoose downwind in Race 3



Aquila leads Firefly on the second leg of Race 3

S Class Championship Regatta Results

BY TEAM

1ST- Team Sheldon Whitehouse (NB)
2ND- Team Stephan Sloan (NB)
3RD- Team Bill Simmons (WLIS)
4TH- Team Doug Cooper (Q)
5Th- Team Sean Park (WLIS)
6TH- Team Alan Haigh (Q)

BY FLEET

1st- Narragansett Bay
2nd- Western Long Island Sound
3rd- Quissett

BY BOAT

Suffice it to say, no boat dominated. *Firefly*, *Mischief*, *Argument*, and *Aquila* had equal scores, and *Surprise* and *Papoose* were very close.



Narragansett Bay



Western Long Island Sound



Quisset



WLIS



The Trophies

Photos by Alan Silken ■

LINKS TO THE PHOTO ALBUMS

Photos by Alan Silken

[Saturday Race 1 \(starts with image of Ida Lewis YC\) & Race 2 \(starts with image of Rose Is. Lighthouse\):](#)

[Sunday Race 3:](#)

[Awards ceremony:](#)



Approaching leeward mark Race 2



Papoose in Race 2



Argument, Firefly and Surprise in Race 2



Team Whitehouse aboard Argument first across the finish in Race 2



Mischief beats to weather.

“We came from behind, the guys showed so much heart. On your own you’re nothing, but a team like this can make you look great... We were facing the barrel of a gun at 8-1 and the guys didn’t even flinch,”

--Jimmy Spithill aboard *Oracle* on winning the 2013 America’s Cup in the greatest comeback in sports history.