

The Racing Beat



The Boulevard of Broken Dreams in the 2024 Three Bridge Fiasco. Mike Josselyn photo.

Uhoo! Comes Back in the Three Bridge Fiasco

By Mike Josselyn

The Three Bridge Fiasco seems so simple ... sail to three bridges around the Bay any way you want. But add in January's generally low winds, strong currents assisted by river flow, and 300 boats sailing in multiple directions makes this race one of my favorites. This year, we had five U20s racing in the event. The tidal currents were generally flood in the morning, slack mid-day, and ebb in the afternoon but of course varied depending upon your position in the Bay. Winds were expected to come from the north all day, building in the afternoon. Stronger pressure on the western side of the Bay.

Howard Elfant and I have sailed this race a number of times and often talk about the previous year's good and bad decisions. With the north wind, we could enjoy a spinnaker sail on *Uhoo!* from the Richmond Yacht Club to the start line off the Golden Gate Yacht Club. Our start time was 9:45 am and the wind favored going either first to Blackaller (Golden Gate Bridge) or Treasure Island (Bay Bridge). We, along with all the other U20s, choose to knock off Blackaller first and took it to starboard without any significant problem and started to head north parallel to the Golden Gate Bridge.

There was still a moderate ebb at the central part of the span, but not too bad and we decided to avoid the crowds and the inevitable battles up Raccoon Straits by tacking over and heading up the Central portion of the Bay. We felt it was a good move as we were going seven knots until we got off Alcatraz Island and found the ebb current

around Pt. Blunt was pushing us towards Alcatraz. While the pressure was good, we realized that we made the wrong choice as it added so much distance and it was confirmed when we come up near the eastern end of Raccoon Straits and saw the lead boats sailing far ahead near Red Rock (Richmond Bridge).

We moaned as we saw the spinnakers open up and we were still a mile south of Red Rock. Oh well, not going to be in the lead this time but let's just keep sailing strong with what we had. We sailed up the eastern side of the Bay near the Chevron terminal and rounded Red Rock to port and set our spinnaker...dead last in the U20 and Sportboat fleet. It was a beautiful day at that point, partly cloudy, breeze from the north of 5-6 knots, and time for lunch. We just kept the spinnaker full, kept the tell tales flowing on the main, and worked on getting a lead on boats ahead of us. Being light and staying in the middle of the Bay, we had enough clear air and pressure to keep going towards our mark, Treasure Island. As we moved along, we realized that the boats ahead were getting bigger and more concentrated.

Every year there is at least one wind hole and this year it was the Bay Bridge. Definitely a parking lot for everyone. We stayed as far east as we could to avoid bigger boats and to get to the wind first. Plenty of sailing forward a bit, drifting backwards a bit, and avoiding hitting other boats. If you stayed on starboard for rights, it only took you closer to the island, less pressure, and bigger boats. But gybing onto port tack to get clear air meant finding a hole to weave through other boats with rights to get onto the eastern side of the channel. We ended up in a battle back

and forth with *Ubetcha* and eventually the northerly came in and we were able to get around Yerba Buena Island (YBI), but slightly behind *Ubetcha*. They got the new breeze earlier and took off under a strong ebb current and decent wind to move our boats along on a reach at 8-10 knots. It was a blast to be bow down, water coming up the foredeck, and racing to the finish.

Ubetcha was doing the same and we didn't make any headway against them, but kept a bunch of Express 27s behind us and all of the remainder of our Sportboat fleet.

We finished second in our Sportboat fleet (14 boats) and 29th out of 300 boats that registered. Surprisingly, the winning boat sailed Blackaller, YBI, and then Red Rock. They waited nearly an hour and half behind YBI before they could take off towards Red Rock, but that powerful afternoon northerly allowed them to sail fast to the finish after rounding the Rock, not to mention that they were also a tricked out J125. We later learned that about half of the boats did not finish, including three U20s that were stalled by the wind hole at the Bay Bridge. As always, the 3BF is frustrating at times but not disappoint.

RYC Boats in the Fiasco: Numbers

How did RYC racers do in the TBF? Statistically speaking (Thanks to John Dukat for the number crunching): RYC had 83 boats entered out of 301 = 27%. There were three RYC boats in top five, eleven RYC boats in top twenty. In terms of podium finishes: out of 24 divisions RYC had 29 podium finishes = 40% of the trophies: Thirteen first place, Twelve second place, Five third place.

The RYC boats in the top twenty were *Rufless*, *Uno*, *Velvet Hammer*, *Defiant*, *Timber Wolf*, *Advantage3*, *Soliton*, *Checkered Past*, *Arcadia*, *Talisman* and *Hare-O-Dynamic*.

RYC Three Bridge Fiasco Division Winners

DH J105: *Advantage3*, Will Benedict / John Sweeney
 DH Express 27: *Tequila Mockingbird*, Randall Racicot / Lise Smith

DH Alerion Express: *Zeneida*, Fred Paxton / Arnie Quan

DH Spin A: *Rufless*, Rufus Sjoberg / Dylan Benjamin

DH Spin B: *Timber Wolf*, David Hodges / John Kernot

DH Spin C: *Barcanova*, Oded Haner / Erin Waid

DH Spin E: *Uno*, Brendan Meyer / Skip Shapiro

DH Sportboat B: *Ubetcha*, Jeff Cook / David Pressley

DH Wabbit: *Hare-O-Dynamic*, Ethan Petersen / Sarah Deeds

DH Non Spin: *Music*, Devin Shanks / Aaron Shanks

SH Sportboat: *Soliton*, Doug Kidder

J24: 2nd, *Little Wing* Robin Van Vliet / Brian Rosensteel

Moore 24: 2nd *Flying Circus*, Melinda Erkelens / William Erkelens



Drifter! Rufless was first to finish in the Fiasco.

DH Spin D: 2nd, *Checkered Past*, Kim Desenberg / Skip Allan

SH Spin B: 2nd, *Surprise!* Bob Johnston

SH Spin C: 2nd, *Dream*, Ernest Galvan

SH Spin A: 3rd, *Gavilan*, Brian Lewis

Richmond Racers in the Puerto Vallarta Race

The big guns were out for the San Diego Yacht Club's Puerto Vallarta Race, which was under way as we went to print. Roving *Racing Beat* Reporter John Dukat tirelessly scrapes the internet and identifies some of the RYC members who were competing in this typically light-weather but Rock Star-dominated big boat offshore event.

Lucky Duck (Santa Cruz 50) has Rufus Sjoberg, Trimmer plus other locals (Jeff Thorpe, Navigator, Hogan Beattie, Trimmer).

Westerly (Santa Cruz 52) Will Paxton, Watch Captain
Vitesse (Reichel Pugh 52) has James Clappier, Boat Captain.

In case you are interested: *Pyewacket* (Andrews 68) has among others: Scott Easom, trimmer; Roy Disney, check signer; Torben Grael; Peter Isler, Navigator; Ben Mitchell, Watch Captain.

And one more, Neil Haydon Stapleton is a trimmer on *Rio 100*, the largest boat in the fleet. Will Paxton once said, "In a Mexican Race you use all your sails."

SYC/Regatta Pro Winter One Design Series

This winter series was organized by the Sausalito Yacht Club, managed by [RegattaPRO](#) and sailed on the Berkeley Circle with windward/leeward courses. In the Express 27 class with 15 boats, the winner was Will Paxton's *Motorcycle Irene*. In the J105 class with 21 boats, Larry Levit was the sole RYC boat in 11th place. Robin Van Vliet's *Little Wing* won the four-boat J24 class. William Erkelens' *For Sale Too* won in the eight-boat Moore 24 class. David Fried's *Son of a Son* won the four-boat J70 class.

Star Winter Series – Walker Cup Midwinters

If there's a tougher, more elite international one design than the venerable Starboat, we don't know what it is. Richmond YC member Doug Smith is a committed Star sailor, and traveled to Miami, to the Coral Reef YC, teaming up with Cicio Canali for the [Walker Cup Midwinters](#), February 8th to 11th. They finished 22nd in the 41-boat regatta which was won by Paul Cayard and Frithjof Kleen.



Toshi at max speed in the ILCA Masters Worlds.

Survival Stuff at ILCA Masters Worlds

It was fun, he said. It blew like hell, the waves were huge and irregular, but the water was warm and nobody died. That's how Emilio Castelli, Toshi Takayanagi, Chris Simenstad and other local crash test dummies (okay, ILCA Masters Racers) characterized the [ILCA Masters Worlds](#) in Adelaide, South Australia. There's a compilation of choice quotes in a recent ['Lectronic Latitude](#) 38 piece.

Chris Simenstad reported, "This was my first Worlds, but won't be my last. The sea breeze built every day, so the second race for my start was always in 20 plus knots. The waves were huge with irregular sets; once in a while a wave would roll through and catch me off guard." Chris survived the big conditions though breaking a tiller extension while recording a top finish of sixth in a fleet of

19 boats. He says he came home inspired with some training and fitness goals!

Jon Andron, who finished fourth in the 19-member ILCA 6 Legends (75+ years young) fleet, wrote: "In my 50 plus years of racing world-class events, this 10-day event was the most physically difficult I've ever completed. My mindset was simply to survive: Stay upright, avoid injury, and live to fight another day."

In the words of Emilio Castelli, who finished fifth in the ILCA 7 Great Grand Masters fleet, "It was fun; it was blowing but the water was warm and I didn't die."



Good start for Chris Sullivan (number 62) in the IOM Region 8 Championships, San Diego.

Berkeley YC Midwinters Saturday RYC Results

01 - Monohull Rating < 85

- 1 *Swift Ness*, Nesrin Basoz, J88
- 2 *Io*, Hill Blackett III, Antrim 27
- 3 *Abracadabra*, Ian Chamberlain, Antrim 27 Cm Odr
- 6 *Family Hour TNG*, Bilafer Family, Henderson 30
- 7 *Arch Angel*, Bryce Griffith, Antrim 27 Cm Odr
- 8 *Barcanova*, Oded Haner / Stephen Gay, Sunfast 3200

02 - Monohull Rating => 87 and < 112

- 1 *Baleineau*, Charlie Brochard, Ericson Olson 34
- 2 *WYSIWYG*, Hendrik Bruhns, Olson 30
- 5 *Minimax*, Lance Kim / Andre Peixoto, Melges 20
- 6 *Joy Ride*, Cindy Evans, Express 34

04 - Monohull Rating => 114 and < 156

- 1 *Sea Star*, Bob Walden, Cal 39
- 2 *Ahi*, Andy Newell, Santana 35
- 3 *Take Five More*, Grant Kiba, Olson 911
- 4 *Tule Fog*, Steve Carroll, Express 27

05 - Monohull Rating => 159

- 2 *Recluse*, Vince Mcpeek, Cal 20

Berkeley YC Midwinters Sunday RYC Results

01 - Monohull Rating < 126

- 1 *Spirit*, Andy Dippel / Kat Dippel, J70
- 4 *Archimedes*, Lawrence Levit, J105
- 5 *L'Attitude*, Frank Nagelmann, Olson 34

03 - Monohull Rating => 129 and < 169

- 1 *Evil Octopus*, Jasper Van Vliet, J24
- 2 *Froglips*, Richard Stockdale, J24
- 3 *Flight*, Rosanne Scholl, J24
- 4 *Hot Water*, Anthony Jacuzzi, J24

06 - Double Hand Sunday

- 1 *Bad Hare Day*, Erik Menzel / Bren Meyer, Wabbit
- 2 *Kwazy*, Colin Moore / Alex Hanford, Wabbit
- 3 *Motorcycle Irene*, Julia Paxton / Jeane Rodgers, Exp 27
- 8 *Barcanova*, Oded Haner / Stephen Gay, Sunfast 3200
- 9 *Hedgehog*, David Herrigel / Synthia Petroka, Olson 29
- 10 *Take Five More*, Grant Kiba, Olson 911
- 12 *Current Affair*, Seth Clark / Cyril Kollock

07 - Single Hand Sunday

- 2 *Dura Mater*, Jackie Philpott, Cal 2-27
- 3 *Surprise!* Bob Johnston, Alerion Express 38-1
- 6 *Soliton*, Doug Kidder, Synergy 1000 Mod

08 - Express 27

- 2 *Freaks on a Leash*, Kathleen Cornetta, Express 27
- 3 *Dianne*, Steven Katzman, Express 27

09 - Alerion 28

- 1 *Zeneida*, Fred Paxton / Arnie Quan
- 2 *Resilience*, Michael Quinn
- 3 *Dream*, Ernest Galvan / Dolores Shotton
- 4 *Jewel*, David Britt / Angie Liebert
- 5 *Diana*, John Arnold
- 6 *Sweet De*, Chris Kramer
- 7 *H2Osprey*, John Skinner

BYC Champion of Champions February 25

01 - Red Fleet

- 2 *Swift Ness*, Nesrin Basoz, J88
- 5 *Baleineau*, Charlie Brochard, J105

02 - Blue Fleet

- 3 *Froglips*, Richard Stockdale, J24
- 4 *Recluse*, Vince Mcpeek, Cal 20
- 5 *Dura Mater*, Jackie Philpott, Cal 2-27

03 - White Fleet

- 3 *Take Five More*, Grant Kiba, Olson 911
- 4 *Dream*, Ernest Galvan, Alerion Express 28

SSS Corinthian Race

Congrats to Joel Turmel and Bart Hackworth for winning first overall in the monohulls!

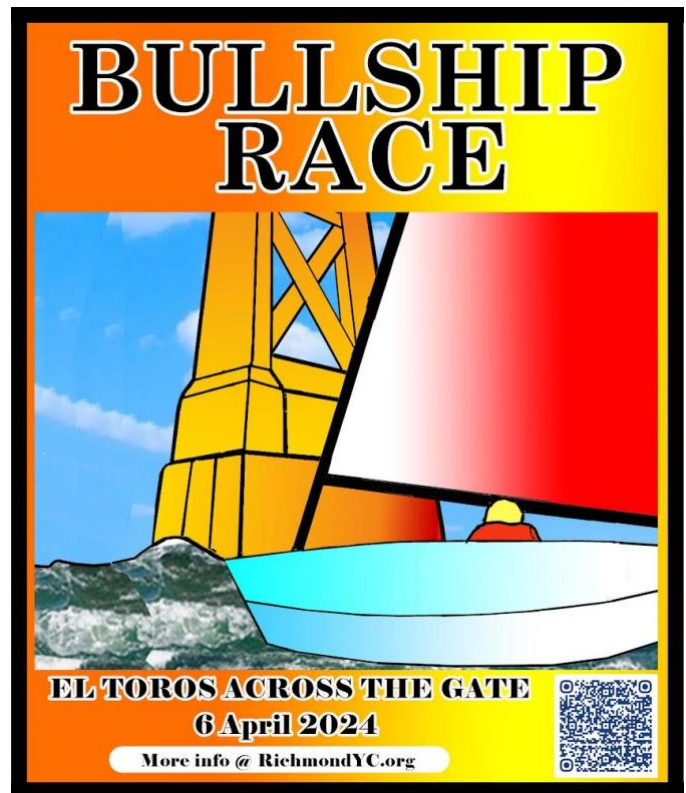
- 1 *Firefly*, Joel Turmel / Bart Hackworth, Moore 24
- 4 *Timber Wolf*, David Hodges / John Kernot Farr 38
- 6 *Kwazy*, Colin Moore / Oj Olson, Wabbit
- 8 *Hot Sheet*, David Wick / Nick Diel, Express 27
- 11 *Speedwell*, Tom Thayer / Robert Milligan, J88
- 13 *Motorcycle Irene*, Julia Paxton / Angie Liebert, Express 27

14 *Tule Fog*, Steve Carroll / Josephine Carroll, Express 27

15 *Ripple*, Barbara Briner / Katie Cornetta, Moore 24

16 *Dianne*, Steven Katzman / Will Anderson, Express 27

20 *Io*, Hill Blackett III / Karl Robrock, Antrim 27



El Toro Bullship Race Needs Cowships!

The Coast Guard requires that we provide enough Cowships to cover our potential rescue needs:

Please sign up [here](#).

El Toro Racers: Register for the Bullship Race at <https://www.regattanetwork.com/event/27752>

The El Toro Class has a Facebook page:

[El Toro Class Sailboats](#)

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