

## Third 'K' Race Report

Written by Tony Brogan and Greg Taylor

A few Keeners turned out in the summer sun and little wind for the third race in the K (Keener) series: the Port Pursuit Race.

Supposed to be a pursuit race, it was amended to be a regular start with two short course options to accommodate the light breezes encountered at the Skipper's Meeting. (Our Race Instructions say that short courses are usually reserved for the second running of a race, but the Race Committee – in introducing the new 'K' series in 2019, thought the series – being for the keeners looking for more racing opportunities - should incorporate additional flexibility).

In terms of converting the race from a Pursuit Race to a regular start, it turns out that our new handicapping system makes it difficult (not impossible and the Race Committee is exploring the arithmetic involved) to convert a boat's BCR into a starting time. Hence, the use of a regular start.

The race was designed to be a circular tour of Captain Passage with all marks to be taken on the port side of the vessel. The marks were Ganges Shoals, Batt Rock, U62, U60, Welbury Spar, Ganges shoals.

Light winds were the hallmark of the day, with will-o-the-wisps (sometimes mirages) to chase, in the midst of vast areas of ocean with no wind at all: just currents. Many a boat sat and spun idly, without steerage, for what seemed an hour at a time in the hot, glaring sun. *(And you wondered why it is called the 'K' for Keener Series – ed)*

It sounds a bore, but in reality, it was not, because somebody else was sailing at the same time you were spinning in circles! The challenge became, if they can do it, so can I.

The approach to Batt Rock took most of the fleet to the saltspring shore in fitful wind. Radiant Heat tried the tack out towards Welbury to hopefully ride the current to back to Batt Rock. Skeena Cloud followed suit and found a bit of breeze and a lift near Welbury Spar before tacking back towards Batt Rock. Her approach to the mark was powered as much by the current as the breeze. The challenge was to maintain an angle that would take her directly to Batt Rack, not above it, for that it would mean passing it on her starboard side. Correcting for that mistake in the fitful breeze and strong current might have been nigh on impossible.

Looking over her stern, Skeena Cloud could see Shingebiss and Radiant Heat pushing hard, catching up, as she slowed in the dying breeze near Batt Rock.

Meanwhile, Karisma who had tacked back earlier than Skeena Cloud found a bit of breeze closer to Batt Rock and was first to the mark, followed by Oasis, who, as usual, did just as good as persevering in the fitful conditions near the SS shore, than taking the risk of tacking over to near Welbury and back. Experience counts! Skeena Cloud was third around, followed closely by Shingebiss.

There was little wind on the trip to U60. Oasis and Radiant Heat took the rhumb line, employing the ebb current until meeting the new flood tide a quarter mile from U60, where they sat and counted the barnacles on the buoy. Karisma, Shingebiss, and Skeena Cloud took the more direct line towards the Channel Islands.

Well, actually, one couldn't see the Channel Islands as they were obscured by a large freighter positioned so that it was broadside on to our approach. Karisma glided by the freighter's stern that was pointing at Prevost Island – just. Shingebiss took her bow, which was pointing at SaltSpring.

Whereas Skeena Cloud seemed intent on ramming it broadside. At least that's where the current was taking her. Carefully considering the alternatives, Skeena Cloud decided discretion was the better of valour and desperately courted what breeze there was to slip by the freighter's bow. And in doing so, saw both Karisma and Shingebiss catch a breeze and the current and take off towards U60. Skeena Cloud knew this was the end of her race.

But upon coming around the freighter's bow, Skeena Cloud was embraced by some of the freshest breeze of the day and found herself fighting to sail tight to the wind to avoid ending up above U60 to join Radiant Heat and Oasis struggling to make any headway in no wind and contrary current towards U60.

Meanwhile, the freighter honked its horn several times, hauled her anchor, and exited scene left while Skeena Cloud passed down her flank.

Skeena Cloud easily caught up to all the boats at U60. She found herself in a closing situation with Radiant Heat. Not wanting to embarrass herself, she frantically began mentally flipping through the rule book. Luckily, Radiant Heat, ever the gentleman, said she would take Skeena Cloud's stern.

But it was Karisma who was the first around the mark, setting a fast pace towards U62. We will catch up with her later. Shingebiss was next around the mark, followed by Radiant Heat, Skeena Cloud, and Oasis.

What was supposed to be a spin run to U62 was not. Spins quickly came down, and head sails went up, but to no avail. It wasn't the breeze, but the new flood that took us at a knot toward U62, boats idly spinning yet again without steerage.

Radiant Heat, with 15 feet of water under the keel, and drifting to even less water off the Secret Islands shore, engaged her engine for safety. Clearing the danger, she shut down the engine, and did the obligatory penalty 360 turn away from the mark.

At this time, Skeena Cloud and Oasis. Oasis and Skeena Cloud were within a coin toss of packing it in, thinking that the fleet would not make it beyond the first short course at U60. I am not sure if that coin was ever tossed. No one wanted to be the first to quit. And thank goodness we persevered.

So here we all were, drifting in the vicinity of U62, and who should show up to rejoin the party but the long-gone Karisma. It seems the breeze she found upon leaving U60 abandoned her two-thirds of the way to U62 and she drifted right by the mark – on the wrong side. It took her the best part of an hour to rejoin the rest of us who were all just then finding a bit of breeze. Suddenly, Welbury Spar didn't seem impossible anymore.

The early part of the race was led by Ogoopogo, After going around U 62 and heading toward Welbury Spar it was Karisma, then Skeena Cloud, then Karisma again.

Radiant Heat was flying her `whimper, Shingebiss her genoa, Oasis and Skeena Cloud their asymmetrics, and Karisma, her symmetrical.

After everyone clearing Welbury Spar, it was a race to the last (as it tuned out – unneeded) short course mark: Second Sister.

It was Radiant Heat trying to hold off the spinnakers on a beam reach to the Second Sister. Skeena Cloud, showing some legs, but not too many smarts, passed everyone, using her asymmetric to her advantage by sailing higher to the wind. Once past the Second Sister, she had to recover the distance she gave away to the fleet, soon finding herself second from last, near Shingebiss. But heck, it was fun, and unlikely to happen again anytime soon.

Once in the harbour, Karisma made tracks down wind near the Salt Spring shore. Shingebiss stayed with headstalls and slowed. Oasis stuck to the Chain Islands side after gybing across the harbour from the Salt Spring shore. Skeena Cloud stayed near the middle.

Meanwhile, Radiant Heat set her symmetrical and trimmed for her customary (and deadly fast) deep reach, and began to catch Karisma.

Turning toward the left shore RH gybed and the wind played some more of its dirty tricks for the day, first forward with the spin back winded, then aft but no puff: back and forth. Finally, the breeze settled in aft on the Starboard side, and there was Karisma between Radiant Heat and the finish.

Radiant Heat’s course to the finish was a direct line behind Karisma and slowly the distance lessened between the two until the wind shadow near the club began to affect the leading Karisma. We were both leaving the boats behind as we swept down to the finish line now 3 boat lengths abeam each other. At the finish, after nearly seven hours and more than 13 miles of racing, Radiant Heat crossed the line a mere half a boat length ahead of Karisma.

Meanwhile, Skeena Cloud had her sights on Oasis and Radiant Heat. But it was not to be. While everyone sailed merrily on in a building breeze, a hole swallowed up Skeena Cloud for four or five minutes. She was quickly passed, coming in last, after Oasis and Shingebiss.

But, no so fast, Skeena Cloud, for the first time since beginning to race with the club over four years ago, won on corrected time. Just to prove, anything is possible. You might want to look up tonight and see if the moon actually is made of green cheese.

Another interesting day ending with munchies and chit chat and an ale or two or a tale or two.....

### Port K Race - 7/21/2019

Start: Start 1, Finishes: Place

Rank	Boat	SailNo	NHC3	Start	Finish	Elapsed	Corrected	BCR	Points
1	Skeena Cloud	121	0.832	10:30	17:10:43	06:40:43	05:33:24	0.832	100
2	Karisma (nee First Draft)	29921	0.868	10:30	17:04:02	06:34:02	05:42:01	0.846	83
3	Oasis	421	0.942	10:30	17:07:05	06:37:05	06:14:03	0.84	67
4	Radiant Heat	67901	0.955	10:30	17:03:58	06:33:58	06:16:14	0.846	50
5	Shingebiss	49077	0.987	10:30	17:09:17	06:39:17	06:34:06	0.835	33
6	Deryn Mor		0.88			DNF			17