

## Wednesday Night: Race #4

Written by Greg Taylor

Six boats and crews, including Tango – a boat that hasn't race with us for awhile – anticipated an exciting race last night. There was a stiff breeze of about 10 to 15 knots out of the SSE and it showed every sign that it was digging in for the duration of the race.

We set a course of Batt Rock (P), U 62 (P), Batt Rock (S), and home. It turned out, as expected, to be a hard beat to Batt Rock, a close reach to U62, a reach back to Batt Rock, and a downwind sail home.

I admit it. I still get butterflies in my belly before every race. Last night, fretting over the wind, they felt more like demented bats. But my savior was to be found in a handsome, strong looking young man on the dock looking to crew. Before he could say much more than hello, I, with more than a little desperation, latched onto him. It took much of the walk back to the boat for him to unpeel my fingers from his wrist.

Częs – which he kindly said I should call him, having realized I was never going to be able to pronounce his full name, is originally from Poland, lived many years in northern England, and now sails the Caribbean. He crossed the Atlantic both ways under sail.

Częs would like to make sailing his career. I wish I was rich enough to survive the divorce were I to hire him to be Skeena Cloud's full time crew. For Czes is personable, kind but competitive, and skilled. He is also a lot more photogenic than me. Not that is important to our performance, but he would be great in any recruiting poster for additional crew.

So, with newfound confidence, we joined the starting line. The skipper (me) embracing the brilliant starting line tactic of coming in on the outboard pin on port tack with everyone else on starboard. I am lucky a mutiny was only avoided because while Czes is an experienced sailor, he has little experience racing. I was able to convince him this was a tactic employed by all brilliant tacticians.

We circled in behind Tango, who for us, was the boat to beat. The fleet tacked out of the harbour. The apparent wind often notching over 18 knots. We sailed under reefed main and two rolls on the genoa. The helmsman was great. The crew not so much. Skeena Cloud trailed the fleet, including Tango, out of the harbour, losing distance on every poorly executed tack. The helmsman was kind enough not to flog the crew. (Thanks Czes).

The fleet was led by Karisma and Imp. The hard work and training of the Karisma crew in the difficult conditions was on full display. Imp steady and implacable as always. Kay D, as usual, was sailing her own race. Her skill and talent a marvel to watch. Shingebiss always seems take a few minutes to get untraced, but once in the groove, she is a

vision of sailing beauty and speed. Tango is a cruising boat, with a stock 3 blade propeller, but her experienced crew – including Ole and his son – got her moving well.

Once out of the harbour, some of the fleet took the Salt Spring shore. Kay D, Shingebiss, Skeena Cloud tacked out towards Welbury Spar. Some sticking with it longer than others. The boats that tacked back towards Batt Rock early appeared to be caught by an ebb current that should have turned to flood, joining the boats coming off the Salt Spring shore below Batt Rock, and had to short tack to gain and then turn on the mark.

Skeena Cloud stuck with the tack towards Welbury Spar until she could gain Batt Rock on one tack. Tango, her nemesis, had tacked back towards the Salt Spring shore. Coming back off the Salt Spring shore, she and Skeena Cloud were on opposing courses, with Skeena Cloud on port. Tango timed her tack well (it turns out, it was no accident – this game is on, and will continue ☺), and Skeena Cloud had to take her stern. Tango quickly tacked and took the mark first.

Meanwhile, well ahead of us, Karisma was in first, followed by the Imp, and the rest of the fleet. Or was it Imp, then Karisma? It appeared as if Karisma and Imp were neck and neck to, and around, U62. I will stand corrected, as the helmsman had me grinding my guts out after a terrible tack that saw Tango get well ahead of us.

We saw Shingebiss pick up her skirts and fly on the reaches to and fro U62. For a sailor, a picture of Shingebiss trimmed well in a stiff breeze should be in a brown paper wrapper.

We picked up some distance on Tango on the reach back to Batt Rock. We had shaken out both reefs by now as the true wind was down to around 10 knots. The rest of the fleet was now hoisting spinnakers as they sailed downwind towards the harbour entrance. Except for Kay D, that is. She had hoisted hers on the return run from U62 to Batt Rock. Passing us going to opposite direction, she appeared to be skipping across the top of the waves.

Karisma and Imp, (or Imp and Karisma) with their symmetrical spinnakers up, were racing DDW on the SS shore. Shingebiss, under white sails, was gybing out past Second Sister. Kay D was gybing even further out that way. Tango was hoisting her asymmetric. After, a minute of reflection – the thought ‘no guts, no glory’ flitting across my mind, and the urging of the eager Czes (who was still thinking of Tango’s tack), we hoisted ours as well.

The breeze cooperated, dropping to between 8-10 true. We gybed to the north, Tango seemed to be able to hold a more downwind course. The two of us traded gybes in the harbour. The rest of the fleet was crossing the line, with Shingebiss in first, followed by Imp, and then Karisma.

As Skeena Cloud sailed deep into the harbour, we were slowly gaining on Tango. She was sailing deeper, but we were a bit faster. We gybed a final time towards the finish line. This put us closer to the breeze, allowing us to sail a bit quicker than Tango. Foot by foot we gained on her until we overlapped her stern. But alas, it was not to be, her bow crossed the line nine seconds ahead of ours

Shingebiss took line honours under white sails. Congratulations to Imp and her crew who came second. They sailed a great race as usual. Karisma also sailed a near perfect race (although was that you doing the dipsy doodle at Batt Rock? ☺), coming in third. Kay D was fourth, followed by Tango and Skeena Cloud.

But on corrected time, it was Karisma first. Imp taking the club points, followed by Kay D and Shingebiss.

And Czes, we beat Tango. Maybe you will come out again? Please?

### Wed Night #4 July - 7/24/2019

Start: Start 1, Finishes: Place

Rank	Boat	SailNo	NHC3	Start	Finish	Elapsed	Corrected	BCR	Points
1	Karisma	29921	0.902	17:00	18:47:45	01:47:45	01:37:11	0.902	0
2	IMP	2107	0.935	17:00	18:45:32	01:45:32	01:38:40	0.921	100
3	Kay D		0.909	17:00	18:56:10	01:56:10	01:45:36	0.837	80
4	Shingebiss	49077	1.007	17:00	18:46:38	01:46:38	01:47:23	0.911	60
5	Skeena Cloud	121	0.872	17:00	19:04:14	02:04:14	01:48:20	0.782	40
6	Tango		0.88	17:00	19:04:05	02:04:05	01:49:12	0.783	20

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