

The Dizzy 'K' Race

Sunday, August 11, 2019

Tandem Report by Tony Brogan (on Radiant Heat) and Greg Taylor (on Skeena Cloud)

This past Sunday's iteration of the latest K series was not as dizzy as it first appeared. There were 4 marks to remember and pass in port order, which were then reversed and passed in a starboard fashion. From SISC to Batt Rk to U62 to Welbury Spar, to Ganges Shoal, reverse course, and return back to SISC around the same marks.

The forecast was for modest SE winds to 7-8 knots but as usual, the forecast was, at best, a suggestion of what was to be. We started in 6 knots, only to see the breeze build to as high as 17-18 knots true, before easing to 10 knots at the finish.

Only 3 boats came out. Where were you all on such a great day? Only Skeena Cloud, Oasis and Radiant Heat duked it out.

At the start Oasis took the far right, Skeena Cloud took the port hand approach and RH approached the starboard end on port and tacked to the line on starboard well before running afoul of Oasis. Then surprise, surprise the wind took a deke to the East and went soft. Skeena Cloud passed astern of RH and tacked to starboard and RH barely cleared the starting mark. It was a full minute before we all really cleared the start line.

(Greg Taylor interjects: From Skeena Cloud's perspective, it was a thing of beauty. Like walking a cliff edge, just don't spend too much time looking or you might end up where you have no business being. SC came in on port parallel to the line expecting RH and Oasis to cross the start line on starboard about half way along. The deke in the wind Tony mentioned meant both RH and Oasis were suddenly forced to head for the same outside pin that SC had intended to jink around onto starboard. Instead of having the outside pin to herself, SC had to take RH's stern before making a quick tack to come onto starboard to avoid having to take Oasis's stern as well. As it was, I thought it best not to look over my shoulder to see how Bob took my sudden intrusion, or even how close I was as the three of us crossed the line almost line abreast.)

We got the first hint of the breeze that was to come as we sailed in tandem to the Chain Islands. Oasis not liking being third boat tacked early back to Walter Spit. Greg was enjoying the ride as he stuck close to Radiant Heat past the Ganges shoal marker. *(Greg Taylor interjects: Indeed, I stuck like glue, figuring whatever Tony can do; I can do slower.)*

Once out to wider waters we all sailed into some light breeze near the Saltspring shore. Oasis took a long ride out toward Welbury while RH and SC tacked closer to the Saltspring shore.

Wind, or lack of, played a factor here as SC found a small hole near the shore. *(Greg Taylor interjects: Everything is relative. My hole still had me moving at 3 knots. But they were moving at 5+. Oasis, turned and made a fast beat toward Batt Rock and ducked RH who had escaped the onshore hole to come out into stronger wind. My thought was I might be going slower but they would have to contend with the building flood current. Unfortunately, the building breeze more than made up for the current.)*

There was a flood current to contend with which had more affect on starboard tack than it did on port.

RH now tacked to port and was reaching the Batt Rock mark. Oasis just 4-5 boat lengths to lee was also just ahead and trying to make the Batt Rock mark. As John remarked, "There seem to be a number of rules in play here".

As Oasis pointed as high into the wind as she could, they slowed by half a knot. RH was now even, and with better boat speed, had the overlap for right of way. In the end RH passed close to the mark and tacked quickly. Oasis also tacked about the same time and now it was a tight reach to U62, with allowance for the from right to left current.

Being able to crack off a little Oasis now had the better boat speed and was gaining. At U62 it was a near thing as Radiant Heat slipped front of Oasis and made the turn while Oasis finally had to fall off around the stern of RH.

Meanwhile SC having escaped the hole was left to observe all this from a point far astern. *(Greg Taylor interjects: It was frustrating as I had kept up with the two of them until falling into my hole. I gained some ground having a shorter course to sail and not having to contend with the current. But once the other two turned at Batt Rock to race to U62, I knew the jig was up. I was making over 5 knots but both of them had to be doing over 6 in the other direction.)*

The route to Welbury was near dead down wind and RH had the spinnaker up in good time. Oasis had problems flying her chute as it is not designed for going downwind and for much of this crossing was rather limp and twisted on the forestay.

(Greg Taylor interjects: Skeena Cloud wondered about hoisting her spinnaker in the building wind once she was on course for Welbury, finally deciding: no guts, no glory. I took a deep broad reach under genoa with the tide into the Pass while getting the spinnaker set. SC then ran another deep broad reach under her asymmetric to Welbury Spar, thereby avoiding having to gybe the spinnaker. Everything went well...until I figured out that I would have to reach across to Ganges Shoal after making Welbury Spar. I checked out the other two boats. Oasis had his hands full with an out of control spinnaker, and while RH carried the spinnaker all the way to Ganges shoal, on the way back to Welbury RH changed down to a jib making just two necessary tacks to close the mark and also avoid the rocks on Welbury Reef. I therefore hastily furled the spinnaker and unfurled the genoa as I turned on Welbury Spar. It was a prudent decision as things started to get a bit hairy.)

Reaching Welbury Spar the wind was still favouring the east of southeast and we continued the spinnaker run to the Ganges Shoal mark and making a judicious change hoisted the genoa and downed the spinnaker. The spinnaker pole was stowed just as we reached the turn. Such good timing!!

Reaching up to Welbury and then across to U62 we had to go all the way to the Prevost shore and then tack. We were able to make the mark with 6 feet to spare and rounded to head for Batt Rock. Initially we

allowed too much leeway for the flood tide but soon eased off, with the jib doing yeoman's work with an outside-the-shroud setting for the sheet, rather than the inboard sheeting for a close-hauled course.

In the meantime Oasis had a wider course into Captain's passage before setting for U62.

(Greg Taylor interjects: RH, when sorted, flew past SC on its way back to Welbury Spar. I thought Oasis' difficulties would give me a chance to catch her. But once she too was organized she began to stretch her legs like the thoroughbred she is and soon passed SC going the other way. Before reaching Ganges Shoal I put a couple of rolls on the genoa in preparation for the upwind/close reach work back to Wellbury and then to U62. But after getting clear of Second Sister on the back across found I had to reef the main to keep SC on her feet. It was exhilarating. I was doing 6+ kts under reefed main and genoa. I saw Oasis tack deep up into Captains Passage to come onto port to make U62. The wind seemed to back a little for me after rounding Welbury Spar so I went onto port and then onto starboard for a straight shot to U62, thereby making up time and distance on Oasis. But once Oasis started reaching from U62 to Batt Rock, she looked like she was not so much sailing, as flying low. I could see why, once I turned on U62 and set a course for Batt Rock, I unfurled the genoa [keeping the reef in the main] and soon SC was doing 7 kts. That's as fast as she has ever gone for any length of time. Once, SC rounded Batt Rock, it was all downwind work to the finish under white sails. The wind was still too high to risk the spinnaker.)

Rounding Batt Rock minutes ahead of Oasis there was still plenty of wind and we proceeded wing on wing with jib and main. Approaching Ganges Shoal the wind moderated and we raised the spinnaker a second time for a good sail in to the finish line. Oasis was making good time and even closing the gap a little.

It was a lovely sail yet again. Even with three boats, we enjoyed the after race camaraderie and look forward to the next several weeks of racing, where we have some interesting courses on the schedule.

Please come out with or without your boat. Many of us will welcome extra crew so you will always get a ride. Are there any juniors out there we should be having along?

See you Wednesday.

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Start: Start 1, Finishes: Place

Rank	Boat	SailNo	NHC3	Start	Finish	Elapsed	Corrected	BCR	Points
1	Radiant Heat	67901	0.955	10:30	13:47:26	03:17:26	03:08:33	0.955	100
2	Oasis	421	0.965	10:30	13:52:30	03:22:30	03:15:25	0.931	67
3	Skeena Cloud	121	0.869	10:30	14:17	03:47:00	03:17:16	0.831	33