

Long Harbour Race

Sunday April 19, 2020

By Tony Brogan and some of his fellow sailors

The wind was blowing stronger what was forecast on arrival at the docks. Having prepared for lighter winds, I had rigged the 135 genoa. With the breeze rattling the rigging in the boats around me, I bagged the genoa and put it safely down below. From what I was seeing, I wanted no clutter on the decks today .

Wandering the docks at 0915, I noted several boats being prepped by absorbed skippers. It was nice to exchange greetings, even at long range, with smiling expectant faces. It looked like it might be a good turnout.

CH 72 crackled to life right on schedule to begin the Skipper's Meeting. Our new racer, Damian was welcomed. Damian, who upon finding that COVID 19 made crewing impossible, decided he needed to buy and race his own boat. And this he did, becoming the proud new owner of a Pearson 33, Muse, and came to put his new boat and skills to the test.

The long Harbour course was announced and out on the water we went. During the pre race period another 2 boats appeared to make a grand total of 15 boats out to race. A modern day record!!

Our start line, extended this season, was now looking a mite shorter!.

The wind was showing a steady 10 knots with stronger interludes and so all the single handed skippers had their hands full. Getting to the last 10 minutes to the start RH made a couple of practice runs at the starboard end and determined lots of room was available, even when avoiding the moored boats and then cruised across to the far side of the harbour and with 4 minutes to go turned back.

Boat speed was a little too fast as Radiant Heat turned for the line with still 2 mins to go. There a little ahead was Oasis, luffing to the Starboard pin end, and just aft of her was another boat. I settled in and also luffed up but I did not want to get to the inside of the pin and so stayed to windward. Fortunately, both boats ahead luffed well to the outside of the line and I eased up coming alongside the pin and then bearing off down the line which was clear, with 20 seconds left, leaving both boats behind. Sails were set for close hauled and with 3 seconds left, hardened up, and was over at full speed. Boats were to the left and the right, but RH was in clear air near the centre of the line.



Skeena Cloud approached from the port end, on port tack, as most boats seemed to be milling around the starboard end of the line. The plan was to pass the pin, flip over onto a starboard tack,

and cross the line. But the wind picked up and I found myself racing towards Oasis and Radiant Heat coming from the other end on starboard tack. Knowing they would not be crossing me I kept to the outside so as not to foul them and waited for them to harden up. It was still a little heart in mouth approaching each other at a combined 10 knots! Unfortunately, they luffed a bit, paying the clock, delaying my tack, leaving me to cross the line about 20 seconds later than I had intended.

Meanwhile, above the sails popping, I could hear ‘shiver me timbers’ off my starboard quarter. It was something seldom seen, a angry Ben Sutton. Ben, like Tony and I, had rigged a larger sail for the expected lighter winds. Us, not being as smart as Tony, left ours up. It seems Ben was having some sort of disagreement with his genoa. I know I am still learning all this sailing jargon, but I must say, I hadn’t heard those names for sailing gear before.

Another description of the start and a wonderful tale of some of the frustrations we all felt here and there is eloquently penned by Kay D:

‘Beautiful wind today, my sailing not so much. I forgot my watch and was counting down the last minute in my head when suddenly there was the bow of Oasis right by my boom. I fouled Bob Jones on the start and was pushed over early as well. I had to restart and do a 720 penalty turn then proceeded to duck the entire fleet in search of clear air. Not much to be found and being at the back of the pack limits your tactical choices. Flew the spinnaker on both runs and managed to do two terrible gybes with hour glasses on both of them. I concluded that when the helmsman went forward to be the crew he was a lot more clumsy than he used to be, taking so much time that the bungee cord self steering tried to hurry him up by rounding up and broaching. Apparently yelling “Awe, come on” very loudly has no effect on bungee cord.

Still a fun day and I finished at 12.44.32. As I was telling Rosemary of my tribulations I tried to find a silver lining. “It will be good for my handicap” I said. She was laughing and replied “Sounds like you are a handicap.”. The boats going the other way in control did look very good indeed.’



As usual Ogoogo had made a good start and was placed to the lee and ahead. I was happy to tack as little as possible in the strong winds and so made the long tacks from shore to shore.

Ogoogo did likewise and moved a little ahead. Caliente crossed astern and then the next crossing was just ahead. She did an early tack to port and set herself on my windward side slowly clawing her way ahead and eventually stealing Radiant Heat's wind. We fell behind soon enough and were soon in clear air again.

Behind a good distance were the larger faster boats jockeying for position with each other (with tales of their own to tell) with Oasis and Second wind in the front of that group.

Meanwhile, in the back, Battle Axe and Skeena Cloud had their own tacking duel, crossing each other's sterns at close range, at what for us, is high speed, until Battle Axe, making a final tack out toward Second Sister took a lead over Skeena Cloud that she kept for the balance of the race.

Radiant Heat now took the long tack to the right passing the Ganges shoal marker while going to the saltspring shore.

Turning back to Starboard tack and heading well out from Second Sister toward Welbury Reef, Ogoogo was now well ahead followed by Caliente. On the long Starboard tack I noted that I was a knot slower than on the port tack but I have yet to resolve that problem.

Both boats ahead tacked to the right before passing over Welbury Reef. In the meantime, Second Wind making good speed, and pointing well, came up to windward passing Radiant Heat as she crossed over the safe part of the reef. Radiant Heat, aiming for awhile at the rock awash part of the reef was, in the last quarter mile, lifted to a safe crossing and did likewise.

Wind on the apparent wind gauge was now often in the 14-18 knot range. Lifted into Captains Passage, Second Wind tacked for the Horda Shoals mark to see Caliente far ahead already heading toward Long Harbour. But not so fast. Ogoogo radioed Caliente to remind her to round Horda Shoals. (*I swear I said Horda Shoals on the radio during the Skipper's meeting, but knowing how I would feel if I had to turn around and return to a mark in those conditions, I still apologize for any misunderstanding. Good on Ole for both returning to the mark and not chasing me around the floats with a boat hook upon his return! – FCR*)

Ogoogo was now around, having passed Second Wind, who was still headed to the Horda Shoals Mark. Radiant Heat had now tacked and was following Second Wind 100 yards back. A frustrated Caliente was headed back to the missed mark.

As Radiant heat was approaching the mark she was busy watching Second Wind pass the mark but a sudden gust caused her to 'autotack' and she was now in irons and stopped. (*Eric later told me something that many echoed, he would looking for some relief of his sore muscles upon getting home. His secret was the hot tub, mine was a cold beer, others said they were looking forward to getting horizontal in the warm sun.*

Bob Jones exclaimed, "Wow, what a day, I was exhausted at Horda Shoals (the second time). Got the boat off the wind and damn near collapsed!"

And from Ben, "It was a stimulating race (he admitted to be stimulated to use the 'F' work more than once). I won't need to go to the gym now, which is just as well, because I couldn't if I wanted to!"

And finally, from Damian, who did spectacularly well on his first outing on his new boat. What an initiation!, "It seems I still have some to learn when it comes to racing a sailboat. From having a reef line holding my main back, tacking too early, not being familiar with all of the marks, and still getting familiar with Muse, there are certainly a lot of variables that I will have to familiarize myself with. Thank you for letting me take part today. I am eagerly awaiting to go through the process of becoming an associate member. Anything you can do to help me in this endeavour would be greatly appreciated"

Returning to the race, Caliente was returning on a fast reach towards the Horda Shoals mark on the port side. She may or may not have had an overlap at the correct time but Radiant Heat gave room anyway for Caliente to pass inside. But looking at Caliente I could not see the skipper. Had he even seen me?

A loud hail from Radiant Heat caused Caliente to harden up and pass the wrong side of the mark. Radiant Heat rounded and headed for Long Harbour at 6 knots downwind. Ole later said that hearing me hail, and not being able to clearly see Radiant Heat, caused him to act quickly on the wheel to avoid a possible collision. I am happy he did as for a moment I envisioned being t-boned at 7 knots!.

Meanwhile, all you fast boats think it's easy being in the back of the pack. Here is what it can look like from my perspective. I often feel like I am going the wrong way on a one way road.



Caliente quickly recovered and was abeam with Radiant Heat all down Long harbour. Twice we crossed each other until finally Caliente squeezed ahead at Clamshell Island passing with what looked like to me, inches to spare from both channel markers, and coming out the other side onto the tack 2-3 boat lengths ahead.

Ogopogo had a lot of fun getting down to Clamshell Island. Long Harbour is a busy place at the best of times, but they had an equipment problem to liven things up. From skipper Paul:

"We had a little excitement Sunday on the Ogopogo. We found Long Harbour a little narrower than usual as we ping ponged in with big red up but managed 4 reasonably good jibes with our marriage still intact, dog still on board, and only one more spinnaker jibe to do before the leeward mark....when the boom fell off. No bang, no fuss, it just fell off. Outhaul, mainsheet, vang all still attached, but the front of the boom was laying on the deck rather than attached to the mast. So we agreed to take the spinnaker down early. Rhys took the helm while holding the dog, I made a rare trip forward of the companionway to inspect the situation at the mast, and April rummaged in the cabin for the toolbox. As it turned out, a cotter ring had un-ringed, the pin was miraculously still half in the hole, and even more miraculously went back into the hole when I gave it and the front of the boom a big, simultaneous, push. April emerged from the cabin with the toolbox, took the helm while Rhys came forward to put his thumb on the pin so that I could resume my normal station at the back of the boat because we still needed to do that one last jibe to avoid hitting the mark. Otherwise known as clamshell island. April then found a spare cotter ring with the proper gauge and diameter, secured the pin so that Rhys could have his thumb back and so that we could jibe one more time, get the jib up, sheet it in, tighten the outhaul, get the jib more up, sheet it more in, get the dog to the high side, so we could finally get out of Long and Narrow Harbour."



It was a rollicking sail. It was well worth being there. It blew away the COVID cobwebs of house arrest. Everyone seemed to have a great sail.



It's possible we could make 16-18 or more of us on the start line for our annual sail past race in two weeks time, so please join us (as long as the COVID-19 Race Protocols are adhered to). (*The rest of the festivities will not, of course, be going ahead, but we will race a course that allows us to salute our burgee flying at the club – FCR*)

Spread the word skippers. Sailing races hone your sailing skills. Increase personal confidence. Provide fresh air and exercise and is good for the soul.



Congratulations to Ogopogo for once again taking line honours, Second Wind for his second win in a row and Battle Axe for doing well once again. And again to Muse, for a great performance on a challenging day skippering his new boat for the first time. (And a huge thank you to Tony for again writing a terrific post-Race report! – FCR)

Photo credits go to FCR, Marilyn Guille, Drew Stotesbury, and Peter Toby. Thanks all.



The screenshot shows a mobile phone interface with a table of race results. The top status bar indicates the time is 5:18 PM on Monday, April 20, and the battery level is at 27%. Below the status bar is a navigation bar with icons for back, forward, search, and more. The main content is a table with the following columns: PHRF, Club, Finish, Corrected, Rating for, club, Rating, Rating, Boat, Skipper, Time, Time, Place, Next Race, and points. The data rows are as follows:

PHRF	Club	Finish	Corrected	Rating for	club	Rating	Rating	Boat	Skipper	Time	Time	Place	Next Race	points
117	274	SECOND WIND	van Soeren	12:33:44	01:41:18	1	253	100						
210	363	BATTLE AX	Raddysh	12:50:32	01:43:27	2	345	93						
102	208	EVANGELINE	Sutton	12:34:36	01:51:15	3	193	87						
186	334	SKEENA CLOUD	Taylor	13:00:48	01:54:47	4	322	80						
120	173	OASIS	Jones	12:33:32	01:55:52	5	164	73						
168	198	KARISMA	Lipke	12:38:07	01:55:59	6	192							
138	144	RADIANT HEAT	Brogan	12:28:50	01:56:20	7	141	60						
185	175	SPARKY	Hillier	12:39:39	02:01:15	8	175							
202	197	KAY D	Herbert	12:44:32	02:01:58	9	200	47						
	165	RAMPART	DeRoos	12:40:28	02:03:48	10	171	40						
72	85	CALIENTE	Andersen	12:25:20	02:03:55	11	94	33						
114	41	OGOPOGO	Faget	12:16:59	02:03:57	12	53	27						
167	144	IMP	Leitch	12:38:28	02:05:45	13	159	20						
100	129	SOUL THYME	Simpson	12:35:52	02:06:04	14	147	13						
	324	MUSE	Sorochynski	13:14:11	02:06:27	15	345							