

## **Wednesday Night Racing: August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

**Report by Tony Brogan with some additional insights by John Tulip and Martin Hebert**

Before getting to another outstanding report from Tony, let's hear from John and Martin.

*What a glorious evening, nice breeze and lovely weather.*

*After last week's debacle at the start and needing some runway to wind up and point we decided to lolligag along. We took the start on port at the club end. Our aim was to try and get out of sync with the fleet initially. Seemed to work reasonably well. A lovely tack over towards Scott point saw 9 knots and lifting breeze. Much the same all the way up to the top. We're starting to figure it out as a team.*

*Around the windward mark we were determined to fly the chute after our wimpiness last week. We also resolved to sail fairly hot apparent wind angles. Lots of fun resulted. Basically same tacking angles down as we did up. Best speed was just over 15 knots and we saw constant 12-14s. Crew work was great, lots of gybes without any drama. The boat likes to be pushed. Now we need to figure out low wind sailing.*

*What a great night.*

*Cheers*

*The Pturbodactyl bunch*

And from Martin (it was great to see Simone out again)

*Nice breeze and appreciated not having to stare into the glare looking for Ganges Shoal. The first five minutes were exciting and I managed to duck the starboard tackers by at least three feet, refraining from giving them only the three inches required in one design racing or the 3mm in IOM racing. After that it was bring on the parade. Some curious large waves, now what was causing them? Good surf potential downwind and we overtook the wind on some of the larger ones. Interesting.*

*cheers,*

*Martin*

*And finally, a huge shout-out to Nicholas and Rob on Sable for their first race. It was a challenging evening for a first race and they acquitted themselves well. Hope to see them back soon. -FCR*

### **Now on to Tony...**

Yet again, those too busy, or for other reasons not available, you missed a grand night of sailing last night.

The wind forecast was a bit iffy showing 4-8 knots to 6 pm and then a chance of easing to 2 knots or so. Belying that was the note for "gusts" 8-12 knots during the race time and past 8 pm.

Down on the dock at 4 pm it was a steady 7- 8 knots SE and more on the water. Arriving early to clean both sides of the "Bottom" of Radiant Heat, I discussed with "Starboard John" the sail options for the day and as he was the only crew, we settled for the jib and agreed to have "a relaxed easy sail and enjoy ourselves. The spinnaker was rigged too as the thought was easing winds would be lighter and likely coming home would be downwind?

The radio skippers meeting was brief. A roll call and the course announcement. It was U60 (P) and return. A short course was established that abandoned the fickle air spot of Ganges Shoals and was instead 45 degrees true to sister's lighthouse, or to the compass challenged, when the lighthouse is on the beam for boats running down the harbour!  
Time limit 7.30PM

That was a bold call by FCR that resulted in one of the best (another one) sails of the year.

As we were preparing to cast off a face appeared at the dockside. "Are you Tony, I was referred to you for a sail race ride?"

"Have you sailed?"

"A long time ago!!!"

Now a big pause. Hand on the throttle. John holding the bow line.....

Deep breath!

"Ok come aboard".

"Thanks, I'll stay out of the way".

"Good"

"Cast off the Bow"

And so we made to the water. A quick beat into the wind gave us 16 knot apparent and looking at our guest, Flavian, "Do you know about self tailing winches?".

"Yes"!!

"Good take the starboard side"

*(Interesting story about Flavian. He owns a B&B in Skidegate on Haida Gwai and was down here buying a Catalina 27 which he intends to sail back home in a couple of weeks. I owned the same boat in Prince Rupert, sailing it to Haida Gwai, Alaska, and did the reverse trip down to Vancouver. I assure him the Catalina is more than capable, if one watches the weather – FCR)*

Three quick tacks later the "crew" was whipped into shape and we turned back for the line to see 9 other boats roaming the waves looking for the best angles to start.

With 12 minutes to go we dipped into Squalor Bay turned at our designated floating buoy and turned for the line. Not a bad approach at 60 degrees and one minute, 20 seconds for the run close hauled.

We turned across the harbour and back and noted Oasis and That's Life idling toward the starboard end. Ogoopogo, Sorcery X and Pturbodactyl were prospecting the centre and port end, while Kay D was darting between the "Big Boys" with great maneuverability. Skeena Cloud was eying the line too.

With three and a half minutes to go, we approached the Starboard end of the line . it was too early for a dip into the "Bay" so we tacked back for a minute and then headed toward our mark. That's Life and Oasis crossed ahead closer to the docks and we turned for the line with a minute and a half to go. We were well set for the line a little early and there came Oasis from the right barging for the line. They would actually have to cross our bow before hardening for the line directly in front of Radiant Heat as they crossed the line. Radiant Heat would have run up their stern but instead hardened to Windward and slowed, falling back a little. That's life was also clear. We crossed the line and immediately tacked to the right for clear air away from Oasis and That's Life and had a good angle toward Walters spit before tacking back onto starboard to head across the harbour.

Sorcery X had a good start and was enjoying the conditions and already pulling clear. Likewise Ogoopogo. We noted with satisfaction that despite our jinky start we were passing ahead of Oasis and Second Wind. On our Port tack we were barely halfway across the harbour when here came Pturbodactyl on a starboard tack. I thought we were ahead but underestimated their speed and realized we needed a quick tack, which we did, just shy of crossing their path. We had well completed with our tack when Pturbodactyl's leeway caused her to fall toward us as she attempted to pass. She came so close to Radiant Heat that we had to give way a little to avoid contact.

We were not done yet. As we made out toward Sisters we were wind shadowed by That's Life overtaking to the windward side. As soon as we were able we tacked under her stern and into clear air. Not so fast. That's Life tacked and covered us, and with her superior speed, threatened to blanket us again. We repeated the maneuver in the opposite direction and tacked to starboard under her stern. It must be mentioned that John and Flavian were now working seamlessly on the tacks and we lost little time with quick jib sets.

Finally we were in the clear and there was time for a quick look around. Pterodactyl had moved ahead, battling for the lead with Sorcery X and Ogoopogo. We had a little separation from Oasis and Second Wind and there was Kay D doing well!

The lead boats tacked toward Batt Rock and the Salt spring shore. We opted for the long Starboard tack toward Welbury spar. Oasis was astern and to leeward just clearing Second Sisters and also on a Port tack, but headed for Welbury Reef.

Second Wind was also enjoying the breeze and had sailed a wider course away from Sisters, following our track 200 or so yards back. (*I was grinding my teeth watching –*

*having already committed to the Salt Spring shore - Second Wind get the same lift - FCR)*

My plan was to get the wind lift across the Captains Passage toward Prevost and hopefully get the remains of the tidal stream, currently ebbing, for a push in the right direction. Basically it worked.

Oasis tacked out from Welbury reef across Captains Passage across the ebb which I hoped pushed her in the wrong direction as she carried across toward Salt Spring before tacking for the U60 mark. *(I am sure my crew - Michael - is using his skills as a former spy, and future physics PhD, to collate this info and package it into a tactical equation that will take up most of my mainsail to express. Go Michael!)*

We made progress across the passage on a port tack and were lifted by the wind 30 degrees as we approached the Prevost shore shy of U62. Half way across we passed the tide line and we had a 10 degree push by the current from left to right. Second Wind, sailing a little faster and sometimes higher than Radiant Heat was closer and receiving the same benefits.

We tacked right on to port tack toward and past U60 mark. The apparent wind was holding 14-16 knots. Boat speed over ground at times reached 6.5 knots . We could see the lead boats turned to approach the mark from deep down toward the Salt Spring side. They were 20 degrees off our starboard bow a half mile away. We tacked back toward Prevost for a while battling a choppy 18 inch wave action that slowed us. Reaching shallow water we turned again to ride the tide toward U60 now a half mile away and saw Pturbodactyl rounding, SorceryX approaching, with Ogotogo coming up toward us and passing not far ahead. There was a period of white capped choppy water as the current ran against the wind. We were bounced around some against the waves, some time slowed, sometimes not.

Two quick tacks and Ogotogo *(that Skipper has a fine crew. I mean, there is only so much can do with a beer in one hand and the tiller in the other - FCR)* was around as we made our final approach. That's Life was there to, just ahead, and soon one tack later we reached around and found ourselves 150 yards behind them.

We thought setting the spinnaker was going to be a challenge. John had only seen it go up and down, and Flavian had never handled one before.

Finding our course to be a very deep reach I asked Flavian to helm the boat. Yes a total stranger in 12-14 knots of breeze downwind. While on the beat I had discovered that Flavian had sailed a Hobie Cat. A frenchman who sailed Hobie Cat HAD to be a sailor? Right!

"Follow that boat", said I, nodding at That's Life. So I went forward like a crab on the foredeck, loosed the spinnaker bag, set the pole with John's assist, came back and set the pole angle, took up some sheet and said to John, "Haul her up!"

And up she went and popped full. Like we had been doing it as a team all our lives! All that was left was a five mile run back to the finish. We would see who overtook whom on the way in.

We were slowly reeling in That's Life who were NFS. Ogoopogo was speed gybing downwind and out to the starboard in Captan's passage.

Sorcery X was well ahead making better than good speed under NFS. Pturbodactyl was almost out of sight near Sisters. Second Wind was around behind us and setting her asymmetric, but a little further back than before. Oasis was approaching the U60 mark. I did not note the other boats except they seemed a fair way aft. *(He is probably referring to me, being last. We decided not to set our spinnaker as we were doing 5.5 to 6 knots anyway, and the trade-off between the marginally better speed, and potential for screw-ups doesn't compute. And it was a good decision because the skipper (me) was taking work calls while rigging the spinnaker before the race and got the sheets tangled. Once we were in the harbour the breeze lessened and the chop decreased so we decided it was past time to set the spinnaker. Or we intended to only to find aforementioned tangled sheets out above the sprit ahead of the forestay. My mess, my fix. So I went up and turned the air blue straightening things out. It was so much fun. I did it twice. I am glad I wasn't up there twenty minutes earlier. I would have got a bit damp. Once set, we had a fun run finishing the race. As the other commentators say, it was fun and exciting sailing – FCR)*

We had a steady run back without needing to gybe. We were a steady 6- 6.4 knots over ground and we slowly passed that's Life. Sometimes the wind eased, but then in the harbour picked up again. On corrected time this will be a good day for Second Wind who followed us in as we gained little on her. Oasis was further back.

It was , I repeat, a great day for a sail. We disbursed to the dock tables for a while and dispensed refreshment , nibbles and chitchat, Covid style. Judging by the smiles and laughter I gathered everyone was in a good mood. No wonder 😊.

See you Sunday for the Keeners Port race.

Club			Finish	Corrected		Rating for	club
Rating	Boat	Skipper	Time	Time	Place	Next Race	points
226	SECOND WIND	van Soeren	19:08:55	01:52:20	1	214	100
24	PTURBODACTYL	Tulip	18:36:33	01:55:22	2	15	90
221	KAY D	Herbert	19:18:21	02:01:22	3	215	80
132	RADIANT HEAT	Brogan	19:03:55	02:03:32	4	129	70
316	SKEENA CLOUD	Taylor	19:39:00	02:03:37	5	316	60
158	OASIS	Jones	19:12:28	02:07:00	6	161	50
133	THAT'S LIFE	McAllister	19:11:00	02:10:24	7	139	40
77	SORCERY X	Slakov	18:59:58	02:10:37	8	86	30
35	OGOPOGO	Faget	18:56:18	02:16:12	9	47	20
	SABLE	Sladen-Dew	dnf		10		10