

# **Ben Mohr Rock Race #1**

**Report by Tony Brogan and Greg Taylor**  
**Pictures and video by Greg Taylor and Anthony Wilkensen**  
**November 22, 2020**

It was a lovely day on the water. The forecast promised 4-6 knots from the SE but we had little of that and from every direction other than SE. John arrived at 0830 and we got all shipshape in time to hear the roll call.

The course was set as previously advertised: Start, U62 (P) Ben Mohr (P), U62 (S), and finish. Start as proclaimed 0930 and finish by 15.30. The wind was coming and going from the West, East, North and points in between on a whim.

We opted for the light air genoa and had the spinnaker packed to use if required. We headed out in reverse and as the wind of the moment was west we hotfooted to the centre and then slowing to sail only raised the main and then the genoa. There was 25 minutes to go, enough time to leisurely inspect the start line and note that flags on the buoys were moving. We planned a port hand start away from the fleet at the starboard end when we were hailed in succession by boats late for the start. On the water was Skeena Cloud, Evangeline, Radiant Heat and Second Wind. First Oasis called in, saying they were running late, then Battle Axe, then Soul Thyme. Ogoogo would have been the last to come out, but wisely decided it was too wet for him to be out. The start was delayed by 5 minutes and then ten. Each time we were setting up for a run to the start when we had to reset. Then with three minutes to the 0940 final start, the wind died.

*(What had happened was that some had only read the 10:30 start time in the Crowsnest, which had been subsequently changed to 09:30 via an email from the FCR. Consequently, there were two starting times out there, so everyone was right. Except me, I should have advised Wendy as to the change, and not assumed everyone reads the FCR's emails. To avoid this in the future, the 2021 Race Instructions will advise that the FCR may change race details by email. I will attempt to keep Wendy updated but sometimes any such change will come out after the Crowsnest is posted. So, people will have to read the FCR's emails. Finally, the 2021 calendar will have the 09:30 start for longer races late or early in the year when daylight may be factor so they get picked up by Wendy for the Crowsnest. I apologize for the confusion - FCR)*

By good chance we were now at the port end of the line on a starboard approach heading toward the fleet congregated at the starboard end all drifting up to the line on port tack so at a minute to go we tacked over to windward of the fleet and just ahead where we drifted, with little wind, up to and over the line, on a beam port hand reach, in undisturbed air.

We thought we saw vague wind shadows on the water over to the left side and ahead and so we hardened a little and while the fleet captains chatted about who was in second place, we moved off up the harbour, putting several hundred yards between us and the next boat. It rained periodically, there was mist on the water and I was happy to

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have mast head running lights to point out where we were located. With time to look around we noted a spectacularly mystic day.

At one or two points along the way we tried the spinnaker but nothing works in zero wind yet we still had 0.4 -0.8 knots over ground. Not even our wimper drew a breath. We headed up to Welbury reef as now we were too late for the flood assist as after noon the ebb would run. We made painful progress past Welbury spar while the fleet trailed languidly behind. Oasis was the next around Second sister and trailed us up and past horda shoals while we were headed left of U62 by 15 to 45 degrees. Here the current kicked in and the wind left us drifting past U62 traveling broad side headed to the Channel islands.

*(They made better progress than me. Ian had come over for a visit in That's Life. He had hopped in his skiff and came out to see what was happening. We had a nice long chat. Long and absorbing enough that I found myself drifting into the shallows. So, the ever accommodating Ian came alongside and maneuvered me out of danger. Ironically, it was Ian, who I didn't know at the time, who got me off the rocks on the other side of the harbour earlier this spring. Ian mentioned that he had moved off island, which saddened me. He is a good guy and a fine sailor. He had bought That's Life in Majorca and sailed her to Salt Spring.*

*And speaking of new boats, Heather came by in her new 2009 Bavaria 31. She was entering the harbour after having picked her up in Vancouver. The boat is well tricked out for both racing and cruising. I was green with envy. Good for Heather, she has been looking for a new boat for some time. It appears it was worth the wait.*

*Back to race, knowing a 720 penalty would take days to complete, I motored over to chat with Second Wind. The three of us, Battle Axe, Second Wind, and Skeena Cloud had a desultory sail out to Second Sister where 4 or 5 knots of SSE found us taking us half the way out to U62. On the way I was chatting with Tony who said he was on his way to the Channel Islands on the tide. Looking out I could see him heading skidding sideways across the horizon.*

*So, already DSQ for not doing my 720, I pulled the plug, turned around, unfurled the spinnaker, and got ready for a fun spinnaker run home. True to the day, the breeze immediately flipped into the NE. Unsurprised, I rearranged things, and Second Wind and me had a nice sail almost home on a close reach.*

*So while the race may not have been a success, the day certainly was. -FCR)*

In the meantime wrapped within their own little wind bubble first Oasis, Then Evangeline, and finally soul Thyme all tacked , tacked again and yet again as all all circled around in a square dance passing and repassing each other as we traversed several circles each. Wind puffs came and went inspiring hope. Put the current

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prevailed, not letting one boat get a rounding of U62. Each in turn thought they would be the first around. Rats, thwarted again.

Soul Thyme tried to escape the current by squeezing around Hawkings Island but came to rest in no wind and sat and watched the antics of the rest of us. Finally we all decided that was enough fun for the day we motored home.

We will try again next week. But I have news for you! The current forecast is for zero to 1 knot of wind. The currents will be slightly better. The showers much the same as today. At this rate it will be christmas before we finish this race. 🤔🎵🎸 (Oh well, if it is to be a day like yesterday, I will take it. But as we all know living on the West Coast, a forecast of what it might be doing - weather wise - a week out, verges on science fiction - FCR)

Here are a couple of videos taken by Anthony aboard Evangeline

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