

Last Wednesday Night Race

September 1, 2021

Pictures by Peter Toby, Nicky Arnoldus, and Drew Stotesbury

The last Wednesday Night Race from Second Sister, around Ben Mohr Rock, and back to Second Sister was phenomenal. Unfortunately, some idiot set the course to start and finish at the club.

It looked so inviting, a nice breeze from the east, three hours to do it in, the tide okay. Why not? Well, 'Windy' did say there would be a transition from the NNE to the south. The transitions occurred in the harbour, coming, and going, but 'Windy' was consistent in yet again getting everything else wrong. That's my excuse for why I set the course. It was 'Windy's' fault. I have no excuse for why I thought a 9.5 nm course would be a good idea for Skeena Cloud. Sorry crew. Please come back.

As Oasis sailed by us at the starting line, he asked, 'you sure you don't want to change the course?' That got me thinking. Then Paul crosses by, telling me, 'this is dumb, but too late now', looking at me with an unnerving smile that reminded me of a lion smacking his lips when a clueless antelope (yours truly) invites him to have a drink at the waterhole.

Imp quietly, and competently, did their thing, as usual, appearing undaunted. But they never seem daunted, by anything.

Skeena Cloud did four things really well. One, she had a terrific crew. Mia directing traffic in the cockpit. Michael on the foredeck, and Drew on music, doing everything that needed to be done, that no one else could, and me, fumbling everyone's name. Janice tells me men live in boxes. That unlike women, they can't occupy more than one box at a time. Well, I was trying to be in the trim box, course box, where the hell is the competition box, all at the same time. The name therefore box eluded me for a bit. So Mia became Nicky, Drew Michael, Michael Drew, and Drew, what's his name'. Sorry crew. Please come back.

The second thing Skeena Cloud did well was crossing the start line on time. but we were soon passed by Imp and Firefly, as we struggled with our spinnaker. Theo and Douglas were slick in getting their spinnaker up, and drawing, soon after the start.

Soon, PocoLoco, Imp, and Firefly were drawing ahead in the desultory breeze. Oasis, looming large beside us, stealing what breeze there was, struggled with their spinnaker. We heard some words that have not yet made it in the Oxford Dictionary. Oasis and Skeena Cloud eventually separated, them to the east side of the harbour, and us to the west. Both of us were in dead air. But at least we were moving, a bit. Oasis was squatting on a mirror.

Exasperated, I finally said, 'let's have a beer'. As soon as we have a beer in our hands, the wind will come and interfere with our enjoyment of it'. Mia said, 'we don't allow drinking on Shingebiss when racing'. My answer was, 'we aren't racing, we are sitting here discussing the history, who lives on, did live on, pothole arrangement, setting, and pretty much everything else known, or made-up, about Rourke Rd', where Drew lives, and Mia used to live. This was the third thing we did well. The beer, I mean.

And, on cue, the breeze picked up...for Oasis. Filling in from the NNE, it found Oasis first. Meanwhile, a flag on a house (on Rourke Rd, of course) next to us stiffened in a SE breeze. Skeena Cloud, stuck in the middle, slowly drank their beer, and discussed, you guessed it: Rourke Rd. Sorry crew. Please come back.

Finally, rounding Second Sister, too far to the west, we entered the Captain Pass trades. Charging across in pursuit of the fleet, we passed PocoLoco at Welbury Spar. It doesn't require mentioning that she had already rounded the mark and was headed home.

Leaving Captain's Pass on a reach, in 8 knots of breeze, we discussed if there was sufficient distance to hoist the spinnaker. After careful and thoughtful consideration, as is his want, Michael summed up his thoughts, "no guts, no glory". Being we were passing Radiant Heat, Evangeline, and Oasis going the other way, heading for the barn, I wasn't too sure about the glory part. But it would take some guts, and Michael is the bow guy.

So, we had a great hoist, the spinnaker went up well, the genoa furled, and we were hurtling toward the mark at over hull speed. It was a blast! But, it couldn't last. The mark was getting larger by the second. We waited. We waited some more. Then, near the last minute, "drop it!" Remembering what Paul said about releasing the tack line to gather in the foot before releasing the halyard, I opened the clutch on the tack line.

Looking over my shoulder, I was aghast to see the spinnaker billowed out, drawing hard, *beside* the boat. Oh, yeah, Paul's instructions were for when the spinnaker was to be brought into the cockpit, not brought down on the foredeck.

Michael, with a death grip on the working sheet, was being pulled up and over the lifelines, one leg raised high in the air, the other with tenuous purchase on the foredeck. I thought to myself, 'he looks like Mary fucking Poppins.

We sorted things and rounded the mark in fine fashion, and headed home. Sorry crew. Please come back.

Congratulations to PocoLoco, Imp, Firefly (who missed the cutoff by only 2 minutes), and Thing One on doing so well on a challenging day: great work.







August Wednesday evening series

Yacht	race 1	race 2	race 3	race 4	race5	total	place	point
Pocoloco	2	7	3	3	1	16	1	100
Radiant Heat	1	5	6	2	4	18	2	94
Skeena Cloud	9	1	1	7	4	22	3	88
Oasis	9	4	5	4	4	26	4	81
Evangeline	5	9	8	1	4	27	5	75
Imp	8	9	4	5	2	28	6	69
Lil Foot	3	9	7	7	4	30	7	
Pturbodactyl	9	9	2	7	4	31	8	56
Firefly	6	3	13	7	4	33	9	50
Shingebiss	4	6	13	7	4	34	10	44
Rampart	9	2	13	7	4	35	11	38
Thalia	9	8	9	7	4	37	12	31
Thing One	9	9	11	6	3	38	13	25
Second Wind	9	9	10	7	4	39	14	19
Sorcery X	7	9	13	7	4	40	15	13
Yolanda9	9	12	7	4		41	16	6

DNF = DNC = finishers + 1

No discards

Club	Boat	Skipper	Finish Time	Corrected Time	Place	Rating for Next Race
90	POCOLOCO	Faget	18:15:00	02:23:51	1	87
150	IMP	Leitch	18:59:46	02:54:24	2	150
348	THING ONE	Arnoldus	21:16:17	03:56:51	3	351
274	SKEENA CLOUD	Taylor	dnf		4	274
160	EVANGELINE	Sutton	dnf		4	160
156	FIREFLY	Woolcock	dnf		4	156
153	OASIS	Jones	dnf		4	153
141	RADIANT HEAT	Brogan	dnf		4	141

