

2021 SNSYC-SISC Annual Regatta: Salt Spring event

September 18/19, 2021

Pictures by John Tulip, Bob Jones, Douglas Woolcock, and Bob Jones

Friday was our first storm of the fall. Southeast winds up to 35 knots, a deluge of rain, and poor visibility. The weekend was predicted to continue being windy, wet, and cool. Only the most intrepid sailors would venture out in such weather and then only maybe on Saturday morning. I worried that the second chapter of the annual SNSYC-SISC home and Away Regatta was destined to be a bust. While only initiated in 2019, 2020 being lost to the pandemic; the three times the clubs have gotten together to race within this format has led it to being a favourite in the schedule of both clubs. Maybe it is because the regatta captures the spirits of the neighbouring clubs. A respect for both competition and community. We race hard. We strive to do well. But understand it is the love of sailing, the sea, and our local waters that brings us together in a diversity of boats, skill levels, and experience. Building a successful racing program or regatta requires a team of people who want to excel while creating an environment in which all can feel welcome, be supported, and grow as sailors. Something Ted Lasso, and both clubs, do well at.

So, it was with some trepidation that I watched the rain and wind lash the docks when I went down to check things out at lunch on Friday. I decided a look was good enough: the air feeling as wet and cold as the water. It was not fit weather for anyone to be wandering the docks, so I went home. Less than an hour later I got a text from Daryl announcing not that they were coming, or even that they had arrived, but that, '*they had made it*'. I thought, 'these guys are keen. A little crazy. But keen. And that bodes well'.

And so it did. The wind stayed. And the rain – mostly – stayed away. It was a phenomenal weekend of racing, more reminiscent of San Francisco Bay than Salt Spring Island. The wind ranged anywhere from 8 to 18 knots True across the deck.

But none of this would have happened if not for some incredible volunteers. First, I must thank my colleagues from SNSYC: Daryl Homan and John Windas. From SISC, Douglas Woolcock, Paul Faget, John Tulip, Rhys Parry, Bob DeRoos (committee boat), and Bob Jones (the reason you found the rebuilt and flagged Martin's Mark) for taking my 2019 version of this regatta from the amateur show it was, to a first class regatta that would stand that test anywhere. In terms of the social elements of the regatta, a huge thank you to Kim Woolcock, Mia Cahill (who took on everything asked of her, did all better than expected, and then also the many things I hadn't anticipated or had forgotten), and Nicky Arnoldus. These last two were my crew. Skeena Cloud's performance is not indicative of their performance. That's on me. But the picture is indicative of the fun we had and the joy they brought to my weekend.



Two of our members recount the action on the course better than I ever could. Mostly because they had a better vantage point than me, who was mostly hanging on, and looking at sterns drawing away. Except for the time Matilda accidentally cut across our bow as she struggled with an errant spinnaker. After the race Warren made a trip around the docks to find me and offer an unneeded and unnecessary apology. Which just goes to add accent on to the point I made earlier about the spirit of SNSYC and its sailors, and how that same spirit makes these regattas such an enjoyable experience for all.

From Douglas Woolcock:

What an amazing weekend of racing. Being by myself on Saturday, while the family enjoyed the Fall Fair, I was not impressed with the breezy forecast. But, we've all tested our patience and commitment at the other end of the spectrum, and I'll take breeze over bobbing any day! The electric motor performed flawlessly getting me out to the sisters in good time. I ran the batteries down as much as I could to burn up the electrons and save on weight. Rampart was setup and ready to go, and I admired my novice flag making - the flags looked great from 100 meters away! The first race was a fun beat into the breeze and I did all I could to keep Firefly on her feet. Baggy dacron main from the 90's wanted a LOT of attention and I appreciated the updated mainsheet setup. The finish was dramatic - embarrassing in how poorly I did, doubly so when I bungled the spinnaker drop and had to pull it out of the water whilst avoiding boats and the Ganges shoal mark, but also exhilarating roaring over the line at 10+ knots. The second race was much the same, except instead of putting the kite in the drink, I put it between the mast and forestay. I was trying to perform the Mexican drop using the main to direct the spinnaker down into its bag. I've practiced this to good effect, but on Saturday I forgot step #2... Turns out, step #2 is important! Sunday I was blessed to have crew. They're typically fair weather sailors, but Kim had the bit in her teeth, and she was on fire, loving every minute of it. Theo kept us fed from below, and we had a blast. A highlight was not hitting U62 during race 4. I think RH was just behind us and probably had their cameras out for a collision shot!

I think crotch straps would make anyone look like a dork!



And from Bob Jones, SISC's Racing Emeritus

The weekend was a blast from start to finish. For Saturday we had a full crew of David, Ben, Ray and myself. The wind called for the smaller working headsail and a reef in the main. I think, for the first time ever, we had two men on the weather rail, and this coupled with the small jib, allowed fast tacking. Not only did we look like a race boat, we acted like one. Did I mention that the bottom paint was only a week old.

IT was great to have a larger fleet, I don't think we did a single mark rounding with less than three boats all looking for the right slot. With the stronger wind, speed up and the smaller boats very quick on the helm Oasis found it better to take a wider arc, maintain speed and get a fast exit. Crew work was great with a larger, fully experienced crew. With the wind reasonably steady we could fly the asymmetric spin wing on wing. This really paid off on the second race Saturday with the finish at the Clubhouse line. Down the harbour we were holding our own with two small gnats who kept rushing across our bow at great speed with large spins on long poles. Our elation at crossing the line ahead of them was quickly dimmed by a horrendous failed spin take down that took about 10 mins. to unravel.

On Sunday morning we switched to the larger & lighter headsail. We were also missing our Ace helmsman Ray Martin. We were over canvased for the first race to U62 and were a little way back. With the smaller crew we did the downwind return with the larger jib wing on wing and it served us well gaining a couple of places before the line off Second Sister.

The Second race Sunday was more interesting. Start, U62, Martins Mark (named in honour of our ace helmsman, the most senior sailor in our Club), Welbury Spar and finish at Second Sister. We had noted on the first race that the tide was not flooding nearly as fast as expected so elected to make one long tack almost to the Provost shore before stemming the tide to U62. This paid off and we rounded with four other boats in the first pack. We elected to go wing on wing again and this took us North of Welbury reef and a spirited broad reach to Martins Mark. We were still in the leading pack with a four boat rounding. Not sure how it happened but at Welbury Spar we found ourselves lying second behind the large new Hans that rated 78 and maintained this to the finish line. WOW.

At right, Bob, crew aboard Oasis in the mix....



And before providing you with a link to all the pictures and results. Congratulations to the individual winners, Paul and April Faget, who won this event previously in 2019. A further thank you to John



Tulip for keeping recording the times to turn over to Paul, who calculated all the scores

And finally, congratulations to the winning team of Bonita and Border Reiver.



In conclusion, this is the note I sent to my crew after the regatta, informing them of all I had learned, so we might do better next time:



me Sep 19
to Mia, Nicky



1. Sail with Mia and Nicky because even when you lose, you win
2. Maybe buy a drone, give Mia and Nicky the boat, and watch from afar
3. Keep a smaller foresail on the boat. Yes, we never need it racing around SS. Until we do. We raced all weekend with too much heel and weather helm. It was slow. Most of the races we would have placed much better if we were only 3 or 4 minutes faster.
4. Furl ugly. Don't try for a sexy tight furl. Make it look like old gym pants and we will be better off
6. We can fly the big spinnaker. We got it up and down in wind and learned how to fix a twist.
7. Figure out how to hoist the spinnaker quicker. Likely by hoisting at the mast?
8. Drink more beer and let Mia and Nicky handle things.
9. It's a lot more fun when I am not a grumpy ol' fart
10. I had so much fun, and learned so much, that we will have to do more regattas
11. Kneel by my bedside every night, fold my hands together in supplication, and pray to her above, that Mia and Nicky come back.

And until next time, if we can all follow this fellow's example, and figure how to relax, and maybe take the odd nap through these challenging and tumultuous times, we should all be in good shape for the next edition of the Regatta come next April. See you then.



Below is a link to the pictures and results.

https://1drv.ms/f/s!AsWmF5N2tuqsgfUug_sy0AxulzKQWg