

Round Penders Report September 25/26, 2021

Round Penders is the “not to be missed” race for many of us SISC racers. It has the best of everything: strategic choices (which way around Prevost), challenging navigation and tactics (Navy Channel and it’s perverse currents), terrific open water sailing (around the bottom of Pender Island), and a fun afternoon afternoon and evening on the docks and in the pub at Port Browning marina.

The first day was ‘owned’ by our FCR emeritus Bob Jones who, after perusing the Rules of Sailing, found that there was no penalty for a bit of chicanery on the course. Jim Raddysh, aboard Battle Axe with Marie, had spent the night in Montague. He called on the VHF telling us he planned to spend the night with us in Port Browning, and said he would join those who chose to sail down the inside of Prevost. Oasis, who appeared to be tacking down the SW side of Prevost in a freshening breeze, answered, ‘I, for one, although I probably shouldn’t publicly declare my strategy, am going to go down around the bottom of Prevost. The breeze is good, and the tides favourable for us on this side. It looks as if most everyone else is as well’. And most everyone else, except Tony, who remained silent, was. And if they were ever thinking of riding the ebb down the NE side of Prevost, Bob’s solid reasoning silenced their doubts.



Minutes later, I said to Nicky, ‘Will you look at the old fox’, and there was Oasis joining Radiant Heat in Captain’s Pass, heading for Peile Pt. At the time, Skeena Cloud was tacking towards U62, planning to ride the escalator up Captains Pass. But Nicky couldn’t stand it. She has a contagious joy for sailing and adventure. And going around Prevost just seemed like more of an adventure. Besides how wrong could it be to follow the two old foxes: Bob and Tony?

Meanwhile, the rest of the fleet was tacking down Captain’s Pass with Sorcery X in the lead. If Tony and Bob are the old foxes, what would we call Greg and Paul aboard Sorcery X? The panthers? The foxes use their wiles to beat you. The panthers employ stealth, speed, cunning, and a killer instinct.

Evangeline, with Art aboard, had a new nose for wind, and was making tacks I had not seen her make before in a constant search for better breeze. My favourite competitor, Second Wind, had "Big Pete" McGovern aboard. Favourite because if the winds are not steady at 8 knots +, Skeena Cloud can keep Second Wind in her sights.

But the most pleasant surprise of the day was to see Sam aboard Shingebiss. Note that it was not a surprise to see Sam *on Saturday*. It was warm and pleasant, with good breeze, and the promise of a couple of G&Ts with good company at the end of the day. But Sunday was predicted to be everything she abhors: cold, very wet, and gray. But, as always with Sam, the glass is half full, and with half a good weekend ahead, there she was, with her usual good cheer.

Skeena Cloud's race down Trincomali was a learning experience. What a meaningless sentence. Every time I get on the damn boat, it is a learning experience. Only this time, it was a much more enjoyable learning experience as I was spending time with Nicky. And we were in Trincomali because both of us decided to be. So I couldn't beat on myself for the decision as I often do when alone. And, I could hardly beat up on Nicky. So, it was a very pleasant sail.



Nicky and I had learned our lesson from the Regatta and put on the 147 genoa with the higher skirt. We sailed flatter and made good speed once we got the current lift out of Active Pass and the wind shift at the bottom of Prevost. And then, lo and behold, there was Evangeline and Second Wind coming around the top of Pender, both obviously bereft of wind. So, in the short distance between us and them, we had to figure out how to take advantage of the 8 kts of wind we then had, in the little time we had left in it.

We chose a course that would land us between Evangeline, who was stalled alongside Mayne, and Second Wind, who was doing only slightly better along the Pender shore. And, as often happens when you pick the middle, you get middlin' results.

As soon as we joined the stalled boats, Evangeline suddenly looked like a goosed horse, rearing up and going flat out across Navy Channel, not to be seen again until we went aboard Oasis for G&Ts. We got some of Evangeline's wind next, and also made some headway, but nothing like Evangeline, who was able to ride her puff right through, and out of, Navy Channel.

Second Wind struggled for a further 10 minutes. Once she too escaped, It was a match race to the finish for Second Wind and Skeena Cloud, which Second Wind won because the skipper of Skeena Cloud foolishly failed to cover Second Wind on her last tack before the mark. Stupid. I so like to beat Eric. As he likes to beat me. Sorry Nicky.

Once across the line, Nicky and I leisurely sailed into Port Browning, and joined everyone onboard Oasis with it's hidden kegs of gin and tonic. We found out that Radiant Heat, Oasis, and most of the others had clear sailing through Navy Channel, and had had a long head start on us. Timing is everything.



Nicky and I had the pleasure of having dinner with Jim and Marie. Marie is rapidly becoming one of my favourite people. We have to get Jim out racing more. Because Marie loves it, and Marie brings something extra to our team. And Jim can hold his own talking with Bob about music. Jim's contribution was a bonus Saturday night. One of my favourite activities of our racing calendar, something we lost during the pandemic, is hanging out in Oasis's galley after dinner, sipping whiskey; listening to jazz, swing, and Frank; chatting with friends; and seeing the joy for music, sailing, his boat, and his sailing colleagues reflected in Bob's eyes.

The next morning promised wind and rain. Nicky and I again changed sails: down to a 135. There wasn't much wind for the start. Paul and Greg repositioned Kim and Nest Egg further out in the Sound. Kim had joined us as our Committee Boat for the weekend making it a better start for all. We waited as a dark wind line came down upon us

The wind had filled in with a steady 7-8 knots and all boats made good time. Second Wind had found a second wind and made good time. Sorcery X made better time with both an edge in speed and higher heading. Shingebiss took a long tack out across Plumper sound toward Saturna Island and then at good speed made the gap between Blunden and Pender Islands in one tack. Oasis had speed but less pointing ability and tracked to the Pender shore before tacking out and then tacking again for the gap. Evangeline was sailing well and close to Second Wind. Skeena Cloud, well balanced with her 135 and full main, was further back and headed for the Pender shore and then mimicking Oasis, finally after a couple of tacks, also headed for the gap. It was so much fun. We were racing at speed, and although it is always a challenge to keep up with the faster boats in these conditions, or even keep them in sight at times, we did well.

Once through the gap, we hoisted the spinnaker and began to slowly, but surely, eat up some of the lead the others (other than Sorcery X) had on us. We were sailing well, Nicky and I in tune, powered by Mia's cookies.

We caught up with everyone off the Pender Bluffs as the wind all but died and the rain began in earnest. Second Wind, being the smartest of the lot, said he was turning on his engine and heading home. Thank goodness, as it was miserable; we soon followed suit on Skeena Cloud.

After an hour of motoring through the rain and low scud we came across Sorcery X making the best of the erratic wind under her asymmetric. In fact, as we entered the harbour under power at 5.4 kts, Sorcery X was pacing us. Well done Sorcery X for line honours on a challenging day.

I knew just how bad the weather was, not only because Nicky finally gave up the wheel and went below to get warm, but upon asking, Paul answered that no, 'he wasn't in bare feet'. So, it's fall. Round Penders again proved why most consider it one their favourite races on our calendar. Thanks to all who made this another special event



Saturday

Club	Boat	Skipper	Finish Time	Corrected Time	Points
156	OASIS	Jones	13:28:25	03:49:15	1
135	RADIANT HEAT	Brogan	13:43:10	04:11:14	2
77	SORCERY X	Slakov	13:31:55	04:23:24	3
160	EVANGELINE	Sutton	14:10:15	04:27:53	4
128	SHINGEBISS	Keating	14:01:42	04:32:32	5
265	SKEENA CLOUD	Taylor	15:03:33	04:36:11	6
229	SECOND WIND	van Soeren	15:00:00	04:46:23	7

Sunday

Club	Boat	Skipper	Finish Time	Corrected Time	Points
77	SORCERY X	Slakov	16:30:00	05:59:18	1
156	OASIS	Jones	dnf		8
135	RADIANT HEAT	Brogan	dnf		8
160	EVANGELINE	Sutton	dnf		8
128	SHINGEBISS	Keating	dnf		8
265	SKEENA CLOUD	Taylor	dnf		8
229	SECOND WIND	van Soeren	dnf		8

Round Penders Series Score

Club	Rating	Boat	Skipper	Saturday	Sunday	total	Place	Rating for Next Race	club points
77	SORCERY X	Slakov		3	1	4	1	68	100
156	OASIS	Jones		1	8	9	2	150	86
135	RADIANT HEAT	Brogan		2	8	10	3	132	72
160	EVANGELINE	Sutton		4	8	12	4	160	57
128	SHINGEBISS	Keating		5	8	13	5	131	43
265	SKEENA CLOUD	Taylor		6	8	14	6	271	28
229	SECOND WIND	van Soeren		7	8	15	7	238	14

