

Dateline: Marion MA
June 115, 2007

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72 YACHTS HEAD SOUTH FOR BERMUDA

It was a clean downwind start for all

Beverly Yacht Club, Marion MA: 70 monohulls and 2 multihulls started today in the 30th anniversary of the biennial Marion to Bermuda Cruising Yacht Race. This was the second downwind start in the last two out of three races. Fresh 12-18 knot winds from 030 to 040 were raising some whitecaps. The sun helped create some warming that fought the offshore breeze for later starters.

Class E, the slower boats, started first at 13:15 EDT and the other classes from d to A followed at 15-minute intervals. The two multihulls started at 15:00 hrs. The class splits put about 8 boats in each class.

Spectators can follow the race on iBoatTrack <http://www.iboattrack.com/>

Under sparkling sunshine, the spinnaker division boats set their asymmetrical chutes as they crossed the line and most headed off on a starboard jibe towards the southwest. Many locals chose to go to the western shore of Buzzards Bay to lessen the impact of the incoming tide. They were jibing down the shore to try for the fastest route to the Atlantic and then down the rhumb line to Bermuda.

The race pits spinnaker and non-spinnaker and celestial and electronically navigated boats into an overall performance competition for the Goslings Founders Trophy.

Yachts sailing with celestial navigation only will receive a favorable 2% rating credit to their corrected time. They will then compete alongside yachts using electronic navigation for overall prizes. The 2% rating credit reflects the statistical difference between celestial and electronic performance in the past three Marion to Bermuda Races. Yachts racing spinnaker and non-spinnaker will be rated accordingly under the ORR and IRC rating handicap systems.

Gulf Stream features along the 645 nm rhumb line course will not be a major influence on tactics this year. There are no warm or cold core eddies to avoid or seek and the stream is flowing across the course without much push to the south.

Weather should be good except for the usual unusual surprises the Gulf Stream always pops at you. The northeast winds at the start should lighten on Saturday then back into the north and eventually through the west and to the southwest by mid-week.

Spectators can follow the race on iBoatTrack <http://www.iboattrack.com/>

The Royal Hamilton Dinghy Club, co-sponsor with Beverly YC and the Blue Water Sailing Club, has planned a great social slate in Bermuda for friends waiting for yachts to finish and for skippers and crews once they arrive.

The Bermuda Department of Tourism, Globalstar, Gosling's and Kingman Yacht Center have supported the 2007 race as presenting sponsors for this year's event. As in 2005 be sure your friends and family track your progress on-line through iBoattrack from Horizon Marine.

About Marion to Bermuda 2007

The Notice of race for the 30th Anniversary Marion to Bermuda Cruising Yacht Race is online at www.marionbermuda.com.

In 2005, sixty-eight monohulls and seven multi-hulls started the race. Race organizers expect more than 100 competitors in 2007. All yachts will be scored under the ORR (Offshore Racing Rule) system, formerly AMERICAP II, and a class or classes will be scored with the IRC system that has become popular for many east coast events.

Yachts choosing to sail with celestial navigation only will receive a favorable 2% rating credit to their corrected time. They will then compete alongside yachts using electronic navigation for overall prizes. The 2% rating credit reflects the statistical difference between celestial and electronic performance in the past three Marion to Bermuda Races.

For the first time in this event, Sail Magazine will present the second annual **Bermuda Ocean Cruising Yacht Trophy**. This new prize is presented to the performing captain in successive Newport Bermuda and Marion to Bermuda Races. The first pair of these trophies was presented to two deserving captains. Jeff White of Radnor Pennsylvania sailed his Hylas 49 Makai in both the 2005 Marion and 2006 Newport ocean races and was the top boat among boats that had sailed in both events. Laura Sudarsky of New York sailed Cassiopeia to the lowest combined score considering all Cruiser Division boats racing in both races.

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About the Marion to Bermuda Cruising Yacht Race

The Marion to Bermuda Cruising Yacht Race is open to amateur cruising yachts, families and friends. Participants will have the opportunity to compete in an open ocean passage with a group of friendly competitors. Sailing in this race is a life experience that can bridge the gap between generations, solidify friendships and foster teamwork, all while promoting seamanship and the love of sailing.

While the spirit of competition flows as freely in the veins of Marion-Bermuda racers as it does in sailboat racers everywhere, Marion Bermuda is a cruising yacht race. It is as much about companionship and the joy of coaxing the best performance possible out of a sailboat as it is about being first to cover the 645 nautical miles from the start in Buzzard's Bay to the finish off St. David's Lighthouse in Bermuda.

Characteristically, a Friends and Family day race is scheduled for Bermuda a week after the start; prizes in that race go to, among others, the yacht with the largest crew and the crew with the best attitude.

This prestigious race began in 1977 with its roots deep in the Corinthian spirit. The Beverly Yacht Club, the Blue Water Sailing Club, and the Royal Hamilton Amateur Dinghy Club host the event.

The Marion to Bermuda Race is open to single-hulled and multi-hulled sailing vessels with a minimum hull length of 32 feet, exclusive of sprits, and a maximum length of 80 feet. In 2005, the race was open for the first time to two new categories, Multi-hull yachts and Double Handed yachts. Also for the first time, a trophy was awarded for the best finish of a yacht with an all-female crew. In 2007, scoring for IRC classes will be added to the mix. This addition opens the race to a broader spectrum of competitors.

Although Marion-Bermuda is a race for amateur sailors rather than pros, safety is a prime consideration and Marion-Bermuda's safety regulations are as stringent as any other race of its type.

All yachts are required to demonstrate to the Selection Committee that they are seaworthy and appropriate for sailing well offshore. This is a Category 1 Race as defined by the ISAF. All yachts must be inspected and meet these offshore safety requirements. Visit the race website – www.marionbermuda.com – for a complete listing of all pertinent details.

The Marion to Bermuda Race includes both a Celestial and an Electronic division with equal distribution of prizes to both groups, with the exception of the Navigator Trophy, which is awarded to the Celestial winner. The fleet will be scored under the ORR and the IRC Rating Systems.

For complete information on the 16th biennial Marion to Bermuda Cruising Yacht Race including all the dates and deadlines, entry list and much more go to www.marionbermuda.com

iBoattrack

Spectators on shore can track the action of the entire Marion Bermuda Cruising Yacht Race from start to finish. When the race starts June 15th in Buzzard's Bay, every boat entered in the 2007 Marion Bermuda Cruising Yacht Race will be provided with a GPS transponder linked by iBoattrack and the internet to every computer round the world. This is the second time the Marion to Bermuda Race has had a complete GPS tracking of racers. A demonstration site is available to preview iboat at <http://www.marionbermuda.com/>

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