

Dateline: Hamilton Bermuda
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22 yachts finish before wind vanishes

8 boats within 20 nm of Bermuda sailing at 2kts or less

Call it the Bermuda wall or call it the Bermuda parking lot, call it what you can't print if you are a sailor stuck in it. Whatever you call it, much of the Marion Bermuda fleet has been stuck on flat seas without a breeze. There were a few wisps from the southwest but that's on the nose and not much good to bring these cruising yachts in the 30th anniversary Marion to Bermuda Cruising Yacht Race.

In the 15-boat Class D one finisher has slipped in with some great sailing in just the right conditions. By early afternoon Wednesday Silhouette was sitting in 1st place in the monohull fleet. David Caso's Cherubini 50 Silhouette from Duxbury MA finished at 19:15:47 on Tuesday. There were only two finishers so far in Class C and none in Class E.

Silhouette is a ketch and looks much like a classic Herreshoff design. Herreshoff said that gentlemen don't sail to weather and since this race was a run and a reach, this boat really sailed. They piled on the mizzen, mizzen staysail, main, staysail and jenny or asymmetrical spinnaker. And they hit every puff just right.

On 1430hrs Wednesday iboat report, 7 boats were within 20 nm of the finish, but they were sailing at 2kts or less. One boat in Class E was still 157 miles from the island. The breeze in Hamilton Harbor picked up around 1400hrs but it would still be right on the nose for boats trying to finish.

Weather forecasters before the race predicted that the winds might fail as the Bermuda high pushed back north to its more normal position. A low that had been hanging around New England for weeks had kept the high down in the Bahamas. But nor it's back.

In Class A, the fastest group, 13 out of 14 boats had finished by 2:30 ADT. The 72-foot wooden yawl Kathleen owned by Jim Feeney of Marion has won that class. Venture an Oyster 62 sailed by Peter Savage of Palo Alto California is 2nd and in 3rd is Visions of Johanna a Chuck Paine/Morris Yachts 62 footer double-handed by Bill Strassberg of Northport Maine and Gram Schwekert of Newport Rhode Island.

In the 2nd fastest group, Class B, 7 of 14 boats have finished and one has withdrawn. A Swan 44 MKII Triple Lindy sailed by Joe Mele from New York stands first on corrected time. The Bermuda entry Babe, a Swan 46 owned by Colin Couper and sailed by a Bermuda Crew including sir John Vereker, the Governor of Bermuda stands second. Donald Cody's Hvas 39 Freestyle from Lakeville MA is third.

Only two boats in Class C have finished and one withdrew. 13 started in the class. Barry Feldman's Baltic Avalon from Newton, MA stands first while the US Naval Academy's MCCurdy 44 Swift sailed by Midshipman Mark McClure was second.

Since the wind died Tuesday, many boats have turned on the 'iron jenny' and are out of the race but still heading to Bermuda for the festivities at The Royal Hamilton Amateur Dinghy Club. By late Wednesday morning only 22 of 72 boats had finished. Still boats within striking distance of Bermuda were holding onto the hope for a breeze.

iBoattrack

Spectators on shore can track the action of the entire Marion Bermuda Cruising Yacht Race from start to finish. When the race started June 15th in Buzzard's Bay, every boat entered in the 2007 Marion Bermuda Cruising Yacht Race was 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 link to iBoat is at <http://www.marionbermuda.com/>

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.

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Captain's Blogs on Marion to Bermuda's iBoattrack Web site

Five skippers in the 2007 Marion to Bermuda Race have agreed to post "Captain's Blogs" on the Discussion Board. Yachts asked by the committee to write and post reports include Cetaca, Checkmate, Galileo, Kathleen and Seaflower.

The Captain's Blogs are posted at <http://www.iboattrack.com/forum/index.php>

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