

The non-starters were Paul Hubbard's *Bermuda Oyster* (Hamilton, Bermuda), Stefano Pacini's *Galileo* (Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts), *Por Dos* sailed by Mark Monwood (Bedford, Massachusetts) and *Shooting Star* sailed by David Kingsbury (Orange, Connecticut).

Yachts that have retired from the race so far that were on the course are Jonathan Brewin's *Big Bear* (Hamilton, Bermuda) Jonathan Baxter's *Pond Prowler* (BER20, St. George's, Bermuda) Maren Erskin's *Cayenne* (Bearsville, New York), Alan Benet's *La Retreat* (Basking Ridge, New Jersey), Tom Bowler's *Nightwind* (West Simsbury, Connecticut), Bill Ferguson's *Sea Fever* (Milford, Massachusetts), *Falcor* sailed by Steve Gross (Scotch Plains, New Jersey), *Bremer Speck* (Ron Hiemann West Newberry, Massachusetts) Black Mallard (Tracy Day McRoberts, Glen Cove, New York) and *Lynley III* (James Barns, Mobile, Alabama).

Race and activity information for the 2009 Marion to Bermuda Cruising Yacht Race is on-line at <http://www.marionbermuda.com>.

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June 23, 2009

***Big Bear* out. *Crescendo* leads pack again**

THIRTY-FIVE still on course for Bermuda

Close competition in all classes

By Talbot Wilson

Follow the race on iBoattrack http://maps.iboattrack.com/races/2009_marion_bermuda/htdocs/
For real time weather go to <http://www.rap.ucar.edu/weather/>

RHADC, Bermuda, June 23, 2009: Bermuda's last hope and fleet leader for the last three days, *Big Bear*, is the latest casualty in the Marion to Bermuda Race. Jonathan Brewin's skipper of *Big Bear* called Harbour Radio around noon Bermuda time to say they have withdrawn due to technical difficulties, later reported as a torn mainsail. More details weren't immediately available.

Big Bear's withdrawal leaves Class B *Crescendo*, Martin Jacobson's Swan 44 MkII (Newport, Rhode Island) at the head of the fleet and looking at possible line honours. We still don't know who has the staying power to win the race, but *Crescendo* has an extremely experienced offshore crew and she is a well-tested boat with several Newport Bermuda races under her keel.

Cetacea, Chris Culver's Souwester 59 from Newport, Rhode Island is also in a good tactical position, well to the west of the original rhumb line from Marion to Bermuda, even though he was 50 miles further from Bermuda than *Crescendo*. *Cetacea* may be able to fetch Bermuda on starboard tack, while *Crescendo* will have more of a beat to the island.

Wind and weather are the big stories today as the Class A and B boats are within the 100-mile circle of Bermuda. Winds that had been west and southwest, favorable for a fast approach to Bermuda, shifted to the south late Monday night and gave the fleet a strong 25-knot headwind and an ugly beat to the finish. These winds are expected to hold for the next two days. It's certainly a wet and wild ride for the sailors still on the course.

The total number of 'did not start' and 'retired' yachts now stands at thirteen and leaves thirty-five boats on the course. Bremer Speck confirmed their retirement early Tuesday morning. She had spent the night riding on bare poles in high winds. They are now motoring back to the states.

Avalon (Barry Feldman, Newton Centre, Massachusetts) legged out on *Katrinka* (Andrew Norris, New Canaan, Connecticut) overnight and leads Class C, placed between her competition and the finish line.

Class D leader, *Silhouette* (David Caso, Duxbury, Massachusetts), is well positioned ahead and westward of the six other Class D boats still racing.

Of the original forty-eight entries, four did not start to begin with, and now eight have retired in the face of big seas and big westerly winds.

The non-starters were Paul Hubbard's Bermuda Oyster (Hamilton, Bermuda), Stefano Pacini's Galileo (Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts), Por Dos sailed by Mark Monwood (Bedford, Massachusetts) and Shooting Star sailed by David Kingsbury (Orange, Connecticut).

Yachts that have retired from the race so far that were on the course are Jonathan Baxter's Pond Prowler (BER20, St. George's, Bermuda) Maren Erskin's Cayenne (Bearsville, New York), Alan Benet's La Retreat (Basking Ridge, New Jersey), Tom Bowler's Nightwind (West Simsbury, Connecticut), Bill Ferguson's Sea Fever (Milford, Massachusetts), and Falcor sailed by Steve Gross (Scotch Plains, New Jersey). Bremer Speck (Ron Hiemann West Newberry, Massachusetts) has not officially retired; but according to iBoattrack, she was sailing north at 1.2 knots.



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About Marion to Bermuda 2009

Exciting events are planned in Bermuda for race chasers as the boats sail the 645-mile course almost due south across the oft-treacherous Gulf Stream current to the islands. More events are planned for the sailors after their arrival.

Centered around the Bermuda islands' 400th Anniversary celebrations, the Bermuda festivities planned for sailors, friends and families start with lighthouse tours and a St. David's Cultural Indian festival on June 20-21st.

Festivities wrap up on June 27th with the prizegiving at the historic Commissioners House at Dockyard followed by a gala banquet in the Keep. The 400th Anniversary *We are Sailing* exhibit presented by the Masterworks Foundation will be a highlight of the week for visitors.

A new Marion to Bermuda blog site, ***Race Chat*** on the website menu bar, has been developed to answer questions for both experienced hands and first timers looking for help. Organizers will also be offering a new mentoring system. First timers will be linked with an experienced Marion to Bermuda skipper for one-on-one help and guidance throughout their entry process.

The race structure for 2009 is very similar to the 2007 race. Boats will sail for a host of prizes under both ORR and IRC rating rule handicaps. Both multihulls and monohulls from 32 to 80 feet on deck are entered. All entries meet ISAF requirements for a Category 1 race as modified by the Notice of Race.

Yachts choosing to sail with celestial navigation only receive a favorable 2% rating credit to their corrected time. They 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.

Since its inception in 1977, the Marion – Bermuda Race has been a Corinthian event and yachts are accepted by invitation. The spirit of the race is that all yachts and crew are participating for the joy and pleasure of sailing, competition, and the camaraderie that accompanies such an offshore event.

The race provides an opportunity for cruising yachts and amateur crews to participate in an ocean race and a rendezvous in Bermuda. It encourages the development of blue water sailing skills on seaworthy yachts that can be handled safely offshore with limited crew. Yachts may not be entered with an intention of furthering a commercial or trade purpose for captain, crew or sponsor.

The Marion to Bermuda Cruising Yacht Race is organized by The Beverly Yacht Club, The Blue Water Sailing Club and The Royal Hamilton Amateur Dinghy Club for the Marion Bermuda Cruising Yacht