



Rolex Big Boat Series

Close Ties

San Francisco (September 8, 2011) – If two- and three-way ties for first are indicative of heated competition, four classes set the stage in today’s opener at the Rolex Big Boat Series for some fiery showdowns over the next three days of competition. A total of 81 boats took to San Francisco Bay for the 47th annual event, with seven classes--four for IRC and three for one-design (J/105s, J/120s, Express 37s)--completing two races each and an eighth for one-designs (Farr 30s) completing three.

“It was a perfect day,” said Barry Lewis (Atherton, Calif.), skipper of the J/120 *Chance*, which finished 3-1 today to tie in overall scoring with John Wimer’s (Half Moon Bay, Calif.) 1-3 on *Desdemona* and Stephen Madeira’s (Menlo Park, Calif.) 2-2 on *Mr. Magoo*. “It was the typical 10-14 knots in the morning; then it blew up to 18-20 in the afternoon, with a nice ebb tide to play all day.”

Lewis said that in the first race all boats converged at the marks simultaneously, and multiple lead changes were the status quo; no one jumped out ahead. In fact, four of the six lead boats were within 20 seconds of each other at the finish. “It was very tight--that’s why it’s so much fun,” said Lewis. “The second race, on the city front, was three laps, so it was longer and gave us a chance to separate out.”

Event Co-chair and Principal Race Officer Kevin Reeds explained that IRC boats sailed on the “City Course” in the morning and switched places with the one-designs to sail the “North Course” in the afternoon. Both courses are designed to highlight San Francisco’s amphitheater-like qualities and enticed no less than four television stations to trek to the St. Francis Yacht Club waterfront to gather colorful close-to-shore footage for their on-air reports. “It was a crystal clear, perfect start to the regatta,” said Reeds, acknowledging a chilly wind but sunny skies that only occasionally succumbed to the famous low ceiling of San Francisco fog.

In J/105s, there also were two boats tied on point scores at the top of the scoreboard. *Blackhawk* (Belvedere, Calif.), with Scooter Simmons driving, and *Donkey Jack*, owned by Edward Conrads/Rolf Kaiser/Shannon Ryan (San Francisco), finished 4-1 and 1-4, respectively. “We had decent starts, and in the first race we were sixth at the first mark, then made up some boats and were able to hold them off until we were passed at the finish by *Donkey Jack*.” Simmons added that the third-place boat, Bruce Stone’s *Arbitrage*, is also one not to discount. It is only four points behind in the 21-boat fleet. “They won the season and this event last year; it’s all a top notch group, but we are here to win it,” he added with a sly smile.

Sy Kleinman's (Saratoga, Calif.) Sloop 54 *Swiftsure II* and Brad Copper's Tripp 43 *TNT* both share a three-point score to lead the IRC B class, while in the Express 37 class, Bartz Schneider's *Expeditious* (Crystal Bay, Nev.) and Kame Richards's (Alameda, Calif.) *Golden Moon* also have three points each.

Ashley Wolfe (Calgary, AB, CAN), skipper of the TP 52 *Mayhem*, enjoyed a good day in the IRC A class, squeaking out ahead of Jim Swartz's TP 52 *Vesper* by one point in the final point standings. She explained that with the 78-foot turbo sled *AKELA* serving as a road block for her team during much of the first race, they "couldn't separate" from *Vesper*, who finished behind them but still won on rating. "*AKELA* owes us five minutes (in the rating), so it's not about beating them; it's about staying away from them." Wolfe, whose husband and father can both be found among her crew, says this is the first time she has matched up with *Vesper* and another new TP 52 *PowerPlay*, owned by Peter Cunningham (George Town, Grand Cayman, CAY). She has sailed the Rolex Big Boat series for ten years and started skippering at the event in 2005. "I've never won and have come in second, so it's one of those things I'm itching for." As a woman skipper of such a powerful boat, she says she doesn't feel much discrimination. "When I win, though, I guess there's still a little of, 'you got beaten by a girl.'"

For more information and results, go to www.rolexbigboatseries.com, where nightly shows by T2p.tv will be aired by 9 p.m. (PDT). Also, join in facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Francis-Yacht-Club-Racing/106175099461351>

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IRC A (IRC - 8 Boats)

1. *Mayhem*, TP 52 52, Ashley Wolfe , Calgary, AB, CAN - 2, 1, ; 3
2. *Vesper*, TP 52 52, Jim Swartz , Park City, UT, USA - 1, 3, ; 4
3. *PowerPlay*, TP 52 52, Peter Cunningham , George Town, Grand Cayman, CAY - 3, 2, ; 5

IRC B (IRC - 9 Boats)

1. *Swiftsure II*, Sloop 54, Sy Kleinman , Saratoga, CA, USA - 2, 1, ; 3
2. *TNT*, Custom Tripp 43 43, Brad Copper , Pt. Richmond, CA, USA - 1, 2, ; 3
3. *Flyer*, Reichel-Pugh 47 47', Rob Sjostedt , Foothill Ranch, CA, USA - 4, 3, ; 7

IRC C (IRC - 8 Boats)

1. *Double Trouble*, J 125 41, Andy Costello , Pt Richmond, CA, USA - 1, 1, ; 2
2. *Timeshaver*, J 125 41, Viggo Torbensen , Laguna Beach, CA, USA - 3, 2, ; 5
3. *August Ice*, J 125 41, Richard Ferris , Tahoe City, CA, USA - 2, 4, ; 6

IRC D (IRC - 8 Boats)

1. *Dayenu*, J 120 40, Donald Payan , Hillsborough, CA, USA - 1, 1, ; 2
2. *Mirthmaker*, Archambault A35 35, Douglas Holm / Kirk Denebeim , Corte Madera, CA, USA - 2, 2, ; 4
3. *Inspired Environments*, Beneteau First 40.7 39.3, Timothy Ballard , San Rafael, CA, USA - 4, 3, ; 7

J 105 (One Design - 21 Boats)

1. *Blackhawk*, J 105 34.5, Scooter Simmons , Belvedere, CA, USA - 4, 1, ; 5

2. Donkey Jack, J 105 34.5, Edward Conrads / Kaiser / Ryan , San Francisco, CA, USA - 1, 4, ; 5
3. Arbitrage, J 105 34.5, Bruce Stone , San Francisco, CA, USA - 2, 7, ; 9

J 120 (One Design - 7 Boats)

1. Chance, J 120 40, Barry Lewis , Atherton, CA, USA - 3, 1, ; 4
2. Desdemona, J 120 40, John S. Wimer , Half Moon Bay, CA, USA - 1, 3, ; 4
3. Mr. Magoo, J 120 40, Stephen Madeira , Menlo Park, CA, USA - 2, 2, ; 4

Express 37 (One Design - 9 Boats)

1. Expeditious, Express 37 37, Bartz Schneider , Crystal Bay, NV, USA - 2, 1, ; 3
2. Golden Moon, Express 37 37, Kame Richards , Alameda, CA, USA - 1, 2, ; 3
3. Blade Runner, Express 37 37, Michael Shlens , Palos Verdes Est., CA, USA - 4, 3, ; 7

Farr 30 (One Design - 12 Boats)

1. Eight Ball, Farr 30 30, Scott Easom , San Rafael, CA, USA - 2, 4, 1, ; 7
2. Barking Mad, Farr 30 30, James Richardson , Boston, MA, USA - 3, 1, 5, ; 9
3. Groovederci, Farr 30 30, John Demourkas , Santa Barbara, CA, USA - 1, 6, 6, ; 13

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