



Rolex Big Boat Series

The Final Play: Winners Determined in Eight Classes

San Francisco, Calif. (September 11, 2011) – After enduring yesterday’s high wind survival conditions, the hundreds of sailors on 81 teams at the 47th annual Rolex Big Boat Series would no doubt agree that handling today’s 14-17 knots on San Francisco Bay was a piece of cake. And rich was the cake’s icing: sunshine unobstructed by fog, with temperatures that had warmed by double digits to 68 degrees. A single “Bay Tour” distance race showed seven classes (IRC A, B, C, D J/105, J/120, Express 37) the four corners of San Francisco Bay, visually anchored by the Golden Gate Bridge to the west, Alcatraz Island in the middle, and Treasure Island and Bay Bridge to the East, while an eighth class (Farr 30) topped off its world championship with four feisty races on the “North Course” that was their racing home for the regatta’s entire four days.

Spectators, too, were treated to the true beauty, emotion and power of sail when, before racing, all boats paraded in honor of 9/11 victims, and for the finish, a colorful lineup of spinnakers roared past the stretch of land closest to Crissy Field, triggering cannon fire from the uppermost decks of nearby St. Francis Yacht Club where later six perpetual trophies as well as Rolex Oyster Perpetual Stainless Steel Submariners would be awarded to winners in six of the classes.

Atlantic Perpetual Trophy – Farr 30: With a world championship at stake, 12 Farr 30s had been sailing their own regatta within the regatta with unmatched intensity. Until today, Scott Easom’s (San Rafael, Calif.) *Eight Ball* had held at bay two fierce competitors—Jim Richardson’s (Boston, Mass.) *Barking Mad* and Deneen Demourkas’s (Santa Barbara, Calif.) *Groovederci*--throughout seven extremely windy races where wild wipeouts and sail blowouts were becoming commonplace. Yesterday, with only one race completed due to uber extreme

(read gear-busting) conditions, Easom knew his foes would recharge, re-circle and move in for an attack today when the wind settled a bit.

Sure enough, Richardson moved into first after winning today's first race and maintained his lead until the third race when, on the last leg, he fouled Rhonda Tolar's (Corona Del Mar) *Wild Thing* after jibing too close and touching its spinnaker with his.

"It was an unforced error; we shouldn't have been there," said Richardson matter of-factly. "

The ensuing penalty turn cost him dearly. He finished 11th and fell to third, opening the door for Demourkas to take the overall lead and then secure it in the last race. Demourkas won after posting finish positions of 5-2-2-4 today, while Easom finished third overall, behind Richardson, on merit of his 8-4-4-7 today.

"Coming into today, I knew winning was a possibility, but we would need all four races," said Demourkas. "In the first race, we were leading and hit the weather mark, so that wasn't so good, but we did our penalty turn and managed to hold it all together. This is my ninth world championship in this boat; I've been a bride's maid a few times, so I've paid my dues." Demourkas, who is also the president of the Farr 30 class, explained that while a 30 footer might be considered small for the Rolex Big Boat Series, the St. Francis Yacht Club was "kind enough" to integrate them. "It shows their commitment to yachting to have us here and gave us a chance to show what the boat can do." Demourkas said the boats are capable of performing in high winds but many of the owners here have not had precious time in the boat like she has had. "It was a little more nerve wracking," she said of the high winds and her own constant jockeying for position, "but damn good racing!"

St. Francis Perpetual Trophy – IRC A: Jim Swartz's (Park City, Utah) IRC 52 *Vesper* breezed to a seemingly easy overall victory here if you went by the fact it won five out of its seven races, including today's. But Swartz credited it mostly to a well-oiled team that simply knew how to tame the boat no matter how high the winds. His tactician Gavin Brady (Annapolis, Md.), an America's Cup veteran, made the comment that San Francisco is the best venue in the world for sailing. "It's like there are ginormous [sic] fans at the Golden Gate Bridge; it's a man-made arena

where the wind comes in at 11 am and you can start on time every day,” said Brady. “For the next America’s Cup here you can just put the AP flag in a glass case and it will never be flown.”

With *Vesper* having pretty much blocked for overall victory, the battle was for second today, and Peter Cunningham’s (George Town, Grand Cayman, CAY) *PowerPlay* prevailed over Ashley Wolfe’s (Calgary, AB, CAN) *Mayhem* in the end. Both boats are IRC 52s and were among five competing in this class along with two other larger boats and one smaller.

“This has been more fun than other races,” said Cunningham. “It was so close for us with *Mayhem* and the others, and these 52s make the Bay look small.” The class sailed 30 miles today and Cunningham said there were some “interesting choices” on where to go. “We were first to Blossom Rock when the wind totally died with a 2-3 knot current and the whole fleet condensed,” said Cunningham. “We were ahead of *Vesper* and *Mayhem*, and I had *déjà vu* all over again: if you get caught in that current...it was classic San Francisco, everything can change so easily.” *PowerPlay* finished second today and posted 15 points to *Vesper*’s 10 in overall scoring. (*Mayhem* posted 18.)

City of San Francisco Trophy – IRC B: Brad Copper (Pt. Richmond, Calif.), skipper of the Tripp 43 *TNT*, said he was “totally jazzed” to win his second Rolex watch here after his second-place finish today sewed up the series for him. “We stuck to the same game plan: focus on the basics, do a good job,” he said, noting that his first Rolex Big Boat Series win was in 2008 and he has sailed in four of the events total. Before today’s race he had a three-point lead over Sy Kleinman’s (Saratoga, Calif.) 54’ sloop *Swiftsure II*, and at day’s end it had narrowed to two points. Kleinman, who turned 90 this summer, has sailed in 30 Rolex Big Boat Series to date, and although he no longer steers, he still contributes to the afterguard on the boat he has sailed here for 16 years. “They make me walk the plank,” he said before racing today, using his cane to steady himself as he walked a short, wide board made especially for his traversing the distance between the dock and the boat. “Thank God for big wind,” he said when asked about his feelings over the past few days. “This one’s blowing in our favor; this boat needs a lot of wind.”

Richard Rheem Perpetual Trophy – IRC C: Andy Costello’s (Pt. Richmond, Calif.) *J/125 Double Trouble* was the only boat in the series to turn in a perfect score,

which meant it won all seven races in the eight-boat sport boat class for “fast forties.” It also was among four J/125s competing in that class, and indeed it was these models, which more typically sail in their own one-design class, that filled the top four spots on the scoreboard. Dee Smith’s new Farr 400 *Team Premier* was decidedly fast, but with a new crew and little time to prepare, it fell short of keeping pace with the veteran teams aboard the J/125s and finished fifth overall.

Keefe-Kilborn Perpetual Trophy – IRC D: Last year, Donald Payan (Hillsborough, Calif.), won the J/120 class skippering *Dayenu*, but this year he took the same boat and entered IRC, wondering how it would go. The performance of both his boat and team proved the gamble paid off, though Payan called the days before today punishing due to the physical demands made by the conditions. In the end, he deduced that his decision had been very gratifying. “One-design sailing is more of a chess board situation,” said Payan, “whereas IRC is more like a rally—you are competing against yourself.”

Commodore’s Cup – J/105: Even after a collision rendered it unable to race yesterday’s two races, Scooter Simmons’ (Belvedere, Calif.) *Blackhawk* looked solid going into today with a full 12 points (helped by granted redress of second-place for yesterday’s two missed opportunities) over Jason Woodley/Scott Whitney’s (Tiburon, Calif.) *Risk*, which stood in second. The lead wasn’t too comforting, however, when *Blackhawk* jumped the start gun and had to restart. “We had to make up 12 boats, and then we chose to go to shore for relief from the current and that was the wrong decision,” said Simmons. “The wind clocked right, and by the time we got to the city front, we were so deep it was the most discouraging thing in the world. Then we knew we had to rope in 10 boats. My crew is just so good that we were able to do it, but it’s not the way you want to win a regatta.” After a tenth today in the 21-boat fleet, the largest here, *Blackhawk*’s lead over *Risk* was seven points. Simmons said that since his first Rolex Big Boat Series (he has sailed six of them in three different boats), his goal has been to win a Rolex watch. “It is the epitomy, the trophy we all want.”

Express 37: Defending champion Kame Richards, skipper of *Golden Moon* (Alameda, Calif.), said his crew had the skill set to deal with high winds, and it tested especially true yesterday when Richards took a commanding lead in overall point scoring. “We didn’t have to do anything spectacular to win overall today,” said Richards, who finished second in today’s race to Michael Shlens’ (Palos

Verdes Est., Calif.) *Blade Runner*. “We could have finished ninth (out of nine boats) and still won on a tie-breaker.” Richards added that *Blade Runner* was only one boat length ahead of him at the finish today, after all those miles, and that was typical of the “two-boat problem” he had all regatta. “They are just so good, and so fun, and it made this the most enjoyable Rolex Big Boat Regatta ever for me.”

J/120: Mathematically, Barry Lewis’s (Atherton, Calif.) *Chance* only had to finish today clean (i.e. with no letters such as DSQ or DNF in their score) to win, but they finished fourth for good measure. Crew member Matt Dingo (Portland, Maine) explained how his team decided not to play “the cone” at Alcatraz, which was the right decision over reaching across to the city front early, but it put them on the outside of some shifts. “It was a little flukier on the side we chose, so we had to step on the gas,” he said, “but that’s what makes the Bay Tour legendary: it’s about what’s going on all over; you’re not retracing any of your steps during 24 miles; it’s only at the Rolex Big Boat Series, and it can be a make it or break it race for a lot of teams.”

Regarded by sailors as one of the world’s premier sailboat racing events, the Rolex Big Boat Series is part of the Rolex Yachting Portfolio that includes over 20 world-class sailing events that take place around the world, including the Rolex Miami OCR; Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup; Rolex Fastnet Race; Rolex Farr 40 World Championship; New York Yacht Club Race Week at Newport and Storm Trysail Club Block Island Race, both presented by Rolex; and the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

For race reports and full results, go to www.rolexbigboatseries.com, where daily highlight shows by T2p.tv are also posted for viewing. Also, join in facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Francis-Yacht-Club-Racing/106175099461351>

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(Final Top-Three Results attached)

FINAL TOP-THREE RESULTS

IRC A (IRC - 8 Boats)

1. Vesper, TP 52, Jim Swartz , Park City, UT, USA - 1, 3, 2, 1, 1, 1, 1, ; 10
2. PowerPlay, TP 52, Peter Cunningham , George Town, Grand Cayman, CAY - 3, 2, 1, 3, 2, 2, 2, ; 15
3. Mayhem, TP 52, Ashley Wolfe , Calgary, AB, CAN - 2, 1, 3, 2, 4, 3, 3, ; 18

IRC B (IRC - 9 Boats)

1. TNT, Custom Tripp 43, Brad Copper , Pt. Richmond, CA, USA - 1, 2, 1, 1, 2, 2, 2, ; 11
2. Swiftsure II, Sloop 54, Sy Kleinman , Saratoga, CA, USA - 2, 1, 5, 2, 1, 1, 1/RDG, ; 13
3. BustinLoose, Sydney 38, Jeff Pulford , Salinas, Ca, USA - 3, 4, 2, 4, 3, 3, 4, ; 23

IRC C (IRC - 8 Boats)

1. Double Trouble, J 125, Andy Costello , Pt Richmond, CA, USA - 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, ; 7
2. Resolute, J 125, Tim Fuller , Murrieta, CA, USA - 4, 3, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, ; 17
3. August Ice, J 125, Richard Ferris , Tahoe City, CA, USA - 2, 4, 5, 4, 5, 3, 3, ; 26

IRC D (IRC - 8 Boats)

1. Dayenu, J 120, Donald Payan , Hillsborough, CA, USA - 1, 1, 2, 1, 1, 2, 1, ; 9
2. Tupelo Honey, Elan 40, Gerard Sheridan , San Francisco, CA, USA - 3, 4, 3, 3, 2, 1, 9/SCP, ; 25
3. Mirthmaker, Archambault A35, Douglas Holm / Kirk Denebeim , Corte Madera, CA, USA - 2, 2, 1, 2, 9/DSQ, 4, 6, ; 26

J 105 (One Design - 21 Boats)

1. Blackhawk, J 105, Scooter Simmons , Belvedere, CA, USA - 4, 1, 2, 1, 2/RDG, 2/RDG, 10, ; 22
2. Risk, J 105, Jason Woodley / Scott Whitney , Tiburon, CA, USA - 7, 3, 8, 2, 3, 1, 5, ; 29
3. Donkey Jack, J 105, Edward Conrads / Kaiser / Ryan , San Francisco, CA, USA - 1, 4, 6, 10, 4, 8, 1, ; 34

J 120 (One Design - 7 Boats)

1. Chance, J 12, Barry Lewis , Atherton, CA, USA - 3, 1, 2, 1, 1, 2, 4, ; 14
2. Mr. Magoo, J 120, Stephen Madeira , Menlo Park, CA, USA - 2, 2, 3, 3, 2, 3, 2, ; 17
3. Peregrine, J 120, David Halliwill , New York, NY, USA - 5, 6, 1, 2, 3, 1, 1, ; 19

Express 37 (One Design - 9 Boats)

1. Golden Moon, Express 37, Kame Richards , Alameda, CA, USA - 1, 2, 1, 1, 1, 2, 2, ; 10
2. Blade Runner, Express 37, Michael Shlens , Palos Verdes Est., CA, USA - 4, 3, 4, 2, 2, 1, 1, ; 17
3. Expeditious, Express 37, Bartz Schneider , Crystal Bay, NV, USA - 2, 1, 3, 3, 10/DNF, 10/DNF, 4, ; 33

Farr 30 (One Design - 12 Boats)

1. Groovederci, Farr 30, Deneen Demourkas , Santa Barbara, CA, USA - 7, 8, 2, 2, 1, 1, 1, 5, 2, 1, 4, ; 34
2. Barking Mad, Farr 30, James Richardson , Boston, MA, USA - 3, 1, 5, 3, 4, 2, 3, 1, 3, 10, 3, ; 38
3. Eight Ball, Farr 30, Scott Easom , San Rafael, CA, USA - 2, 4, 1, 5, 2, 3, 2, 8, 4, 3, 7, ; 41

Media contact:

Media Pro International

Barby MacGowan

Email: barby.macgowan@mediapronewport.com

Tel: +1 401-849-0220

Mobile: +1 401-225-0249