

ISSUE 14 | SEPTEMBER 2007

# the crew

The magazine reporting on the key issues  
directly affecting today's large-yacht crew

## REPORT



passport to côte d'azur - part two



# gotta regatta

## blast from the past



**Proving that less is indeed more, this year's Newport Bucket, with just a dozen yachts, featured all the traits of Bucket tradition, dating back to the fabled Nantucket Bucket days: extraordinary yachts enjoying sailing together, a casual atmosphere, with great parties, and fun for one and all, both on and off the water. Roger Marshall reports.**

**A**s ever, the Newport Bucket 2007, held in July, began with a party and a captains' meeting on Friday night. Bucketeer extraordinaire Hank Halsted and his team of lovely ladies, Bucket veterans all, laid out the ground rules for the event, with its small yet impressive fleet. These rules came down to only three requirements: no collisions, no protests, and, most importantly, having lots of fun. With those stipulations, the cannon fired and the Newport Bucket officially started.

Saturday dawned breezy and fine with, for Newport, an unusual wind direction – a northerly following the front that had passed through the previous night. For the veteran crew aboard *Avalon*, the northerly was not good news. The previous afternoon *Avalon*'s crew had gone for a practice sail in 28 knots of wind and destroyed the spinnaker, forcing a downwind sail without a spinnaker in a fading northerly, causing her to go painfully slowly.





Fortunately, the first leg turned onto a reach, enabling *Avalon* to build a little speed. *Tree of Life*, rounded the reaching mark as lead boat, but immediately behind her the wind shifted more than 130 degrees – from 010 degrees to 140. The southerly was weak and continuing to go more southerly. It was a question of the sea breeze fighting the overlying northerly, resulting in the wind remaining weak all afternoon. These were unfavourable conditions for a yacht with no spinnaker. On the reaching leg, the yachts with spinnakers gained on and then passed the leaders.

Saturday evening's party in the tent gave everyone a chance to unwind. The Bucket fleet was small, yet owners and crews were wearing huge smiles, all thoroughly enjoying themselves together. Unlike previous years, the yacht hop was abandoned for the joys of the dance floor. The journalists covering the event then attended a writers' dinner at the new hot spot in Newport – 41 North, where the food was superb. Dining under moonlight at midnight in Newport, Rhode Island, is an enormous pleasure that doesn't occur very often.

Sunday dawned clear with a strong 10- to 15-knot northerly, again a perfect wind for a downwind start on a course that was the reverse to the previous day. The fleet was shepherded to the start line by Tom Lewis aboard his latest Broward 120, brought to Newport especially for the event. The breeze looked as if it would be ideal for the entire day. The course entailed a start just off Castle Hill, then a run downwind for a few miles to the R2 buoy, then a reach, another reach, and a beat to the finish. It looked straightforward, or so we thought. But the Wind Gods had other ideas. At just about in the same location as had occurred on the previous day, a 100-degree wind shift hit the fleet, turning the first reach into a long beat in ten knots of wind for the last boat to start the pursuit race. The second reach had now turned into a very broad reach. It was clear that the wind was building and staying in the east.

*Avalon* was third around what had become the windward mark, hoping to pass the boats in front. After a long reach in an easterly, rounding the final mark brought her onto a close fetch. Cranking everything down, they sought out to catch the leaders, slowly overhauling them. Could they pass anyone before running out of racecourse? They passed *Tree of Life* to leeward and hauled on *Jess Sea*. The tension onboard was palpable. The crew, who had been so relaxed half an hour before, lined the windward rail as *Avalon* gradually gained on *Jess Sea*. A slight wind shift turned the close fetch into a beat, and two tacks later she finished ahead of *Jess Sea* and got the first gun, leading the fleet across the finish line.

The splendour of the day was capped by perfect weather for the evening soiree at the International Yacht Restoration School (IRYS). For his diligent effort on the racecourse, *Avalon*'s owner Jason Taylor was rewarded with four visits to the podium and an armload of silverware, including the Cheppewa Bomb and 3rd Place Overall. Capping off the nostalgic feel of this year's Newport Bucket, veteran skipper Clive Youton of *Zingaro* fame swept to a sweet overall Bucket win aboard *White Wings* against fellow W-Class *Wild Horses*, driven by owner and builder Donald Tofias. *Selene*'s pranksters won the Skulduggery award, with Capt. Travis and the crew of *Whisper* bringing home a magnum as the appropriate prize for the Cool Crew Award. More importantly, however, the smiles and laughter from the previous evening were amplified as crews and owners enjoyed a perfect end to a relaxing race- and party-filled weekend. Several people commented that the evening prize-giving celebration was one of the most enjoyable that they had attended in a long time. "It has the flavour of the old-time Buckets that were smaller, more intimate, and a lot more fun," one hard partying sailor said. It just shows that you don't need to have a cast of thousands to enjoy yourself.

Images courtesy of Billy Black, Roger Marshall and Norma Trease



#### RACE 1 Presented by Bank of America

- 1st Place *White Wings*
- 2nd Place *Selene*
- 3rd Place *Mischievous*

#### RACE 2 Presented by Northrop & Johnson

- 1st Place *Avalon*
- 2nd Place *Selene*
- 3rd Place *White Wings*

#### NEWPORT BUCKET CUP (combined day 1 & 2 racing)

- 1st Place *White Wings*
- 2nd Place *Selene*
- 3rd Place *Avalon*

#### LES GRANDES DAMES DES MERS

- 1st Place *Avalon*
- 2nd Place *Carmella*
- 3rd Place *Whisper*

#### LES GAZELLES DES MERS

- 1st Place *White Wings*
- 2nd Place *Selene*
- 3rd Place *Mischievous*

#### OTHER AWARDS

- Churchill Yacht Partners Corinthian Cup *Whisper*
- Skulduggery Tie *Selene*
- Cool Crew *Whisper*
- Bone *Palawan / Flying Goose*

- The Armadillo Longneck Trophy for most notable start *Carmella*
- The Cheppewa Bomb *Avalon*



