

# Sailing's a breeze in Off Soundings series

By DAVID TRANCHIDA  
Day Sports Writer

## Block Island, R.I. — All smiles.

A more consistent and stronger wind on the second day of the Off Soundings Club's Spring Series replaced the shifting and diminishing breezes of Friday to make for ideal conditions over much of the course Saturday.

And regardless of finish, many skipers agreed that just having two clear days made the weekend a success.

"You just can't beat this. We're very fortunate to have good weather for two days," said Bill Loweth of Noank as he steered Brer Rabbitt III toward the mouth of New Harbor after finishing 6th in Class C-4. Loweth and brother-in-law David Strang skippered Walter Strang's boat to third place Friday and ended with a third overall for the two days.

Their efforts will add a five percent penalty to their rating in the Fall Series. The winner of each two-day series is assessed a 15 percent penalty and second place carries a 10 percent penalty in an effort to equalize the competition from year to year and keep one boat from dominating the class.

Paul Hewitt of West Mystic won C-4,

sailing New Wave to two first place finishes and Neal O'Connell sailed Checkered Demon to second. J.M. Washburn III was fourth in Our Tern.

Ed Purcell of and Grace Smith won Class B in Just Friends with a first and second.

"This was just excellent weather and the course selection was perfect for today's conditions," Purcell said.

Purcell was followed by James Brown in Eala, John Saxe in Mandalay and Cal Beggs in Mistral.

Saturday's course took the fleet around the island and started with an east-northeast wind of about 15 to 18 miles per hour. The wind stayed consistent for the second leg along the northern end of the island and then died about midway through the third leg off the southern coast of the island.

That leg was the most frustrating, with spinnakers collapsing and skipers hunting for pockets of wind.

The wind improved on the west side of the island and stayed steady enough to allow most of the fleet to finish in good wind.

"We had two days of fair breezes and good weather. You can't ask for anything else," said Carl Fast of Noank, who with his wife Val sailed their new boat, Looney Tunes, to third

overall in Class C-3.

The race was only the third for the Fasts in the new boat and they and their crew were fitting hardware throughout the weekend.

"We had an excellent crew. Everybody was great and they deserve a lot of credit," Val Fast said.

Bill Barlow sailed Alice to first in C-3 and he was followed by Katie Beal Bradford in Premium in second. George Martin sailed Osprey to fourth.

In the big boat class, C-1, Joseph Connolly and Alan Karenko sailed Hot Numbers to first. They were followed by James Rich Jr. and James Rich III in Settler, second; Rodney Johnstone in Ragtime, third and Joe Bardenheier in White Fire, fourth.

In the next biggest class, C-2, Kevin Farrar won in Wildthing followed by Buster Kingsbury in Joy Ride, second; Bill Healy in Sirprize, third and Bruce Kuryla in Defiant, fourth.

Rounding out the racing classes, C-5 was won by Paul Bergendahl in Risky Business, followed by Donald Wilkinson in Prophet, second; Toby Doyle in Phoenix, third and Milan Bartek and Bill Cannon in Chasing Rainbows, fourth.

See SAILING page D8

## Sailing From D3

Cruising Canvas division I was won by Anthony Halsey in Patriot, followed by James Barrett Jr. in Vib, second; Robert Almeida in Banshee, third and Bruce Lockwood in Arrow, fourth.

Cruising Canvas division II was won by Wayne Morse in Exorcist followed by Donald Davis in Maria, second; Richard Steinhilber in Rascal, third, and Bertil Olsson in Ak-Va-Vit, fourth.

Class A-1, for the more conven-

tional designs, was won by Seville Simonds in Rogue, followed by Robert Read in Nepenthe, second; J. Robert Gunther in Eastwinds, third and Linwood Mather in Excellence, fourth.

Class A-2 was won by Jack Lovell and Ed Birch in Minandet followed by Paul Van Dyke in Valiant, second; Samuel Hird in Blueflower, third and Robert Almeida Jr. in Piper Too, fourth.

UNDUP

# Conditions determined Off Soundings results early

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A 10-knot northerly breeze off New London Harbor that ran into a sea breeze off Gardiner's Bay on Shelter Island served to split the fleet Friday on the first day of racing in last weekend's Off Soundings Club's fall series.

Skippers who stayed on a northerly course were rewarded with consistent wind and those who dipped south found light and variable winds and finished up to three hours behind, according to Brin Ford, publicity director for the two-day series.

The difference was too great to make up Saturday, despite a southeast breeze up to 20 knots that held all day.

Two 12 metres competed with the fleet for the first time in club history, providing extra excitement at the start as the two battled before breaking for the line at the gun.

Following are combined results for the two days of racing with boat and skipper:

■ **A1** — 1. Rogue, Seville Simonds; 2. Excellence, Linwood Mather; 3. Spindrift, William Rich Jr.; 4. Tynaje, Peter Ross.

■ **A2** — 1. Piper Too, 2. Bow Wow, 3. Reveille, 4. Minandet.

■ **B** — 1. Mandalay, John Saxe; 2. Fluent, Stuart Dickinson; 3. Mistral, Cal Beggs; 4. Just Friends, Ed Purcell.

## SAILING

■ **C1** — 1. Hooligan, Peter Brinckerhoff; 2. En Charette, Ron Noe; 3. Hot Numbers, J. Connolly/A. Karengo; 4. Morningstar, Bob Fisher.

■ **C2** — 1. SirPrize, Bill Healy; 2. Joyride, Buster Kingsbury; 3. Magbooka, John Nevin; 4. Defiant, Bruce Kuryla.

■ **C3** — 1. Factory Girl, Bill Canning; 2. Osprey, George Martin; 3. Looney Tunes, Carl Fast; 4. Premium, Katie Beal Bradford.

■ **C4** — 1. Checkered Demon, Neal O'Connell; 2. New Wave, Paul Hewitt; 3. Wharf Rat, Hugh O'Brien; 4. Wavewalker, Ron and David Walker.

■ **C5** — 1. Farr Out, Robert Gibbs; 2. Hotspur, David Devlin; 3. Anticipation, Bijan Rasadi; 4. Persistence, John Graeb.

■ **Cruising Canvas I** — 1. Arrow, Bruce Lockwood; 2. Scalawag, William Lieber; 3. Serenity, Cal Brouwer; 4. Mirage, Warren Woodworth.

■ **Cruising Canvas II** — 1. Shimaera, R.J. Snyder; 2. Mitime, Tim Evans; 3. Xapiema, Robert Welsh Jr.; 4. Tempest, David Bourne.

## JY/15 championship

**Stonington** — A fleet of 100 JY/15s is expected to compete in a three-day series in Fishers Island Sound off Stonington harbor this weekend.

Competitors from as far away as Idaho, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Texas have entered the North American Championship series.

Racing begins at noon Friday and a second race will follow weather permitting. Organizers are shooting for three races Saturday starting at 9 a.m. and two races Sunday starting at 10 a.m.

In addition to crowning a North American Championship, the series will help determine the JY Sailor of the Year. While all age groups will race together, a junior trophy will be awarded as well.

Among local competitors are Rod Johnstone of Stonington, who designed the boat in 1989, Michael Keegan, who won last weekend's JY/15 division of the Hospice Regatta, and Tim Hotchkiss of Watch Hill. Erin Maxwell of Stonington will try for the junior trophy.

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## LOCAL

# For Off Soundings sailors, winning has its price

By **DAVE TRANCHIDA**  
Day Sports Writer

Winning the annual Off Soundings sailboat race can be a little unnerving.

While accepting the congratulations of your peers, you can't miss the sly grins. You may be on top this year, but the victory just set you back for the next three races.

Welcome to what may be the sporting world's most valiant attempt at equalizing the competition.

As today's fleet of 146 boats prepares to race from Watch Hill to Block Island for the 58th annual Off Soundings Spring Series, several skippers will have a tougher time than others in claiming a trophy at the finish line.

A win makes a repeat performance

much tougher because of a nifty element unique to Off Soundings. It's a penalty for winning.

In the often complicated world of sailboat racing, where a boat's dimensions and sail area determine a handicap, the Off Soundings penalty is an extra little touch that tries to keep the same boat from winning year after year.

And that's part of the charm of the race, according to Brin Ford, this year's public relations officer for the race.

"The penalty is the wrinkle that makes for very interesting racing. It has been received well over the years because it allows other people to compete because the hot shot has to carry an extra load," Ford said.

Adding the penalty is akin to requiring this year's Indy 500 winner to beat the

field next year by five laps instead of simply getting to the finish line ahead of everyone else.

Steven A. Anderson of Noank is one of those who will be carrying a penalty this series. He sailed Restless, his J30, to first place in the C4 class in last fall's series.

A win adds a 15 percent penalty to your rating. A boat's rating is another mathematical formula based on its design and requires faster boats to beat slower boats by a prescribed margin, rather than simply getting to the line first.

"Winning is a double-edged sword," Anderson said. "The penalty is an attempt to spread the wealth around and it does a good job doing it. Unless you're a superior sailor or get extremely lucky, you won't win again with a penalty."

A second-place finish adds a 10 percent

penalty, a third adds five percent and they do accumulate. A first in the spring series and a third in the fall gives you a 20 percent penalty for the next series. And you maintain the penalty for three seasons before you can start working it off, five percent per series.

The Off Soundings fleet is really a hodge-podge of boats and so it is broken into 10 classes.

The A1 class consists of the larger boats with conventional designs. It includes classics like the Mystic Seaport's 62-foot Brilliant that leads the annual antique boat parade down the Mystic river. Classes A2 and B are similar in design to A1 boats, but generally are smaller vessels.

And then there's the C classes, one through five, comprised largely of boats

more suited for racing and divided by size and rating. The two Canvas classes are for skippers who don't have spinnakers or those who choose not to use them.

"The C1 through C5 are the hottest boats. It's where the Off Soundings rock stars live," Ford said.

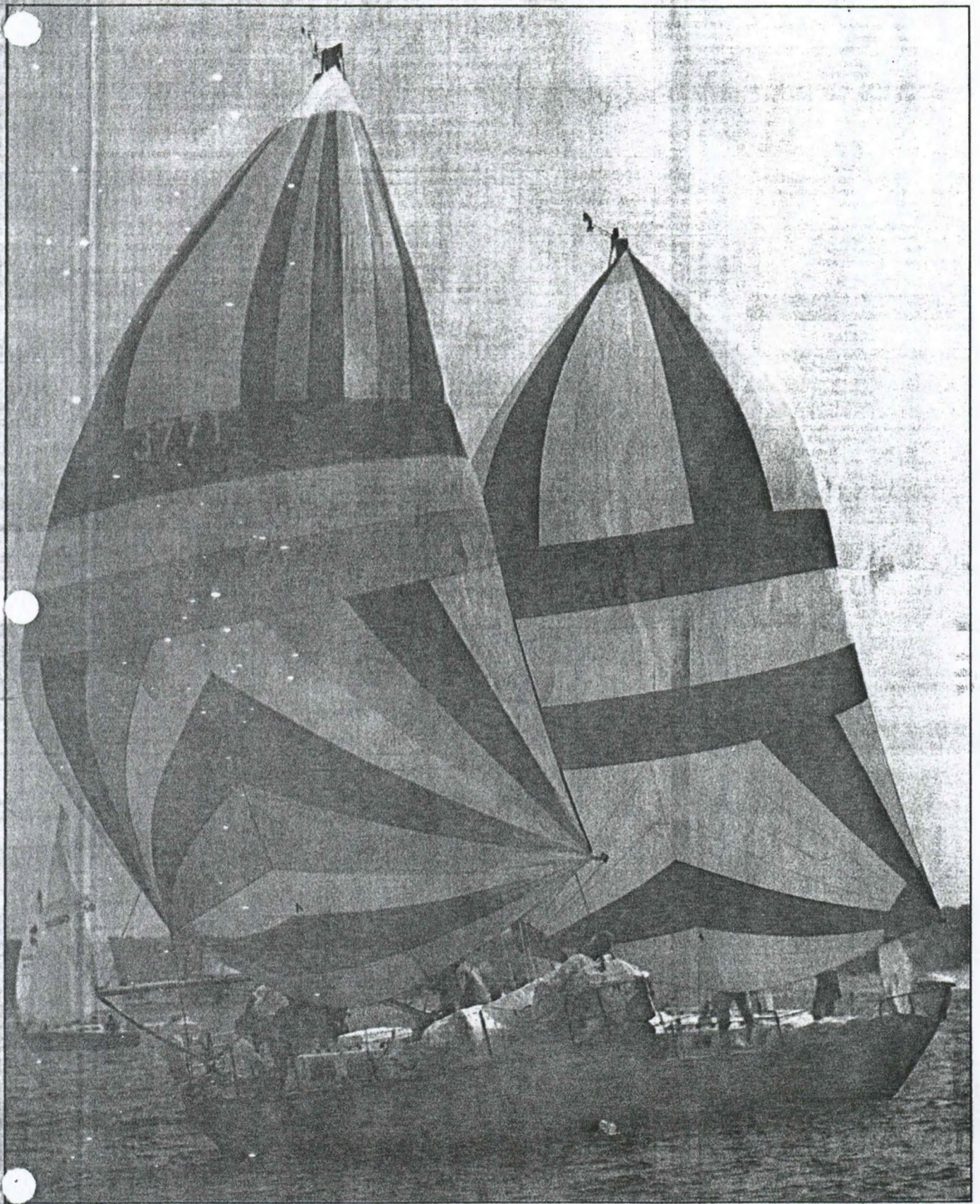
The oldest boat competing this weekend is Dolphin, designed and built by famous yacht designer Nathaniel Herreshoff around 1910, Ford said. Herreshoff's classic design proved so successful that Dolphin once accumulated a penalty of 45 percent, Ford said.

Reveille, a Tartan 34 owned by John D. Orzech of Niantic, carries the greatest penalty, 25 percent, into this series.

The winner of each class is determined by results over the two days of racing. Saturday's race will be on a course to be determined off Block Island.

# SPO

## THE RACE IS ON



Robert Fatterson/The Day

■ *Piper Too, left, and Bow-Wow compete in the Class 2 Friday in the Off Soundings Race off Watch Hill, R.I. The event concludes with a full day of racing today. Story, additional photo, on Page F6.*

# Off Soundings fleet battles shifty winds on series' first day

By DAVID TRANCHIDA  
Day Sorts Writer

**Block Island, R.I.** — Fluky. That was the word of the day as skipper after skipper described Friday's wind on the first day of the two-day Off Soundings Spring Series.

"It was a very atypical breeze for this area. You had to play the shifts," said Paul Hewitt of West Mystic, who skippered New Wave to first place in Class C-4. "You had to tack a lot more often. It was more of a tactical race," he said.

"It definitely favored the experienced sailors," Hewitt's wife, Kristana Arp said.

The north-northeast wind made for a strategic battle on the second and longest leg of the course, roughly 12 miles from Weekapaug Point to Nebraska Shoal off Matunuck Point.

In sailing terms, it was a beat in light air. Though winds up to 20 miles per hour were forecast, the committee boat clocked nothing more than 10 miles per hour.

Usually it's a parade the whole 12 miles to Nebraska Shoal," Hewitt said, describing the more common south-southwest wind pattern that turns the fleet into a line of billowing spinnakers with few boats able to make progress on those around them.

"It was a challenge because the wind was fluky," said Val Fast of Groton, who with her husband, Carl, took third in Class C-3 in

Looney Tunes.

Fast said she was particularly pleased with their first day's effort considering it was only their third race in their new boat.

"Considering we spent the day fastening down hardware, we did fine," Fast said, noting that the boat still needed some last-minute work.

Those who opted for a course closer to land were generally more successful, taking advantage of the offshore wind conditions.

Constant changes in wind velocity also posed problems, demanding frequent tacks on the second leg to get the most of the pockets of heavy air.

"This is the kind of day that kills the textbook sailor," said David Strang, who with Bill Loweth skippered Brer Rabbit III of Groton to third place in Class C-4.

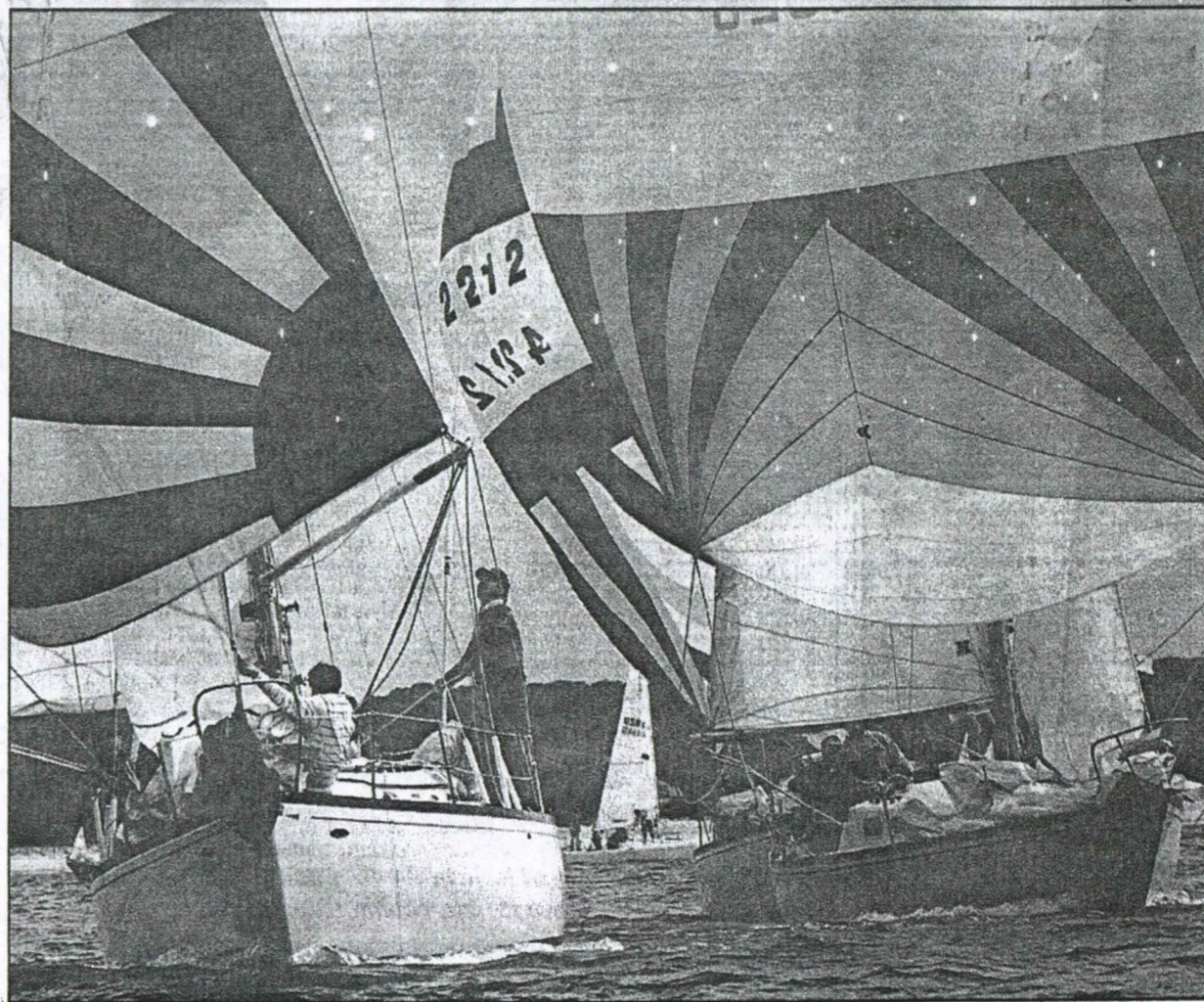
The race continues today on a course around the island.

Overall winners in each class are those who post the best combined time for the two days of racing.

The top four in Class A-1, with boat name followed by skipper, were Excellence, Linwood Mather; Rogue, Seville Simonds; Nepenthe, Robert Read, and Eastwinds, J. Robert Gunther Jr.

Class A-2: Minandet, Jack Lovell and Ed Birch; Blueflower, Samuel Hird; Piper Too, Robert J. Almeida Jr.; and Charmer, Will Pease.

Class B: Just Friends, Ed Purcell; Mandalay, John Saxe; Eala, James Brown; and Windrider II, Russell



Robert Patterson/The Day

■ Class A-2's Bamboo, Valiant and Reveille, left to right, at the start of the Off Soundings race.

Brown.

Class C-1: Whitefire, Joe Bardeneier; Settler, James Rich Jr.; Hot Number, Joseph Connolly and Alan Karenko; and Covenant, Charles Moore Jr.

Class C-2: Joy Ride, Buster Kingsbury; Wildthing, Kevin Farrar; Sirprize, Bill Healy; and Lively, U.S. Naval Academy.

Class C-3: Alice, Bill Barlow;

Premium, Katie Beal Bradford; Looney Tunes, Carl and Val Fast; and Osprey, George Martin.

Class C-4: New Wave, Paul Hewitt; Checkered Demon, Neal O'Connell; Brer Rabbit III, David Strang and Bill Loweth; and Restless, Steve Anderson.

Class C-5: Risky Business, Paul Bergendahl and Chasing Rainbows, Milan Barteck and Bill Cannon;

Persistence, Stephen Grzesik; and Prophet, Donald Wilkinson.

Cruising Canvas division I: Patriot, A.J. Halsey; Vib, James Barrett Jr.; Breakaway, Richard Joslyn Jr.; and Brief Candle, Edward Osgood Jr.

Division II: Exorcist, Wayne Morse; Maria, Donald Davis; Ack-Va-Vit, Bertil Olsson; and Rascal, Richard Steinhilber.