

Brilliant shines in Off Soundings

By Ebba Hierta
Staff Writer

A smoking sou'wester, packing winds up to 30 knots during the second day of racing in the Off Soundings Club spring race series June 14-

SAIL RACES

15, gave the schooner Brilliant the edge it needed to take top honors.

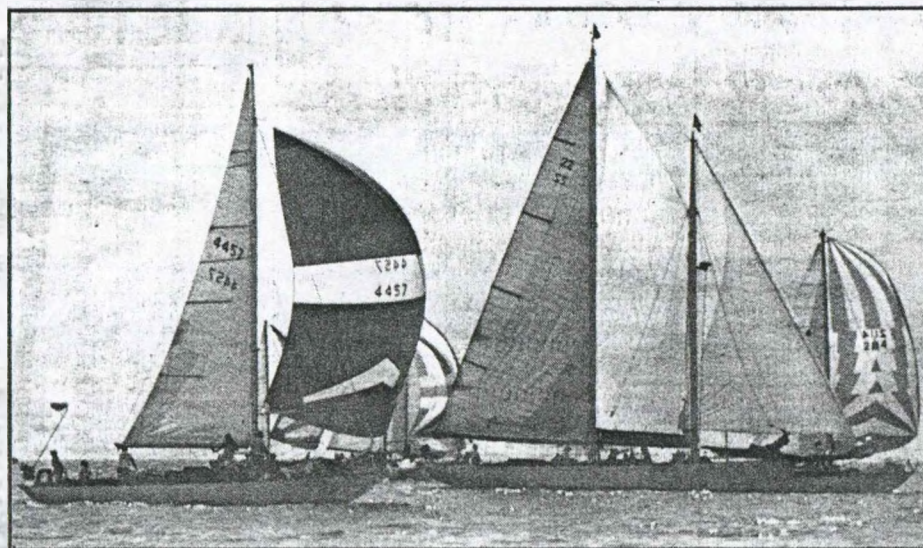
At 62 feet, Brilliant was the longest boat in the 150-boat fleet. It was first across the line and first on corrected time in the first race and overall winner in Class A-1. Skipper George Moffett said the breezy event provided "ideal schooner conditions."

The win was a big surprise, said Moffett, because he had only two experienced racers on board. The rest of the crew consisted of four first-time sailors and two dinghy sailors.

Brilliant, built in 1932, is owned by Mystic Seaport Museum. The crew, who were paying customers for the cruise, drilled for six hours the day before the race, Moffett said. "They did an excellent job. They really worked themselves to exhaustion. It was quite a memorable event for them."

The regatta included a race from Watch Hill, R.I., to Block Island on Friday and a circumnavigation of the island on Saturday. Boats were handicapped under Performance Handicap Racing Fleet.

The Friday morning start went off



EBBA HIERTA/SOUNDINGS

Brilliant, center, wasn't first across the line at the start of the Off Soundings spring series, but the 62-foot schooner took the lead by the first mark.

without a hitch, with clear skies and 10- to 12-knot southwest winds providing ample propulsion for the downwind start. Wind picked up as the day wore on, reaching 18 knots by the final leg of the 25-mile course.

Saturday brought more sunshine and steady 18-knot winds for the upwind start, with winds increasing as the boats rounded the island for a long run down the back side. Several people clocked gusts over 30 knots, said race committee spokesman Bob Nickerson, but no serious equipment failures were reported.

RESULTS:

• CLASS A-1 — 1. BRILLIANT, SPARKMAN &

STEPHENS, GEORGE MOFFETT, MYSTIC, CONN.; 2. NEPENTHE, PEARSON 39, ROBERT W. READ, SEEKONK, MASS.; 3. PURITAN, LITTLE HARBOR 38, DONALD P. ROBINSON, NOANK, CONN.

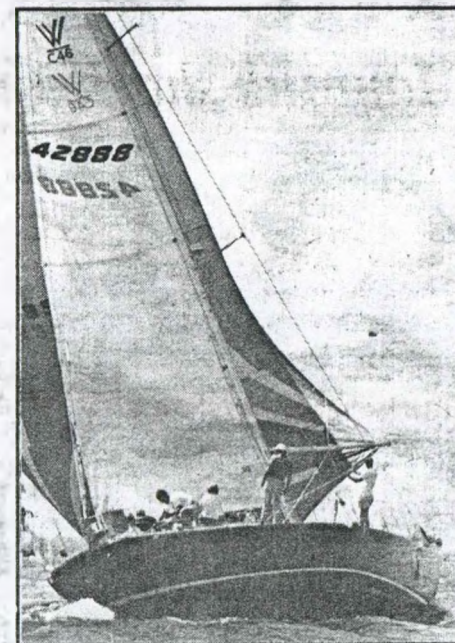
• CLASS A-2 — 1. REVELLE, TARTAN 34, JOHN ORZECH, NIAN TIC, CONN.; 2. BAMBOO, LUDERS 36, PETER MCFADDEN AND DAVID LEVENTHAL, STORRS, CONN.; 3. VALIANT, TARTAN 34, PAUL C. VAN DYKE, MYSTIC, CONN.

• CLASS B — 1. SANIBEL, PEARSON 30, EDWARD C. DIECKERHOFF, MYSTIC, CONN.; 2. WATER-COLORS, MORGAN 28, WILLIAM DRINKUTH, ANSONIA, CONN.; 3. AFTA FIVE, TARTAN 27, ARTHUR H. MEYERS, LYME, CONN.

• CLASS C-1 — 1. HOOLIGAN, EVELYN 42, PETER BRINCKERHOFF, RIVERSIDE, CONN. 2. J.A.R.D. LOOSE, TRIP 40, DICK ROHMAN; 3. JACK ROSE, J/39, ROBERT B. AUDETTE, PUTNAM, CONN.

• CLASS C-2 — 1. JET STREAM, C&C 40, JACK WILLS, OLD LYME, CONN.; 2. YEN-YEN, EVELYN 32, WILLIAM F. ZIMMERLI; 3. ALICE, CATALINA 38, BILL BARLOW, BRISTOL, R.I.

• CLASS C-3 — 1. OSPREY, C&C 35, GEORGE MAR-



EBBA HIERTA/SOUNDINGS

Defending Class A-1 champ Excellence, a Cambria 46, is owned by Linwood Mather of Mystic.

TIN, MIDLAND PARK, N.J.; 2. PIRATE, PRETORIA 35, BILL BAXTER, GREENWICH, CONN.; 3. SPIRIT, MORGAN 36, NORMAN PECK, NIAN TIC, CONN.

• CLASS C-4 — 1. NEW WAVE, EVELYN 26, PAUL HEWITT; 2. TRANSFUSION, PEARSON 31, ROBERT DARLING, WEST SIMSBURY, CONN.; 3. REBEL, CONTESSA 33, LOUIS BEVILACQUA, NEW YORK.

• CLASS C-5 — 1. GLORY DAYS, J/24, RODNEY JOHNSTONE, STONINGTON, CONN.; 2. MAYBE, J/24, CHRIS FIELD, NOANK, CONN.; 3. EMANCIPATE, RANGER 29, DAVID WHELAN, NORTH HAVEN, NEW YORK.

• CRUISING CLASS — 1. JYRO, J/35C, JOHN JOHNSTONE, STONINGTON, CONN.; 2. UN BEL DI', PRETORIA 35, JOHN MESSEK JR., ESSEX, CONN.; 3. ASTRI, TAYANA 52, KEN FOSS, NEW LONDON, CONN. ■

Navy scores a hat trick at college nationals

Off Soundings From D3

427.39. Astri, sailed by Ken Foss of New London, was third in 429.88.

"I thought Astri might have won, we didn't know that other boat (Un Bel Di) was in it," John Johnstone said. "We had a good start and we just tried to play the beach and stay out of the current.

Jyro, a year-old J-35C, crossed the finish line sixth with Glory Days seventh.

Fourth in the Cruising Canvas Class was Breakaway, sailed by R.A. Joslyn Jr. of Guilford.

Second to Rodney Johnstone in Class C-5 was Noank's Chris Field in Maybe. David Whelan's Emancipate was third and Bob Puder's Wild Flower fourth.

A close race

When J.A.R.D. Loose finished first Saturday, Hooligan skipper Peter Brinckerhoff worried about the overall result for Class C-1.

Hooligan finished first Friday and second Saturday, but would it be enough once the times were corrected?

It was, as Hooligan won the class in 510.62. J.A.R.D. Loose, sailed by Dick Rohman was second in 512.90 and Robert Audette's Jack Rose was third in 512.50. "There was lots of tide today, the wind was 20 knots true on the south side of the island," said Brinckerhoff, describing his race.

Brinckerhoff, of Riverside, sailed with 12 crew members on board the 42-foot Hooligan.

Loose Cannon, sailed by John Dunn, was fourth in the 22-boat class in 515.11.

Despite tearing her jib, Reveille, out of Mystic, was first overall in Class A-2. Sailed by John Orzech, Reveille was first Friday and led Saturday until the finish line when the jib tore, allowing commodore van Dyke to win in Valiant.

But Reveille hung on for the win with a corrected time of 426.99. Bamboo was second, sailed by Peter McFadden and David Leventhal, Valiant was third and Bob O'Brien's Irish Mist fourth.

In Class B, Sanibel won the overall title as sailed by Edward Dieckerhoff of Mystic. William Drinkuth's Watercolors was second overall, while Arthur Meyers' Afta Five was third and Tigress, sailed by Allen Anderson of Stonington, was fourth.

New Wave, sailed by Paul Hewitt of West Mystic, was first in Class C-4 in 456.80. Robert Darling Jr.'s Transfusion was second, Louis Bevilacqua's Rebel third and Thunderduck, sailed by Malcolm Ross, fourth.

In Class C-2, Jet Stream finished first Saturday to take the overall title in 498.89. Jet Steam is sailed by J. Wills and L. Bowman of Old Lyme. Second was William Zimmerli's Yen-Yen. Third was Alice, sailed by Bill Barlow, and fourth was Lindy, sailed by Waterford's David Dickerson.

And in Class C-3, George Martin's Osprey won the overall championship in 470.30. Second was Bill Baxter's Pirate, third was Spirit, sailed by Norman Peck, and fourth was American Maid sailed by Burton Cunin and Al Pritzsche.

Joe Coates of Ledyard snatched a victory away from his brother Allen Coates, of Ledyard with two laps to go to win his second feature of the year in the 15-lap Strictly Stock main event.

"I tried to go by as cleanly as possible," Joe Coates said. "If he was faster, I would have let him go. Brotherly love was always there. I never hit him."

Joe Coates, who started 17th, moved into contention on lap 10 by passing Ken Lenda of Norwich for second. From there, he began chasing Allen who grabbed the lead on the start with a nifty five-abreast move in the front stretch.

Following the Coates across the line were: Greg Moran of Preston, Bob Bruce of Bozrah and Lenda.

Rounding out the top 10 were: Dean Nutting Jr. of Shannock, R.I.; Lou Bellisle of Plainfield; David Blain of North Grosvenordale; Mark St. Hilaire of Bristol; and Pat Donnellan of Salem.

McGirt stops Moore

The Associated Press

Charleston, S.C. — Buddy McGirt, assured of a shot at the welterweight title this fall, knocked down Tyrone Moore three times and stopped him in the seventh round of a scheduled 10-rounder Saturday night.

McGirt improved to 53-2 with 41 knockouts by stopping Moore at 2:08 of the seventh round.

"I lost my concentration because I got news about the title shot afternoon," said McGirt. International

ETue Day

[6/16/91 D3]

Skip Weisenburger/The Day

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Brilliant rides strong winds to top of class

Johnstone brothers, Hooligan take titles

By VICKIE FULKERSON
Day Sports Writer

Block Island — The wind picked up speed Saturday to a steady 20 knots and Brilliant picked up its first Off Soundings Club trophy, winning its class in the 54th annual spring racing series off Block Island.

Brilliant, the 62-foot training vessel which belongs to the Mystic Seaport Museum, was fourth Saturday and first for the two-day series in Class A-1.

The schooner, skippered by George Moffett, had finished first Friday,

capturing the first-place overall trophy in a corrected time of 408.43 minutes. Next in Class A-1 was Robert Read's Nepenthe in 428.03.

Corrected times are calculated using handicaps and also penalty percentages for having sailed Off Soundings well in the past.

"Today I think we were closer in relation to (Brilliant), but they just had great conditions," Read said just after the race. Nepenthe was second both Friday and Saturday.

"We're going to have to give them a heavy weather rating or something next time," said commodore Paul van Dyke of Brilliant. "Of course now that they carry a penalty, it'll be light and they'll do terrible the next time. You need this kind of wind for a schooner."

Gusts reached up to 28 knots at the

finish line of the 22.9-mile course, shortened to 18.2 miles for Classes B, C-5 and Cruising Canvas.

In third place Class A-1 was Puritan, sailed by Donald P. Robinson of Noank. Fourth was Tattler, sailed by Frank Bohlen of Mystic.

Also in Class A-1, Linwood Mather's Excellence finished 13th overall of 19 boats, but took the honor Saturday of being the first boat across the finish line.

Excellence, which won the overall crown last year, carried a 15 percent penalty with her to the line this weekend.

"Hey, we were first across the line, that's what really counts," Mather said with a smile. "If we ever win again, it'll probably be the rest of the fleet starting Friday and us Saturday, that's how far behind we'll

be."

Excellence was second across the line Friday — 11th after corrections.

In the family

Brothers John and Rodney Johnstone each took combined wins in his respective class, with John Johnstone at the helm of Jyro in the Cruising Canvas Class and Rodney in his J-24 Glory Days in Class C-5.

Rodney Johnstone finished first of 14 boats both Friday and Saturday for the overall title in his newly christened J-24. John Johnstone didn't come by his overall victory so easily.

After finishing seventh among 25 boats Friday, he was first of 27 Saturday to squeak out a win over John Messek in Un Bel Di 426.46 to

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[The Day 6/15/91]

A 'Brilliant' day for Off Soundings

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But then, that's what happens when you're sailing a boat nearly 62 feet long.

Moffett and his crew had no trouble and Brilliant, however, in Friday's opening day of competition in the 54th annual Off Soundings Club Spring Racing Series off Block Island.

Brilliant, a schooner which belongs to the Mystic Seaport Museum, crossed the finish line at Block Island long before any of the other 18 boats in Class A-1. And after times were corrected to include handicaps, the win stood.

"It was a perfect day for schooners and I can't say there were many others here today," said Moffett, who has been the captain of the Seaport's training vessel for the past eight years. "In elapsed time we were great. With corrected time, I didn't think we could pull it out."

It was Brilliant's first run in Off Soundings, although the boat has been entered in several classic boat regattas, according to Moffett. The boat, built in 1932, will celebrate its 60th anniversary next year.

"I think I'm getting to know her after 10 years on the boat," said Moffett, who was mate for two years before becoming captain. "But there's a lot to do on a boat this size. We certainly keep busy during a race."

The boat, which carried 12 crew members Friday, has a mainsail with an area of 975 square feet. Another sail, called a golly-wobbler, measures 1,200 square feet, while the jib is 875 square feet of cloth.

Brilliant crossed the Atlantic in 1933, one

of the first boats of its kind to do so, and served as a Coast Guard Academy boat throughout World War II.

"It's rare a schooner gets such great wind," said Moffett, whose boat came in ahead of runner-up Nepenthe, sailed by Robert Read, and third-place Spindrift, sailed by William Rich Jr.

The race, which began off Watch Hill, was over a course of 24.81 miles. Wind was a steady 10-12 knots for the first part of the race, but picked up to near 18 knots on the final leg.

Glory Days unbeaten

Glory Days, owned by David Eck of Stonington, was delivered just more than a month ago.

The brand new J-24 got just one tryout at a Wednesday race off Groton Long Point before it took to the waters Friday off Block Island.

Skipped by J-24 designer Rodney Johnstone of Stonington, Glory Days didn't give in to the other 13 boats in Class C-5, beating second-place Emancipate, sailed by David Whelan.

Wayne Ingersoll of East Lyme was third in Marimind, while Chris Field of Noank was seventh in Maybe, despite being assessed a 10 percent penalty for its past successes at Off Soundings.

"We got the spinnaker down just at the right time at the start," Johnstone said. "That helped us. I think we did better in the light wind at the start, that's what J-24s are made for. We don't want it to blow hard because we don't have a lot of weight."

This season marks the 15th anniversary of the J-24 boat, as Johnstone sailed the very first boat of the kind to an overall, two-day win.

"It couldn't have been more incredible out there today," Johnstone said. "I'm glad we

could duplicate the win on the 15th anniversary of the J-24.

Class C-5 sailed an 18.35 short course, along with Class B and the Cruising Canvas Class.

Hooligan shines

In the fastest class of the day, Peter Brinkerhoff's Hooligan finished at the top of Class C-1. Second in the 22-boat field was Jack Rose, sailed by Robert Audette of Putnam.

In Class A-2, Niantic's John Orzech sailed Reveille to a win over 11 other boats. Peter McFadden and David Leventhal of Storrs were second in Bamboo.

Class B's 11 boats were led by Afta Five, sailed by Arthur Meyers of Lyme. Second was William Drinkuth's Watercolors.

Meltemi set the pace in Class C-2 and was sailed by Gene Festa of New Haven. Tied for second were Lindy, sailed by Waterford's Dave Dickerson, and Yen-Yen, sailed by William Zimmerli of Avon.

In Class C-3, George Martin's Osprey took first and Bill Baxter's Pirate was second.

Class C-4 belonged to New Wave, skippered by Paul Hewitt of West Mystic. Louis Bevilacqua's Rebel was second.

And in the Cruising Canvas Class, Shellman Brown's Long Reach took the honors out of the 26 boats in the day's largest class. Astri was second, sailed by New London's Ken Foss, while Un Bel Di', sailed by John Messek Jr. of Essex, was third.

Racing will continue today at 9 a.m., with the boats sailing a course around Block Island. Results will be announced for today and for the two days of the race combined.

In September, the Off Soundings fleet will sail again, this time from New London to Shelter Island, N.Y., and the second day of fall racing will be in Gardiner's Bay.

BRILLIANT



Skip Weisenburger/The Day

■ Class C-4 competitors *Our Tern*, skippered by John Washburn, left, and Clifford Fisher's *Rusty-Nail* make their start

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Class C-4 belonged to *New Wave*, skippered by Paul Hewitt of West Mystic. Louis Bevilacqua's *Rebel* was second.

And in the Cruising Canvas Class, *Shelman Brown's* *Long Reach* took the honors out of the 26 boats in the day's largest class. *Astri* was second, sailed by New London's Ken Foss, while *Un Bel Di'*, sailed by John Messer Jr. of Essex, was third.

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SPORTS

OFF SOUNDINGS



At the start — Toward Block Island a

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C-3 head away from the start and to- tings Club racing Friday. From left, the

boats are Francis Murphy's Pursuit, Norman B. Peck's Spirit and Charles Borrmann Jr.'s Irish Witch. Racing continues today. Story on Page B3.

Skip Weisenburger/The Day

Off Soundings From D3

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GS



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Off Soundings crews cast off for Block Island series

By VICKIE FULKERSON
Day Sports Writer

Thursday's gusty winds gave hope for good sailing in this weekend's Off Soundings Club races off Block Island.

The races begin at 10 a.m. today with the 156-member fleet leaving from Watch Hill and sailing to Block Island. Competition in the nine classes will continue through Saturday with a race around Block Island, completing the club's 54th annual Spring Series.

"We're looking for a day like (Thursday)," said race secretary Allen And-

erson of Stonington, who will sail Tigris, a Tartan 27, in Class B. "Sometimes there's rain and fog, too much wind, too much sea, all sun, no wind . . . (Thursday) was perfect, clear with a wonderful breeze."

Last year, the winds were light on Saturday morning, Anderson said, delaying the start of the race.

The fastest boats will sail in Class C-1, with Walter Paladino's Uptown Girl the top-rated boat of the 22 in that division. Hooligan, sailed by Peter Brinckerhoff, is rated second in the class and Gary Bennett's J'aitu is third.

The largest category is the Cruising

Canvas Class, with 27 boats entered, including Anthony Halsey's Patriot, billed as the fastest.

Boats are rated according to a handicapping system which takes boat length, keel and other factors into account. There is also a percentage penalty attached to boats which have been highly successful in the past.

Two boats, John Lovell's Minandet and Ed Purcell's Just Friends have been tagged with the highest penalty, both at 25 percent. Minandet is entered in the Canvas Cruising Class, while Just Friends will sail in Class B.

In Class C-2, William Healy's Sirprize

and Kirk Blanchard's Zephyros are tied at the top of the division. Ray Gincavage's American Pie is third and fourth is Gene Festa in Meltemi.

Francis Murphy's Pursuit is the top-rated boat in Class C-3 for the weekend and W. Loweth and W. Strang's Brer Rabbit III is first among 13 boats in Class C-4. Ronald Sternicki's Strange is the top-rated boat in Class C-5.

In Class A-1, Linwood Mather's Excellence and Bill Fortmann's Snow Goose will do battle at the front of the 19-boat fleet in that division for the second straight year. Bow-Wow, sailed by Nick and Dusty Staub, and Irish

Mist, sailed by G. Robert O'Brien will start at the top in Class A-2.

Among the 11 boats in Class B, John R. Saxe's Mandalay is rated first and carries a 20 percent penalty point.

Three classes, B, C-5 and Cruising Canvas, sail short courses, 18.35 miles today and 18.2 miles Saturday, while the other boats compete over 24.81 miles today and 22.9 miles Saturday.

Awards will be given to top finishers today and Saturday and for the combined, two-day competition. Spring results are combined with results of September's two days of racing off Shelter Island, N.Y., for the overall title.

Conditions wreak havoc with Off Soundings

Shelter Harbor, N.Y. — Everything was in place Friday for the first of the Off Soundings Club's sailing series.

Anything, that is, but the wind was uncooperative.

The 140-boat fleet had to contend with light and variable winds and had to deal with a strong current that brought many to a halt in the race and resulted in four of the nine classes being declared no race because no boat could finish the 24.6-mile course before 5 p.m. Only 16 boats finished in time in Class

A-1, A-2, C-2 or C-3.

The only classes to finish on the 24.6-mile long course were C-1 and C-4. Dick Rohman's J.A.R.D. Loose was the winner in C-1, followed by Robert B. Audette's Jack Rose, Ron Noe's En Charette, Norman H. Gahm aboard Peregrine and C. Paul Lebeau's Pererine.

In Class C-4, the results were tentative pending a protest. The winner was Jonathan Lathrop's En Charette. John M. Washburn's Our Tern was second, Hellion, sailed by Ed Hellenbrecht and Andrew

Staniar, was third, Malcolm A. Ross was fourth with Thunderduck and Bill Webster fifth aboard Deliverance.

The three classes that sailed the 16.2-mile short course all managed to get their races in.

In Class B, William Drinkuth was the winner aboard Watercolors. Rusasell W. Brown was second with Windrider II, followed by Bugler's Holiday, sailed by Ed Burch, Cal Beggs aboard Mistral and Ed Purcell on Just Friends.

In Class C-5, Chris Field was the

winner aboard Maybe, followed by David P. Devlin's Hotspur, Ronald A. Sternicki's Strange, David J. Whelan on Emancipate and Reinhard Sarges aboard Salud.

Rascal, rated as the slowest boat in the Cruising Canvas class, but Richard Steinhilber came away the winner. Allen R. Perrins' Barb was second, followed by Bertil Olsson's Ack-Va-Vit, Thomas M. Ginz on Solaire and Dick Tuschick on Dutchess.

The fleet will try again today in Gardiners Bay.

Wind deigns to make an appearance

Shelter Harbor, N.Y. — After one day in which the weather played the spoiler, Off Soundings sailors were happy to see the wind make an appearance Saturday.

Breezes blowing 10-15 knots made for a good day of racing in the 54th annual Fall Race Series of the Off Soundings Club. But then anything was better than Friday's still conditions, which accounted for four of the nine classes of boats being declared no race.

Saturday, therefore, saw four winners take overall honors on the basis of one race, including Linwood Mather's Excellence in Class A-1 and Bamboo, sailed by Peter McFadden and John Lovell, in Class A-2.

Second in Class A-1 was Tynaje, sailed by Peter Ross, while David Noyes Jr. was third in Elixir and J. Robert Gunther Jr. fourth in Eastwinds.

In Class A-2, Wallace Tobin was second in Elizabeth, commodore Paul van Dyke was third in Valiant and Robert Almeida Jr. fourth in Piper Too.

Classes C-2 and C-3 were also based solely on Saturday's race, with Bill Healy's Sir prize the winner in C-2. Following Healy were Alan Karenko's Wolverine, Jeff Pritchard's Wild Thing and David Dickerson's Lindy.

Keith Lovell finished first in Class C-3 in Aeria, with Ron Walker second in Wave-

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walker, Burtin Cunin and Al Fritzsche third in American Maid and Steve Anderson fourth in Restless.

One other race, Class C-4, finished Friday but was abandoned because of a protest — leaving Saturday's winners with the trophies. Jonathan Lathrop's Arabesque took first prize in the division, with Malcolm Ross second in Thunderduck, Bill Webster third in Deliverance and John Washburn fourth in Our Tern.

All classes which did not finish Friday were sailing the long course, 24.6 miles from New London to Shelter Harbor. The only class sailing the long course which did finish was Class C-1. Classes B, C-5 and Cruising Canvas all sailed a 16.2-mile short course Friday.

In Class C-1, J.A.R.D. Loose, sailed by Dick Rohman, was fourth Saturday but took top overall honors in the class. First in Class C-1 Saturday was Dave and Bob Nickerson in Split Decision and second was Norm Gahm in Peregrine, also second overall. Third Saturday was Leprechaun, sailed by Paul LeBeau.

Third overall in Class C-1 belonged to Ron Noe's En Charette, fifth Saturday, and

fourth overall was Robert Audette's Jack Rose.

Class B overall honors went to William Drinkuth in Watercolors (second Saturday) and second was Ed Birch in Bugler's Holiday (first). Third overall and third Saturday was Cal Beggs' Mistral. Fourth overall was Ed Purcell's Just Friends. Fourth Saturday was Tigress, sailed by Andy and Mark Anderson.

Hotspur, sailed by David Devlin, swept through Class C-5 with honors both Saturday and overall. Chris Field's Maybe was second overall, followed by Ron Sternicki in Strange and Reinhard Sarges fourth in Salud.

After Hotspur in Saturday's race were David Leventhal's Fast Forward, Sternicki in Strange and Sarges in Salud.

And in Cruising Canvas, Rascal, sailed by Richard Steinhilber was first both Saturday and for the two-day series. Second overall was Allen Perrins' Barb, while Bertil Olsson was third in Ack-Va-Vit and Thomas Ginz was fourth in Solaire.

Barb was also second Saturday, followed by R.A. Joslyn Jr.'s Breakaway in third and Ack-Va-Vit in fourth.

Saturday's races in Gardiner's Bay featured courses of 20.2 miles for the long course and 16.2 miles for the short course.

The Day Fri Sept 13, 1991

Off Soundings fleet makes way this morning

By VICKIE FULKERSON
Day Sports Writer

New London — Normally, to the victors go the spoils.

But in the case of the Off Soundings Club's racing series, to the victors go the penalty percentages, making it extremely difficult for boats to repeat from race to race.

Today at 9:30 a.m. is the start of the 54th annual Off Soundings Club Fall Race Series, with boats in nine classes sailing from New London to

Dering Harbor off Shelter Island, N.Y. Competition concludes Saturday with races in Gardiner's Bay.

With 140 boats in the fleet and the spring's winners having picked up their penalty points, there will be little room for error.

The rule states that any yacht winning a first, second or third place will carry a penalty until the yacht has participated in three additional race series. The penalties are 15 percent for each first place, 10 percent for each second place and five percent for each third place.

For example, last fall's Class A-1 overall winner was Excellence, sailed by Linwood Mather.

This spring, Excellence took the honor of being the first boat to cross the finish line on the second day of racing — good for 12th out of 18 boats in her class. The penalty took its toll.

"If we ever win again, it will probably be the rest of the fleet starting Friday and us Saturday, that's how far behind we'll be," Mather said goodnaturedly after the race.

Another boat in Class A-1 which picked up a 15 percent penalty was

Brilliant, a 62-foot training vessel which belongs to the Mystic Seaport Museum. Brilliant, sailed by George Moffett Jr., of Ledyard, won the spring series by finishing first overall Friday and fourth Saturday.

The largest category of boats this weekend is the Cruising Canvas Class, with 23, including Anthony Halsey's Patriot, billed as the fastest.

Boats are rated according to a handicapping system which takes boat length, keel and other factors

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into account. Penalty percentages are tacked on at the end of the race.

Ed Purcell's Just Friends, sailing in Class B, has the highest penalty with 25 percent.

In Class A-2, R.J. Snyder's Shimaera and John Orzech's Revellie are the top two rated boats. G. Robert O'Brien is third in Irish Mist and Nick and Dusty Staub in Bow-Wow are fourth.

Mandalay, sailed by John R. Saxe, is ranked first in Class B, followed by William Drinkuth in Watercolors and Edward C. Dieckerhoff in Sanibel. Allen Ames is the fourth-rated boat in Sesame.

In Class C-1, Peter Brinkerhoff's Hooligan is the top-ranked boat, with Dick Rohman's J.A.R.D. Loose second, Robert Audette's Jack Rose third and Gary Bennett's J'ai Tu fourth.

Of 18 boats in Class C-2, Kirk Blanchard's Zephyros is rated first

and Bill Healy's Sirprize is second. Class C-3 is led by Fireball, sailed by Donald and Robert Kern. Second in Class C-3 is T. Jack Rogers in Wings.

In Class C-4, Brer Rabbit III is the top-ranked boat, sailed by Walt Loweth and Bill Strang. Thunderduck, sailed by Malcolm Ross is second in the 12-boat class. Of 11 boats in Class C-5, Reinhard Sarges' Salud is ranked first followed by Chris Field in Maybe.

Three classes, B, C-5 and Cruising Canvas, sail short courses, 16.2 miles both today and Saturday, while the remaining classes compete over 24.6 miles today and 20.2 miles Saturday.

Awards will be given to top finishers today and Saturday and for the combined, two-day competition. Fall results are combined with results of June's two days of racing off Block Island for the overall title.