

IDA LEWIS DISTANCE RACE 2007: NEWS

A Challenge Like Never Before: Rumours, Paladin and Decision Persevere

NEWPORT, RI (Aug. 13, 2007) -- A low pressure system delayed the planned Friday (August 10) start of the 2007 Ida Lewis Distance Race, but 17 hours later--at 8 a.m. Saturday morning (August 11)--sunshine prevailed and a fresh northerly enabled a colorful "spinnaker sendoff" for the 14 boats competing. By that time, the Race Committee had shortened the race--originally set at 177 miles--by 27 miles and two teams had dropped out due to schedule conflicts caused by the delay. The race started off Fort Adams State Park at the mouth of Newport Harbor, continued past Castle Hill and Brenton Reef, then incorporated Block Island, Montauk Point, Martha's Vineyard and Buzzards Tower into its configuration before returning to Fort Adams and just beyond to the finish line at the historic Lime Rock location of the race's host Ida Lewis Yacht Club.



Race photos by Amory Ross

"A severe weather warning had been issued on Thursday and the call was for 25-35 knot gusts Friday night when the sailors would be on their leg from Montauk to Nomans Land (south of Martha's Vineyard)," said Principal Race Officer Peter Gerard. "In the spirit of caution and safety we decided to delay and shorten course, diverting the second of two Montauk legs to a mark southeast of Block Island."

In the end, it was lack of wind instead of too much wind that foiled the efforts of half the fleet and allowed only seven boats to finish, four of those being the larger IRC entrants that made it back to Newport before the light-medium winds on the backside of the front began playing games with the rest of the fleet.

"The bigger IRC boats got away from us at Block Island when the wind first died and the southwest breeze, which wasn't predicted to come at all, took more than four hours to fill in across Rhode Island Sound," said PHRF defending champion Tim Woodhouse (Newport, R.I.), who wrought every last ounce of power from his Thompson 35 Rumours to become the only one of five teams in his class to finish.

Woodhouse's closest competitor, Tom Rich (Middletown, R.I.) aboard his Peterson 42 Settler, was keeping his handicap time on Rumours up until the last mark of the race, but then an oncoming ebb tide proved stronger than the breeze and Settler couldn't go anywhere. "We took the risk of trying to go between a rock and the shore for current relief and it didn't pay off," said Rich. "We were being swept up onto the rocks, so we turned on our engine. It was a great race until then."

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Race photos by Amory Ross

According to Woodhouse, "Settler would have beat us easily if the breeze had held." Woodhouse himself had been fortunate to get to Castle Hill on the last of the flood tide, but it took him one hour to get from there to the Dumplings, a mark near the finish line and a distance of less than one mile. He was fighting a 1 1/2 knot current in only four knots of breeze, which again was coming from the north. "An hour after that, the boats behind us had to battle a three-knot tide," said Woodhouse. Two more PHRF boats gave up, and one raced until the time limit expired at 3 p.m. on Sunday--all were just short of the finish line after more than 30 hours of sailing.

Two of five double-handed boats--sailing in a new division for this race--were the last to officially finish on Sunday afternoon and the only ones to take home trophies after the rest of their fleet gave up. They were Paladin, a J/35 skippered by Jason Richter (Mt. Sinai, N.Y.) in first, followed by Off Beat, a J/109 skippered by Doug Hannah (Jamestown, R.I.).

Stephen Murray (New Orleans, La.) defended his IRC title with his TP52 Decision, edging out Ron O'Hanley (Boston, Mass.) and his Farr 50 Privateer. Germany's Norbert Plambeck, with his Frers 80 Hexe (formerly Boomerang), finished third in that division.

According to O'Hanley, "This is a terrific race because it starts and ends in Newport and there are quite a significant number of navigational challenges. We were a bit disappointed by the delay because we lost a few crew members and we prefer heavy air, but the Race Committee had to make its decision. My congratulations go out to Decision who navigated the light air beautifully."

The Ida Lewis Distance Race has been newly added as one of the qualifying events for the first-ever DHORT (Double-Handed Ocean Racing Trophy), administered by the Stamford (Conn.) Yacht Club and added to that club's line-up of other prestigious trophies for which the race is a qualifier as well: the NELS (New England Lighthouse Series for PHRF boats) and the NORT (Northern Ocean Racing Trophy for IRC).

The Ida Lewis Distance Race is sponsored by North Sails and New England Boatworks, with support from Churchill Yacht Partners, Harken and J Boats.

For more information, go to <http://www.ildistancerace.org>, or contact Event Chair Dirk Johnson at info@ildistancerace.org.

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2007 Ida Lewis Distance Race - Top-three Results					
Finish	Boat	Type	Owner	Hometown	Corrected Time
<i>IRC</i>					
1	Decision	TP52	Stephen Murray	New Orleans, LA	1:03:33:33
2	Privateer	Farr 50	Ron O'Hanley	Boston, MA	1:05:34:01
3	Hexe	Frers 90	Norbert Plambeck	Cuxhaven, Germany	1:06:40:45
<i>PHRF</i>					
1	Rumours	Thompson 35	Tim Woodhouse	Newport, RI	1:00:15:54
<i>Double-handed</i>					
1	Paladin	J/35	Jason Richter	Mt. Sinai, NY	1:04:21:25
2	Off Beat	J/109	Doug Hannah	Jamestown, RI	1:05:00:08

Teams Preparing; Double-handers to Have a Go

NEWPORT, RI (Aug. 2, 2007) -- The sailors will come from near and far, but they will all go the same distance -- 175 nautical miles -- when they compete in the annual Ida Lewis Distance Race set for its third running on Friday, August 10, 2007. The overnighter, which begins and ends off Newport, R.I., starts at 3 p.m. and plies some of the most storied and beautiful sailing grounds in the world, challenging boats in classes for PHRF (spinnaker and non-spinnaker) and IRC, with the addition this year of a class for double-handed boats.

Making the hike from New Orleans, Louisiana, to defend his IRC victory here in 2006 will be Stephen Murray, steering his TP 52 *Decision*. His tactician Andy Lovell, also from New Orleans, likes to call it "a navigator's race," which translates into plenty of turning marks and tactical decisions about tide, current and weather. The Frers 80 *Hexe*, famous as the old *Boomerang*, will sail with Germany's Norbert Plambeck at the helm and an all-German crew. Ron O'Hanley (Boston, Mass.) will sail his new Cookson 50 *Privateer* in IRC division, having finished third last year in PHRF aboard a Swan 48, also named *Privateer*, while Jim Madden's (Newport Beach, Calif.) J/65 *Brand New Day*, with a mostly local crew--including J Boats guru Jeff Johnstone (Portsmouth, R.I.)--also will be joining the IRC racing. Madden was last year's line-honors winner (with his Reichel/Pugh 66 *Stark Raving Mad*), completing the course in a little less than 23 hours.

After the start just off Fort Adams State Park at the mouth of Newport Harbor, the race continues past Castle Hill and Brenton Reef, then incorporates Block Island, Montauk Point, Martha's Vineyard and Buzzards Tower into its configuration before returning to Fort Adams and just beyond to the finish line at the historic Lime Rock location of the race's host Ida Lewis Yacht Club.

Newport resident Tim Woodhouse, winner of last year's PHRF division, will again sail his Thompson 35 *Rumours*, which always is a formidable contender in around-the-buoys racing on Narragansett Bay. "The 2006 race was great.a tactical challenge, " said Woodhouse. "And the conditions were perfect, which always makes it fun." Among those joining Woodhouse on the starting line will be Daniel Heun (Franklin, Mass.), aboard the J/105 *Liquid Courage*, and Tom Rich (Middletown, R.I.), skippering his Peterson 42 *Settler*. Last year Rich sailed with a mostly teenage crew, which had a great first-time experience sailing overnight--even encountering a whale, which spouted water on them as they sailed.

Doublehanders to Have a Go

Among the sailors competing in the Ida Lewis Distance Race's debuting double-handed division is Jason Richter (Mt. Sinai, N.Y.) with his J/35 *Paladin* and Bjorn Johnson (Red Bank, N.J.) with his Beneteau

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40.7 *Valkyrie*. Having sailed a slew of shorthanded events in the nearly three years he has owned *Valkyrie*, Johnson feels confident of his game. "I happen to like Newport and really like medium-distance races like this," said Johnson, who earlier this season finished third overall in the 44-boat Bermuda 1-2 race, which also started from Newport. "They are a true test for whether you're really cut out for double-handed sailing. You get no sleep, and as you do with longer distance races, you don't get the couple of days to get into the rhythm of the boat."

Johnson said important to him was that the Ida Lewis Distance Race has been newly added as one of the qualifying events for the first-ever DHORT (Double-Handed Ocean Racing Trophy), administered by the Stamford (Conn.) Yacht Club and added to that club's line-up of other prestigious trophies for which the race is a qualifier as well: the NELS (New England Lighthouse Series for PHRF boats) and the NORT (Northern Ocean Racing Trophy for IRC).

The Ida Lewis Distance Race is sponsored by North Sails and New England Boatworks, with support from Churchill Yacht Partners, Harken and J Boats.

For more information and to enter, go to <http://www.ildistancerace.org>, or contact Event Chair Dirk Johnson at info@ildistancerace.org.

Ida Lewis Distance Race Becomes Annual Affair

Third Time's a Charm: August 10

NEWPORT, RI (May 24, 2007) -- The Ida Lewis Yacht Club has announced that it has made its biennial distance race--which debuted in 2004--into an annual affair. The third Ida Lewis Distance Race begins and ends off Newport, R.I., and sets out at 3:00 p.m. on August 10, 2007. Covering 175 nautical miles, the race plies some of the most storied and beautiful sailing grounds in the world, challenging boats in classes for PHRF (spinnaker and non-spinnaker) and IRC, with the addition this year of a class for double-handed boats.

"It's a great 'in-between' competition for boats that compete in major races off Newport and then head to Long Island Sound for late summer events," said Race Chairman Dirk Johnson. "From a spectator start off Fort Adams in Narragansett Bay, the race continues past Castle Hill and Brenton Reef, then incorporates Block Island, Montauk Point, Martha's Vineyard and Buzzards Tower into its course. It's quite the challenge, with its multiple turning marks and tide and current negotiations."

Johnson added that the race is one of the qualifying events for the New England Lighthouse Series (PHRF) and Northern Ocean Racing Trophy (IRC and Doublehanded) administered by the Stamford (Conn.) Yacht Club.

The event got star ratings last year when the Ida Lewis Race Committee sighted the finish line between a point on the clubhouse's deck--situated on Lime Rock where a finish-line party was underway--and a mark in Newport Harbor. A greeting committee of club members, bearing bottles of champagne, met each boat as it finished, shining a light on sails in the darkness when needed.

"It was reminiscent of Ida Lewis herself," said Johnson, referring to the club's namesake and lighthouse keeper who in the early 1800s saved as many lives as there are stars on the club's burgee (18). "Of course, she used a row boat to meet shipwrecks, but we like to think she was smiling on us."

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An impressive array of grand prix boats, including Titan 12, Blue Yankee, Harrier, Numbers and Rima, have competed in the Ida Lewis Distance Race. Last year, 13 boats completed the competition, with the line-honors boat--the Reichel/Pugh 66 Stark Raving Mad, owned by California's Jim Madden and sailing in IRC class--finishing in a little less than 23 hours.

According to Andy Lovell, tactician aboard Stephen Murray's (New Orleans, La.) TP52 Decision, which won IRC class on corrected-time, "It was a real navigator's race." Newport's Tim Woodhouse, skippering his Thompson 35 Rumours, won PHRF class.

A Notice of Race will be available in early June.

For more information, contact Ida Lewis Yacht Club, 401-846-1969, info@ildistancerace.org, or visit <http://www.ildistancerace.org>.

2007 IDA LEWIS DISTANCE RACE CHAIRS:

EVENT CHAIR: Dirk Johnson

SPONSORSHIP CHAIR: Ann C Souder