

## IDA LEWIS DISTANCE RACE NEWS



### **Variety Adds Spice to Ida Lewis Distance Racing**

#### ***Something for Everyone OFFSHORE and IN BAY***

NEWPORT, R.I. (March 30, 2021) – The 17th edition of the annual [Ida Lewis Distance Race](#), scheduled for August 19-21, literally offers something for every type of big-boat sailor. Not only are there classes for ORC, PHRF (including Cruising Spinnaker) and Double-Handed (Mixed Gender and Open) but also there are Youth and Collegiate challenges. As well, entrants have a choice of racing in either the traditional OFFSHORE distance race, starting on Friday (August 20) and requiring overnight sailing, or the shorter IN BAY distance race, starting and finishing Saturday (August 20). The latter is a holdover from Covid-19 adaptations made last year to accommodate sailors during uncertain times.

“Last year’s inaugural IN BAY distance race was a big hit,” said Event Chair Pat Kennedy, “because it allowed a lot of people to sail who otherwise – due to Covid restrictions – wouldn’t have been able to. On top of that it was not just another buoy race on Narragansett Bay; it was an exciting short distance day race of 33 miles, starting off Fort Adams and heading north around Conanicut and Prudence Islands. That said, the OFFSHORE distance race with its overnight component and long track record is what has made the Ida Lewis Distance Race one of the most iconic events on the East Coast.”

The OFFSHORE distance race starts off historic Fort Adams and finishes in front of the lighthouse that serves as the clubhouse for Ida Lewis Yacht Club, the event’s host. Based on wind and sea conditions, the overnight course is chosen by the Ida Lewis Race Committee just prior to the start and it can be anywhere from 112 to 169 nautical miles. The courses are aptly named for the scenic way points they include: “Buzzards Bay”, “Point Judith”, “Block Island” and “Montauk”.

“We have been racing the Ida Lewis Distance Race OFFSHORE event since 2013,” said EC Helme (Newport, R.I.), skipper of the J/92 *Spirit* that has twice taken a second in its PHRF class. “Our typical program is really just day racing since the boat is pretty sparse, but the OFFSHORE race is perfect for a smaller boat. It’s a reasonable distance; never too far from a good bailout point; and usually there are boats that are similar enough to us to make it directly competitive. It’s a chance to push ourselves a bit and figure out currents, winds and tactics we don’t normally get to deal with.”

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Top: *Spirit* at the start of the 2019 Ida Lewis Distance Race OFFSHORE event. Bottom: *Vento Solare's* team collecting its finish-line champagne and sailing in the 2020 Ida Lewis Distance Race IN BAY event. Photos by Stephen Cloutier **Ctrl+Click to download in high resolution**

One of the first teams to sign up this year for the OFFSHORE race was Bill Kneller's (Newport, R.I.) J/109 *Vento Solare*, which placed third in class last year in the IN BAY race, finishing the course in just over five hours.

"On the first leg from the start off Rose Island to R2 off Brenton Reef it was a spinnaker run," said Kneller. "Our strategy was simple - sail our own race away from other boats, do

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transitions methodically with ample time to execute, and constantly change trim to optimize for the ever-changing conditions. The strategy paid off to reach the podium.”

## Youth and Collegiate Challenge

Youth and Collegiate challenges have been popular components of the Ida Lewis Distance Race, encouraging a healthy future for the sport of sailing. With special trophies for each, the challenges are applied to both OFFSHORE and IN BAY racing.

Youth entries must consist of a minimum of two adults (one designated as Captain), and more than 40% of the crew must have reached their 14th birthday but not their 18th birthday prior to August 20, 2021.

Collegiate entries also must consist of a minimum of two adults (one designated as Captain), and more than 40% of the crew shall not reach their 26th birthday prior to August 20, 2021.

## Trophies

Trophies for the Ida Lewis Distance Race OFFSHORE Race will be given in ORC, PHRF (Aloha and Coronet divisions), ORC Double-handed and PHRF Cruising Spinnaker classes. Trophies for the IN BAY DISTANCE Race will be given in PHRF (Aloha and Coronet divisions), PHRF Double-Handed and PHRF Cruising Spinnaker classes.

## GMT Boat of the Year Series

For 2021, the Ida Lewis Distance Race IN BAY race has been included as a qualifying event in the Narragansett Bay Yachting Association’s [Boat of the Year series](#). The trophy for the series – the Narragansett Bay Boat of the Year Trophy sponsored by GMT Composites – is awarded in the Fall to the owner of the boat on Narragansett Bay that has achieved the best overall performance for the season.

For more information on the Ida Lewis Distance Race, visit [www.ilyc.org/distancerace](http://www.ilyc.org/distancerace). For questions, contact Race Chairman Pat Kennedy, [Distancerace@ilyc.org](mailto:Distancerace@ilyc.org)

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