

EmOcean, a J/120, Wins Overall Honors in 2007 Charleston to Bermuda Race

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA (May 27, 2007)—The amazing, sometimes arduous, hours at sea are over and the free-flowing offerings of Gosling's Rum have come and gone, and now, the 2007 edition of the Charleston to Bermuda Race is consigned to history. This 777-mile race began on May 18th with eight tall ships and hundreds of spectators looking on, and ended with a convivial evening of awards at the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club Saturday, May 26th, during which the final finisher—the Hylas 45 *E's Alee*--was towed to the dock and met by all the other crews with rousing applause. That's typical of the C2B. It's not the largest race to this idyllic Atlantic island, but it's definitely one that offers something for every competitor, including genuine recognition.

This year, overall honors were awarded to a skipper and crew who performed superbly— young Will Hanckel and his friends on board his father's J/120 *EmOcean*. This Charleston-based group made their intentions known early in the proceedings as they were the second entry to set their kite at the start, and the first to round the race's initial turning mark. Though Hanckel and company couldn't maintain the boat-for-boat lead for long, they sailed smartly and aggressively and remained in contention throughout the nearly five days it took them to reach Bermuda. En route, they dealt deftly with a variety of conditions that ran the gamut from 25 to 30-knot northeasterly winds and confused, 10-foot seas, to light zephyrs and moderate swells. Near the end of the race, the crew opted to abandon its watch system in order to have all bodies on the rail and all hands on deck for the final 24 hours. And they did this despite having on board provisions that were limited at that stage to cookies and crackers.

Hanckel is no stranger to victory, but those trophies are usually associated with around-the-buoys contests, and until the last couple of years, his wins were limited to events staged in one-design dinghies. (He won the 2006 Y-Flyer National Championship.) He nonetheless looked right at home receiving a new, sterling silver, Charleston to Bermuda Race trophy upon which the name of his father's boat will be inscribed. As Sutherland Madeiros, the Mayor of Hamilton, and Gregory W. Slayton U.S. Consul General stood by, along with all the dapperly attired flag officers of the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club, Hanckel and his crew also received a large crystal bowl as the winners of the J/Boats Trophy for the best performing J/Boat in the fleet. All in all, not bad for a crew with no C2B veterans on its roster.

Sailing more than 95 percent of the race on port tack, Team *EmOcean* finished in 4 days, 21 hours, 43 minutes, and 32 seconds, giving them a corrected time of 4 days, 9 hours, 25 minutes, and 16 seconds. By comparison, Scott Jones' Peterson 44 *Lung Ta* took almost a full day longer (5 days, 21 hours, 20 minutes, no seconds), which equated to a corrected time of 4 days, 11 hours, 39 minutes, and 29 seconds. That was good enough for second overall honors. Third overall was awarded to Kevin Hogan and crew sailing aboard his C&C 44 *Kintaro*. But *Kintaro*'s crew deserves special recognition for

sailing the entire way from the finish down the tricky channel that rims Bermuda's western shore right up to the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club in Hamilton Harbor, all of that in total darkness.

For scoring purposes, the 18 competitors were segmented into four classes. Joe Harris's Open 50 *Gryphon Solo*, with Hugh Piggin as skipper, was the first boat to arrive in Bermuda, and finished first in the Exhibition Class with a corrected time of 4 days, 23 hours, 26 minutes, and 32 seconds. Despite her actual elapsed time of 4 days, 8 hours, and 33 minutes—more than 11 hours faster than the next boat—this 'round-the-world racing machine finished 8th overall.

EmOcean also won top honors in Class A, followed by Hogan's *Kintaro* in second, and David Guggenheim's Beneteau 40.7 *Piakea* in third with a corrected time of 4 days, 17 hours, 0 minutes, and 36 seconds.

In Class B, Jones' team on board *Lung Ta* took top honors, followed in second by Jay Cook's Beneteau 423 *Tohidu*, with a corrected time of 4 days, 16 hours, 52 minutes and 28 seconds, which was good enough to nip Guggenheim's team for the Beneteau Trophy (also an impressively sized crystal bowl). Third place in this class was awarded to Steve Lesniak's team of eight on board his Beneteau 510 *Celadon*.

And top honors in the three-boat non-spinnaker class went to Dan Valoppi, who was skippering Bermudian Robert Aldred's Beneteau 365 *Dreamscape*. Though the other two boats competing in this class dropped out, one of the crews—Richard Muenow's group on board his Brewer 44 *Ageless Adventure*—flew to Bermuda to be there for the awards after arriving back in Charleston four-plus days into the race.

Muenow and his crew were among the well wishers on the dock when the weary crew aboard *E's Alee* finally made it in. This group, which was made up of two instructors, six students and one correspondent, had endured not only teeth-rattling sea conditions in the Gulf Stream and hours of listless calms, but *E's Alee* was one of two boats that had to anchor only hours after the start when the winds subsided and the current began to determine their fate. Said one unnamed crew member after tying up to the dock in Hamilton Harbor, "This race was really tough, but the welcome here makes it all worthwhile."

Race Director Brad Van Liew concurred. "That's the thing about this race, it's really whatever you make of it. Some of the entries we have are here to race, and others are here for the voyage. And everyone gets a wonderful reception in Bermuda." And what of the fact that eight boats opted to drop out of this year's race? Van Liew said he wasn't worried. "We have an inclusive attitude about the competitors in this event. This is the kind of race where you get to make the decisions necessary to enjoy the race on your own terms....I think everyone who participated was happy, even those who had to motor to get here."

The Charleston to Bermuda yacht race is sponsored by Bermuda Tourism, Gosling's Rum, the Fairmont Hamilton Princess, Charleston Harbor Resort, Bennett-Hofford, and Charleston Boatworks. The seventh edition of the Charleston to Bermuda Race will be

staged in the spring of 2009. For additional information and full scores, log on to www.charlestontobermuda.com

Final Results:

Place, Yacht Name, Owner's Name, Results in Class

Exhibition (PHRF - 3 Boats)

1. GRYPHON SOLO, Hugh Piggen, 1

Spinnaker A (PHRF - 6 Boats)

1. EMOCEAN, Will Hankel, 1
2. KINTARO, Kevin Hogan, 2
3. PAIKEA, David Guggenheim, 3

Spinnaker B (PHRF - 6 Boats)

1. LUNG TA, Scott Jones, 1
2. TOHIDU, Jay Cook, 2
3. CELEDON, Steve Lesniak , 3

Non Spinnaker (PHRF - 3 Boats)

1. DREAMSCAPE, Dan Valopi, 1

OVERALL:

1. EMOCEAN, Will Hanckel
2. LUNG TA, Scott Jones
3. KINTARO, Kevin Hogan
4. TOHIDU, Jay Cook
5. PAIKEA, David Guggenheim

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