

## Leaders Savor Bermuda as Strong Conditions Blast Fleet

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA (May 24, 2007)—Of the 18 boats that originally departed Charleston last Friday, eight remain at sea as of this morning. Among the others, five boats have withdrawn (two of those are in port on the mainland and one in Bermuda), while the rest sit safely berthed in Hamilton Harbor. For much of Wednesday and Wednesday night, 20 to 25-knot northeasterly winds and seas near 10 feet hammered this sector of the North Atlantic. At 11:30 p.m. Bermuda time last night, the local weather service issued a small craft warning—not good news for those competitors still at sea. But accompanying that warning was a forecast that calls for the winds to diminish and the seas to slowly subside over the next 24 hours.

On Wednesday, race watchers in Bermuda were treated to a near steady parade of finishes yesterday as five C2B entries sailed across the line off St. David's Light near the northeastern end of the island. The parade actually began on Tuesday night when Joe Harris's Open 50 *Gryphon Solo* culminated her 4-day, 8-hour and 33-minute passage. The next morning, Buddy Darby's *Luna Danns* and Bill Hanckel's *EmOcean* rolled across the line within a half hour of each other. Both quickly headed ashore for safe haven as the conditions continued to worsen. About eight hours later, Beezer Molton and his crew on board the J/120 *Don Quixote* battered their way across the line in choppy seas, followed not long afterward by David Guggenheim's Beneteau 40.7 *Piakea* and Kevin Hogan's C&C 44 *Kintaro* in succession. (See list below for official elapsed times.)

Meanwhile, Mother Nature's foul temper was taking a toll on those boats farther out at sea, and for a few of the crews, hand steering in these big winds and waves was getting a little tiring. On board the Hylas 45 *E'sAlee*, sailing correspondent Will Haynie wrote in his Wednesday dispatch, "The wind is coming out of the east and we are registering 23 to 27 knots apparent wind on our bow. We are sailing close-hauled in rough seas. The bow gets buried and spray covers the entire boat. Nobody is dry...We change watch every four hours, and nights like last night can make that seem like an eternity...During our overnight watches, we all took turns at the helm in 30-minute intervals because it will wear you out."

As Haynie mustered his optimism, he and his *E's Alee* crewmates remained among the boats farthest from Bermuda, over 260 miles from the finish as of Wednesday's 10:00 a.m. position report. By today at 6:00, they still had 218 miles to go and were positioned more than 100 miles south of the rhumbline. Some 30 miles ahead of them, Glen McIntosh's Beneteau 57 *Latitude Adjustment II*, and Jack Wood's Island Packet 40 *Zippity Do Dah* also continue to find the upwind going quite slow. Due to the strong headwinds and confused seas, neither of these three posted stellar progress throughout yesterday or last night according to the iBoatTrack data updates. Nonetheless, that same program projects that these three should all reach the finish in the wee hours on Saturday.

Among the remaining boats, the race organizers expect Scott Jones' Peterson 44 *La Tung*, Jay Cook's Beneteau 423 *Tohidu*, and Robert Aldred's Beneteau 361 *Dreamscape* to finish some time today. George Reavis' catamaran *Rahma*, which was powering toward Bermuda as of the 8:00 a.m. position update today, should also make it ashore today. And that leaves only Steve Lesniak's Beneteau 510 *Celadon*, which should arrive some time later tonight.

The prize giving ceremony for the Charleston to Bermuda Race is scheduled to take place Saturday evening at the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club. A trophy for the best overall performance will be awarded, along with additional trophies for the top finishers in each class. There are also two boatbuilder trophies at stake, the Beneteau Trophy for the fastest Beneteau in the race, and a J/Boats Trophy for the best performing J/Boat. And all participating boats will receive a participation plaque.

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. Follow the race boats via iBoat at [www.charlestontobermuda.com](http://www.charlestontobermuda.com).

#### Official Elapsed Times

Gryphon Solo	4 days, 8 hours, 33 minutes
Luna Danns	4 days, 21 hours, 8 minutes, 39 seconds
EmOcean	4 days, 21 hours, 43, 32 seconds
Don Quixote	5 days, 5 hours, 45 minutes, 18 seconds
Kintaro	5 days, 7 hours 9 minutes, 0 seconds

###