

## 2007 Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta Diary

### *The Concours d'Elegance – April 19, 2007*

The panel of judges met at an undisclosed luncheon locale to discuss the lengthy list of elegant and eligible contenders - over 60 gleaming classic yachts - polished, coiled, and buffed to perfection, were viewed throughout the morning, competing to win the Concours d'Elegance. The day began very early for some, as clearly, the stakes are high with such a stunning fleet at hand. A press briefing in the (lovely air-conditioned) Panerai media center, followed by the lively skippers briefing at the Yacht Club, rounded out the late afternoon as we all waited (and are still awaiting) a bit of breeze... Pouring out of the intimate upstairs of the AYC, skippers and press were welcomed by the Prime-minister and the whole of the Classics Committee. Due to popular demand, for the first year in 20 there will be four – rather than three – days of traditional racing, followed by the increasingly popular and ever-impressive, Single handed race on Tuesday. The added course is Monday's 20-mile "Windward" race. Course maps and Racing info is on pages 31 and 29 of the Programme, respectively. A finale for some and a *segué* for others, the annual Mt. Gay red hat party went on until midnight on the new lawn (future croquet course) just outside the Last Lemming.

### *Day 1 – April 20, 2007*

It is hot. Unseasonably hot. The breeze – stronger in the morning and tapering off gradually throughout the day - did however cooperate for day one's 20-mile course; The Old Road. With barely a cloud in the sky and a decent 10 knots of wind, an impressive fleet of over 60, headed off for some very civilized Caribbean sailing. It is thrilling to have some of the old favorites back, as many boats whom haven't been seen here in too many years, have returned. The brand new, yet authentic 12 meter – *Kate*, is here from St. Kitts where she was launched in December, and looking sharp, with her stand-out yellow hull. *Gli-Gli* the famous Carriacou Canoe was out with spectators for the day, which segued into evening activities around 3:00.... as we all artfully squeezed back into the harbour. I can't say anyone was surprised with the results of the Concours d'Elegance – 25.5m ketch *Belle Adventure* taking winner overall – but the task of judging must have been grueling with such a surplus of ship-shape beauties. The prizes were awarded elegantly amidst champagne and canapés in the Copper & Lumber Hotel's back garden. The evening went in many directions at this point, but seemed to finale for most, with The Last Lemming's Pirate-themed Crew Party. Though I didn't see many pirates, if anyone has contact information for the kilt-clad dancing machine, please let us know.

### *Day 2 – April 21, 2007*

Just enough breeze... for some. For others, performance in the light wind was notable. 19.71m *Juno* for one was pointing like no other schooner. An exciting start for the pink flag class with *Ticonderoga*, *Mariella*, *Tomahawk* and *Sumurun* on the line together, was a photographer's dream, and the rest of the day was relaxing to say the least.

It may not have been clear who won the race, but the winner of the party was undeniably 46ft Spirit of Tradition Class *Equus* and Donald Tofias - who reportedly

was seen back in, and relaxing at the Hospitality suite well ahead of the rest. The 'Pimms' party at the Yacht Club was already underway upon return to the dock – with a steel band narrating the affair...A perfect sundowner for a day of fair weather and fabulous company – no complaints, only optimistic outlook for the rest of the regatta, and maybe some superstitious offerings to the wind gods...

#### *Day 3 – April 22, 2007*

Set 'em and forget 'em. Day three's 'Cannon' Race, is known as the social race. The course is simply a reach out and a reach back, and then a reach out and a reach back. Hardcore racing sailors hate it, while everyone else loves an opportunity to just go sailing. With a perfectly lovely 10-12 knots of breeze, gear and crew were unstressed, there was plenty of time for oohing and ahing and waving, and simply enjoying ideal Caribbean sailing. The race was followed up by the parade of Classics in English Harbour, offering more viewing opportunities for those ashore. Currently in first place overall is the gorgeous 20m yawl *Galatea*, who deserves to win based on looks alone...

#### *Day 4 – April 23, 2007*

Judging from the enthusiasm for 2007's added fourth race on Monday, Antigua Classics week will be stretched to four days as a rule. For the first year, following the traditional three race days, the new 'Windward' course was raced. This new arrangement gave Captains and crews an extra day to practice up for the increasingly popular and incredibly impressive Single-handed race, which for the first year, was held on Tuesday, as the grand finale – rather than the opening race - of the entire event. Breathtaking, in a word describes the sight of more than 20 classics, between 17 and 72 feet, being skippered single-handedly. Not a trace of exhaustion amongst these admirable sailors, after four days of racing and at least five of soireeing through the wee hours... The large boat class was won by Captain Peter Underdown and *Cuilan*, while Antiguan Hans Lammers and *Sunshine*, claimed the small boat victory.

#### *Prize Giving – April 24, 2007*

An excited bunch gathered at the Copper & Lumber on Tuesday evening for an understandably lengthy prize-giving – this year's fleet of 61 was the largest ever. The reaction of the surprised winners overall – Judd and Pete Tinius and their crew of 72ft *Galatea* – was priceless. The magnificent Swedish-built classic yawl pulled off a clean sweep in the Vintage Class A division, winning all four of the races sailed. Classic Class A went to *Wandering Albatross*, while the Traditional Class was won by Carriacou sloop *Genesis* and the Spirit of Tradition class was won by W-Class racing yacht *Equus*. The widespread sentiment following ACYR 2007, is that this year's event may have been the best ever, and all are thrilled for next year's continuing Panerai 'Classic Yachts Challenge' sponsorship and the growing popularity of Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta as a whole.

By Jordan Mitchnick