



2023 Fall Newsletter

BICS was Incorporated as a nonprofit 501, (C), (3) organization in 2017 by Island sailing program supporters who were intent on making the sport of sailing fun, accessible and affordable to everyone. BICS promotes a welcoming environment that learning, volunteerism, and the satisfaction of supporting a true community benefit program.

Directors:

George Davis
John Doolittle
Henry duPont
Jacques Fiechter
James Gallacher
Ted Merritt
Al Skinner
Ray Torrey
Chuck Townsend

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Block Island Community Sailing had a full season of summer sailing and looks forward to our Fall and Winter sailing programs.

Block Island Community Sailing (BICS), Block Island's nonprofit adult / family sailing organization, has had a season of growth with an upgraded fleet, special accreditation as a US Sailing advanced sailing school now offering "Basic Cruising", "Bareboat Cruising", and "Coastal Navigation" courses, and a full season of racing events. In addition to sailing lessons and free boat use by our qualified members. BICS is the home for the Performance Handicap Racing Fleet (PHRF) on Block Island for which we offer a number of racing events including the Thursday Night Sailing Series, the Mary D Fund Benefit Regatta, the BICS Offshore Regatta, and the BIYC Around the Island Pursuit Regatta. BICS is the only sailing organization on Block Island to run regattas with US Sailing Certified Race officials and we provide all the regatta promotion, race management, and scoring required to run a well-managed event. A brief description of each of these events follows:



Dr Tom Warcup awarded BICS most active member award seen with our 42' bareboat charter yacht which BICS sails in the BVIs for our Winter Sailing Program

2023 Thursday Night Sailing Series

This event is a 10 weeklong sail racing series in which the Island's most accomplished sailors face off against each other in around-the-buoys racing every Thursday evening. This event is specifically for keel boats which sail under the PHRF rules. Now in its 25th year, the Series is run by Block Island Community Sailing as an advanced racing clinic, with coaching and a weekly newsletter on the Racing Rules of Sailing, boat speed techniques, and racing tactics.

The racing format is typically a windward-leeward course set in the recreational area in the northern section of the Great Salt Pond. The courses are typically about a mile and a half, or twenty minutes long, which allows three races to be run each evening. The Race Committee was run by BICS Director Henry duPont, who was assisted by BICS members, Russ Certo, Elizabeth Moss, and Dr Tom

Warcup, who provided and operated his fabulous 26' Scout sport fishing boat as our Race Committee vessel. Each of the Race Committee members participated in setting the racecourse, timing the starts and finishes, and recording the scores for each race.

The Thursday Night Sailing Series 1st Place finish was awarded to co-skippers George Davis and Todd Crouch sailing a Colgate 26 "Slapshot". Second place honors went to Bob Closter sailing his J/24 "Island Spirit", and 3rd place went Jeremy and Heather Moore, sailing "Moore Sailing", a Colgate 26.

Mary D Fund Benefit Regatta

Block Island's historic Mary D Fund Benefit Regatta, a popular fundraising event in the 1990s, was sailed yet again on Saturday July 15th in Block Island Sound. Seven boats entered the regatta which was hosted by Block Island Community Sailing. The course this year was windward-leeward, 13 miles in length, from the start/finish line set just north of the entrance channel down to the "South West Ledge" Whistle Buoy and back. Race conditions had Southely winds between 5 and 8 knots. The Race Committee consisted of Henry duPont, the Regatta Chairman, and Arleen Tunney, Bob Greenlee, and Elizabeth Moss as the oncourse race officials. Marty Schulman provided his 32 foot sport fishing boat to serve as the Race Committee boat. The race conditions became challanging as the fleet aproched the windward mark at Southwest Ledge while sailing against the current in light air. Mercifully the wind filled in on the way back to the finish line.



Michael Rock and Susan Sellers finished first in the cruising Class on their Watch Hill 15

Top honors in the Spinnaker Class went to Bob Closter sailing "Island Spirit" his J/24, second place to Henry duPont sailing "RUSH" his Tripp 26, and third place honors went to Jeremy and Heather Moore who finished only 19 seconds behind "RUSH", on corrected time, sailing "Persistence" a C&C 29.

In the Cruising Class, Michael Rock sailed to first place sailing his lovely Watch Hill 15 "Whisper".

Special thanks go to the New Harbor Boat Basin for being the event location sponsor.

BICS Offshore Regatta

Our Offshore Regatta, which was held August 12th, is a mid-distance yacht race sailed around government marks in Block Island Sound. This regatta is on the Eastern Connecticut Sailing Association's Offshore Racing Circuit Calendar as a "points" race. Eight boats entered the regatta, which was hosted by Block Island Community Sailing. The course this year was a windward- leeward-windward course, 12 miles in length, from the start/finish line set about 200 yards north of the entrance channel down to the "R6" buoy off of Cooneymous Cove, then up to "1BI", the North Point buoy, and back to the start/finish line. Race conditions had Southerly winds between 6 and 10 knots. The Race Committee consisted of Ted Merritt, the Principal Race Officer, and Dr. Tom Warcup who worked as a team on Tom's 26 foot sport fishing boat to ably set the start / finish line and to manage all the flag and horn signals required to start the event.



Bob Closter 1st place winner

After the start there was some close racing upwind until the fleet approached the "R6" windward mark buoy which unexpectedly became enshrouded in its own "personal" fog bank. Those skippers with GPS

navigators on their boat or cell phones were able to enter the fog bank and locate and round the windward mark buoy in less than 100' of visibility. Five minutes after rounding the buoy, the leaders "popped" out of the fog bank and were on their way, in good visibility, to "1BI", the next mark of the course. All the other boats, which declined to sail into the fog bank, had to retire from the race.

Top honors in the Spinnaker Class go to Bob Closter sailing "Island Spirit" his J/24, second place to Henry duPont sailing "RUSH" his Tripp 26.

This regatta was followed by an after-race awards party graciously hosted by Becky Pappas and Tim Clark at their party tent at the Beachead Restaurant.

2023 BIYC Around the Island Pursuit Race

On Sunday, Sept 3rd, the Block Island Yacht Club hosted the 10th annual Around the Island Pursuit Race. This Regatta was promoted and managed by BICS and sanctioned by the Eastern Connecticut Sailing Association as a "points" regatta on their Offshore Racing Circuit. This year the regatta had 10 yachts competing, with 2 from the mainland, including the largest yacht ever to register for this event, "Carthage Must be Destroyed", a very impressive looking Farr 53 racer / cruiser from NY, NY.

The race conditions featured SSW winds from 7-11 knots, and the 17 mile course sailed in a counter clockwise direction with the start / finish line set just outside of the New Harbor entrance channel.

The winning yacht in the Spinnaker Class was "Screwball", an Aerodyne 38 co-skipped by Keven and Amy Carse, from Clinton CT. Second place went to "RUSH" a Tripp 26 skippered by Henry duPont from BICS, and third place went to "Island Spirit", a J/24 skippered by Bob Closter also from Block Island.



Kevin and Amy Carse and crew finished 1st place in the Spinnaker Class on "Screwball"

The winning yacht in the Cruising Class, was "Nimble" an e33 skippered by Chuck Townsend of Block Island, who beat the next boat in his class by 59 minutes! Second Place went "Mallorca", a J/30 sailed by Jim Fiorato, of Block Island and third place went to "Whisper" a Watch Hill 15 skippered by Michael Rock, of Block Island

Special thanks to James Gallacher who served as I Principal Race Officer and who ably started each racing yacht, on time, in the starting sequence. Henry duPont, the Regatta Chairman, provided race management, and event scoring, the New Harbor Boat Basin provided the regatta headquarters, and Becky Pappas and Tim Clark hosted a terrific after race awards party at the Beachead.



Chuck Townsend and Crew sailed his e33 to first place in the cruising class

BICS Boats Raced in Mainland Yacht Club Regattas

BICS Members sailed their boats in several mainland yacht club regattas this year including "RUSH", Henry duPont's Tripp 26 who sailed with his crew, under the BICS Club flag, in the Off Sounding Club's Spring Series and in Block Island Race Week. "RUSH" finished 5th out of 12 boats who raced in Division 1 of the Eastern Connecticut Sailing Association's offshore racing circuit.

"Mischief", the BICS "new" Cape Dory 28 set off to Mystic CT on Friday July 28th to race in the Mystic River Mudhead's "Mudnite Madness" overnight race which was coincidentally from Mystic around Block Island and back. Crewed by BICS Members Alan Skinner, Roy Fowler, Dr. Tom Warcup and Henry duPont, this challenging race featured conditions which included a good spinnaker run down Fishers Island Sound, broad reaching out to and around Block Island at night, some light winds punctuated by a spectacular thunderstorm with 30 kt winds north of the Island at 5 in the morning, and a frustrating adverse current, in light air, just as we were approached the finish line. "Mischief" finished 6th in her class, and since she started and finished her sail from and to Block Island, she gets the distinction as the only boat to have sailed the course twice!

Mischief also sailed to Newport to participate in the 40th annual Cliff Mitchell Memorial Columbus Day Weekend Regatta racing from Newport to Block Island on Saturday October 7th. Mischief was crewed by Todd Crutch, Alan Skinner and Henry duPont who delivered the boat to the Newport, attended the Skippers meeting at the Newport Yacht Club, had a pleasant dinner in town, spent the night on the boat, and after a 9:00 race start, raced to Block Island where Mischief finished 2nd out of 14 boats. Conditions were easterly winds from 15 – 20 kts, good beam reaching conditions for our Cape Dory 28.

BICS Sailing Extends our Sailing Season to Warmer Waters this Winter!

Block Island Community Sailing is now offering our second year of our winter sailing program in the British Virgin Islands, one of the most fabulous sailing venues in the Americas. We are now booking one-week sailing course / bareboat charter vacations which feature seven days of cruising with BICS sailing instruction aboard a chartered 46' luxury sloop sailing from Tortola to Virgin Gorda and back, stopping at some of the most spectacular cruising harbors in the BVIs. The chartered yacht offers three private staterooms each with its own head and shower. US Sailing Basic Keelboat, Basic Cruising, and Bareboat Cruising courses are offered while under way and those who complete these courses are eligible to get their US Sailing International Proficiency Certificate, (IPC) which qualifies them to charter a yacht without a professional captain and crew, almost anywhere in the world. The cost of a one-week charter, which includes a fully provisioned yacht is half the cost of the other sailing school programs operating in the Caribbean. We have already booked a few charter weeks in March, but there are a few charter weeks available in February and April. For more information on pricing and availability for this terrific opportunity, call BICS at (401) 741-5136 or write us at info@sailbi.org.



BICS Annual Meeting Sat. November 25th with Around the World Singlehanded Sailor Joe Harris.

Our fifth Annual Meeting was held over Thanksgiving Weekend in the Harbor Baptist Church. BICS President Henry duPont brought the attending members and guests up to date with our programs and awarded George Davis, John Doolittle, and Al Skinner our most dedicated volunteer awards and Dr. Tom Warcup our most engaged member award. We presented a Treasurer's Report and a Nominating Committee Report both which passed with Al Skinner being elected to fill a one-year term on the Board of Directors (see side panel on the first page of this newsletter).

This year BICS featured Block Island resident Joe Harris as our esteemed Guest Speaker who recently finished a double handed around the world (ATW) Yacht Race in his Open 40 "Gryphonsolo2" ocean racing yacht with his crewmate Roger Junet. Joe, a champion ocean racer and a noted inspirational speaker, wowed our annual meeting attendees with his slide show of his latest around the world

voyage the Globe 40 which can be found at www.globe40.com/en/ Joe's first single handed around the world record attempt was in 2015, as Joe was racing to better the record of 137 days solo, around the world, non-stop, by way of the three great capes. While Joe completed the voyage in 152 days, he was forced to stop twice to repair damage to the boat, so did not break the record. The Globe 40 RTW race was organized with 8 stops, against 7 other Class 40 yachts similar to his GryphonSolo2. Joe and Roger Junet finished 4th, completing all 8 legs and covering over 36,000 nautical miles in 8 months.

Our BICS annual meetings are open to our members, friends and anyone who wishes to learn more about our programs.



Joe and Roger celebrating their Globe 40 ATW Race finish in France

BICS is putting Block Island on the Map as a Sea Faring Nation!

BICS members fared well racing in the Eastern Connecticut Sailing Association Offshore Circuit scoring enough points to put our sailing club in 10th place out of 44 clubs which entered boats in ECSA Regattas. Our racing program goal to field competitive boats and crews and to achieve more podium finishes to move up the ladder as one of the most competitive sailing clubs in the region.

Now that Block Island Community Sailing is the only US Sailing Accredited Basic Cruising and Bareboat Cruising school in SE New England, we are helping put Block Island on the map as a center for sailing excellence. Our community benefit programs include special sailing instruction for ladies and seniors, and our new cruising courses introduce our students to the rewarding cruising lifestyle.

You can help us bring the joy of sailing to Block Island by joining BICS as a member, donating to support our charitable community benefit programs, or volunteering to help us work on our growing fleet of sailboats. You can also provide the gift of sailing to family and friends with gift memberships and lesson packages this holiday season. Visit us at our web site: www.sailbi.org or contact us at info@sailbi.org for more information.

Special thanks to our commercial sponsors who donated generously to support our sailing programs.

Sotheby's, Mystic Shipyard, The National Hotel, The Barrington Inn, and The Block Island Yacht Club



One of the Mooring's 46' sloops chartered by BICS, and sailing off "The Baths" in Virgin Gorda, part of our BICS Winter Sailing Program