



BICS has completed its first Caribbean Sailing Charter / Cruising Vacation Week.

Block Island Community Sailing, the Islands low-cost adult / family sailing program completed its first sailing charter / cruising vacation week in the British Virgin Islands last week with a six-day charter on a 42 foot sloop based in Road Town, Tortola and visiting at some of the most spectacular cruising harbors in the Caribbean. Our first cruise which was skippered by US Sailing Cruising Instructor Henry duPont included BICS Members Stephanie and Tom Warcup, Anne and Tom Walsh, and Laurie McTeague as our cruising students / crew. The itinerary included stops at scenic harbors on Norman's Island, Cooper's Island, The Baths on Virgin Gorda, Leverick Bay in North Sound on Virgin Gorda, and Brandywine Bay on Tortola.

Sailing instruction included every aspect of big boat handling, with docking, mooring, anchoring, maneuvering in close quarters, sail trim, reefing, and emergency procedures including man overboard drills using a number of approved procedures. Sailing instruction was punctuated with stops at secluded beaches and lagoons which are renowned for great snorkeling. The cruise included three nights at the Leverick Bay Marina which offers shore side services like a laundry and showers and a fun beach bar with live music and casual Caribbean fare.

The BICS Winter Sailing Program is an extension of our regular summer sailing program with lessons and sailboat rentals out of the New Harbor Boat Basin. BICS is proud to have received the distinction as the only US Sailing School in New England which is accredited to teach US Sailing's "Basic Keelboat", "Basic Cruising", "Bareboat Cruising and "Coastal Navigation" sailing proficiency certification courses.

If you wish to participate in our winter sailing program, there still are student / crew booking positions available for you, your family, and friends in our upcoming cruising charter vacation weeks which are scheduled in April. If you wish to participate, call BICS at (401) 741-5136 for cruise pricing and availability information.



Under Sail with Virgin Gorda in the background



At the "Baths" on Virgin Gorda



Secluded Brandywine Bay on Tortola, BVI

BICS Cape Dory 28 “Mischief” Repowering Project Almost Completed

In December, BICS took on the task of changing out the 45-year-old Volvo Penta engine with a new Yanmar 2YM15 marine diesel engine. This is a complex, expensive project, but without a reliable working engine, “Mischief,” our large boat sail training platform would not be available for next sailing season. BICS was able to find an expert marine engine replacement resource at the Avondale Boat Yard only a few miles from our winter boatyard at the Pier 65 marina in Westerly and their experienced marine mechanic, Paul Dittrich performed the engine exchange at the Pier 65 Marina. BICS was able to reduce the boat yard labor costs with our own volunteers who prepared the old Volvo Penta engine for removal by disconnecting and removing all the engine accessories like the fuel, water cooling, engine control, and exhaust systems and by removing the corroded engine mounting bolts saving about 15 hours of labor worth \$1,860. BICS also took advantage of the Avondale’s expertise by rebuilding Mischief’s seacocks, replumbing the cockpit drains, and by adding a bilge/hull plug, which lets the bilge drain without pumping when the boat is out of the water. Next steps are launching and sea trials which will be accomplished during the second week in May.



Thanks to all our members and supporters who generously donated to our special campaign to fund this project for which we are still a couple of thousand dollars short. If you wish to support large boat sailing at BICS and have not donated to this project, please select the “Donate Now” button on our website at www.sailbi.org or kindly send a check to the address below.

BICS Membership Renewal Now Open for the 2023 Season.

BICS is a member-based organization, open to everyone, and with a single \$250 annual membership fee, our members can participate in the unlimited use of our boats, along with member discounts for sailing lessons, and racing, boating safety, and race committee certification clinics.

Members get monthly email updates during the sailing season and our BICS quarterly newsletter by Email year-round. Members are invited to participate in all the BICS activities including, cookouts, family sails, and racing events like Block Island Race Week, Off Soundings and Eastern Connecticut Sailing Association events, like the “BIYC Around the Island Pursuit Race” where members get first pick for crew positions on racing boats. If you have not already renewed your membership for 2023, kindly select the “Sign Up” button on our website at www.sailbi.org.

US Sailing “Coastal Navigation” Course to be Offered by BICS This Spring

Interested in learning more about nautical charts, plotting courses and positions and knowing where you are and which direction to head when your electronic chart plotter fails? BICS will be offering the US Sailing “Coastal Navigation” course this Spring. The course will include 3 two-hour class room sessions, a Student workbook, a practice chart, and navigation tools including a pair of dividers and a parallel ruler. Course completion results in a US Sailing “Coastal Navigation” proficiency certificate. Call the number below to learn more and to preregister for this preseason navigation course offering.

Please note that BICS is looking for summer staff housing for a sailing instructor from Mid May to Mid August. If you have or know of a spare bedroom, a garage or a basement bedroom, please let us know at the phone number below. BICS will be happy to pay the going rate for summer staff housing.

Block Island 2023 Sailing Events Calendar

Published by Block Island Community Sailing

Event	Class	Host Club / Sponsors	Dates
BICS / BIYC Summer Sailing Kickoff Event	All	BIYC / BICS / National Hot.	May 28 th 5-7 PM
Off Soundings Club Spring Series	PHRF OS	Off Soundings Club, ECSA	June 10th-11th
Block Island Race Week 2023	PHRF	Storm Trisail Club	June 19th-23rd
BICS Thurs Night Sailing	PHRF	BI Community Sailing	June 30 – Sept 8 th
Performance Keelboat Instructor Clinic	All	BI Community Sailing	July 8 th – 9 th
Mary D Fund Benefit Regatta	PHRF OS	BI Community Sailing	July 16 th
Mudnite Madness Overnight Race	PHRF OS	Mystic River Mudheads	July 28 th - 29 th
BICS / SHYC Offshore Regatta	PHRF OS	BICS / SHYC / ECSA	August 12 th - 13 th
BIYC Around the Island Pursuit Race	PHRF OS	BIYC / ECSA / BICS	September 4th
SHYC B.I.G Jack Watch Hill to BI Regatta	PHRF OS	Stonington Harbor YC	September 10th
BICS Annual Member Awards Picnic	PHRF	BI Community Sailing	September 10th
Off Soundings Club Fall Series	PHRF OS	Off Soundings Club, ECSA	September 16-17th
Cliff Mitchel Mem Columbus Day Regatta	PHRF OS	Newport Yacht Club	October 8th

Notes: All events will be Pandemic compliant. All BICS and BIYC events are sailed under the PHRF Class Rules of the Eastern Connecticut Sailing Association. To join ECSA to get your PHRF Certificate go to: www.ecsa.net

Legend:

- BIYC: Block Island Yacht Club
- BICS: Block Island Community Sailing, Inc
- ECSA: Eastern Connecticut Sailing Association
- PHRF: Performance Handicap Racing Fleet. (PHRF OS) means Offshore Rules
- SHYC: Stonington Harbor Yacht Club



Wanna get away? To participate in one of our winter sailing program charter weeks in April call us at 401 741-5136