

A full-page photograph of a white sailboat with two people on board, splashing through the water. The sailboat is white with a large white sail. Two people, a man and a woman, are on the boat. They are both wearing life jackets and sunglasses. The water is dark blue and splashing around the boat. The background shows a green shoreline with some buildings.

WindCheck

Sailing the Northeast

The Bridge Fiasco

**Alerion: Past, Present
& Future Perfect**

We're All In the Same Boat

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The Bridge Fiasco

By Nick Bowen

The Twenty Hundred Club has a reputation for hosting adventurous sailboat races and on Sunday, June 7 they again pushed the envelope with a new race called the “Bridge Fiasco,” modeled after a similar race in San Francisco Bay. The rules are simple: start the race just south of Prudence Island and sail under each of the three bridges spanning Narragansett Bay in any order: the Newport Bridge, the Jamestown Bridge, and the Mt. Hope Bridge. The format of the race was pursuit-style, which means your handicap is taken at the start of the race. The highest rated boat, *Kestrel* sailed by Mark Franklin, started at 9:05 and the lowest rated boat, *Resolute IV*, started at 10:31.

Twenty-one boats (fifteen Spinnaker and eight Cruising Canvas) competed in four classes. This was a great turnout considering this was the first regatta on Narragansett Bay during the COVID crisis. Many crews were very enthusiastic to get out on the water.

The winds were from the north about 12-15 knots at the start, and high tide was right around the time when the first boats were starting. The course was 27 nautical miles and with generally north-south routes, this meant 13 nautical miles of downwind sailing (with following currents) and 13 miles of tacking upwind against some very strong currents. Having to tack for half the race meant the boats sailed about 40 nautical miles.

Ninety percent of the fleet decided to sequence the bridges in the following order: Mt. Hope, Newport, then Jamestown. David Schwartz, sailing *Mischief*, was the fastest around the course, finishing in 4 hours and 23 minutes for a win in Class A Spinnaker. He reported that he never saw less than 10 knots of wind during the day. All other boats on the podium sailed this sequence.

There were three lone wolf boats worth noting. The boat *epiphany*, sailed by Nick Bowen, started with Jamestown then Newport bridges. This worked really well until they got into the upper bay after noon and the wind started dying and strong outgoing currents prevailed on the trip to Mt. Hope Bridge. *Spirit*, sailed by EC Helme, did the Jamestown Bridge second and they got caught in strong currents after the Newport Bridge. *Whalayed*, sailed by John Whaley, decided to transit from the Newport to Jamestown Bridge by going around Beavertail. Although this was only 1.5 nautical miles longer, it added a lot of upwind tacking. These lone wolf strategies cost each of these boats a full hour.

Overall, the Bridge Fiasco was a great start to the season for the first of the Twenty Hundred Club's six races this summer. To learn more, log onto twentyhundredclub.org.



Tom D'Albora's Coconut (left) and David Schwartz's Mischief (right) sailing downwind.

Results

Spinnaker A Class (PHRF Base < 100)

1. *Mischief*, David Schwartz
2. *Allora!*, Alexander Clegg
3. *Amadeus V*, Jay Turchetta
4. *Zephyros*, Timothy Grimes
5. *Coconut*, Tom D'Albora
6. *Vento Solare*, Bill Kneller
7. *Resolute IV*, Terry Arndt
8. *Spirit*, EC Helme

Spinnaker B Class (PHRF Base > 100)

1. *Vela*, Michael Zani
2. *Meddler*, William Shaw
3. *Party Tree Racing*, Michael Filimon
4. *Mystic*, Christopher Borden
5. *Blitz*, Chris Tate
6. *Cetacean*, Peter Maloney
7. *Pau Hana*, David Wilson

Cruising I Class (PHRF Base <= 140)

1. *Vixen*, Jim DelBonis
2. *En passant*, Jim Archer
3. *Relentless*, Robert Laska
4. *Whalayed*, John Whaley
5. *epiphany*, Nick Bowen

Cruising II Class (PHRF Base > 140)

1. *Serendipity*, Gary Venable
2. *Highlander*, Jonathan Bixby
3. *Kestrel*, Mark Franklin
4. *Oceana*, Scott Karn

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