



The Royal BVI Yacht Club

Wild T'ing, Sorceress take the Honours in the 2011 Race to Bitter End Yacht Club

With very light winds forecast, all competitors were delighted to have moderate winds for the inaugural Royal BVI Yacht Club race to the Bitter End Yacht Club over the weekend of 7/8 May. Two races were held; on Saturday competitors raced from Road Town to North Sound, with St Thomas boat Wild T'ing skippered by Lawrence Aquí taking the honours. On the Sunday, the race back to Road Town was a pursuit race, and Sorceress skippered by Heath Copland were the winners.

With three entries from St Thomas, stiff competition was ensured for this race to Virgin Gorda. With the start of the handicap race on Saturday in Road Town harbour, most competitors elected to start at the pin end of the start line. BVI boat Luxury Girl took an early lead, but was soon overhauled by the Santa Cruz 70, Hotel California. Luxury Girl and Wild T'ing then matched each other tack-for-tack all the way to Beef Island and beyond. They split off the Dogs, when Wild T'ing elected to take a route very close to Virgin Gorda's North shore. It proved to be decisive, since they enjoyed better wind and as a result were able to ensure they had enough of a winning margin to beat Luxury Girl, even taking in to consideration their bigger handicap. Hotel California took line honours, but were third on corrected time owing to their handicap rating.

Competitors were treated to a "Punch and Pizza" party by Bitter End Yacht Club on the Saturday evening and prizes of rum and beer went to the top three boats.

Following a relaxing morning the boats headed back to Tortola on Sunday afternoon, under Pursuit Race format. Some of the St Thomas boats had to leave earlier in the day to ensure they got home, so the race was contested by Sorceress, Luxury Girl and Hotel California. Sorceress left first, enjoying a 10 minute head start over Luxury Girl. Flying spinnakers downwind, Luxury Girl gradually closed the gap on Sorceress, and by the time the boats reached Beef Island they were getting ready to overtake. Unfortunately the unpredictable wind in the shadow of Beef Island caused Luxury Girl to gybe accidentally, resulting in a member of their crew – Mark Critchlow – being knocked overboard. Fortunately he was uninjured and he was recovered safely, but in doing so Luxury Girl used her engine and so was disqualified. This left Sorceress to cross the finish line first, having maintained enough of a gap on Hotel California to ensure victory.

Commenting after the race on Sunday, Sorceress skipper Heath Copland said "We were really worried that we were going to be caught by Luxury Girl, but once we saw one of their crew go for a swim we knew we'd be fine!" Joking aside, Heath was very concerned for the well-being of the crew member concerned, and fortunately he was absolutely fine. Luxury Girl skipper Guy Phoenix commented "I'm really pleased with our performance this weekend. We held Wild T'ing for most of the race on Saturday, and if we had followed the same route as them we might even have won. On Sunday I knew we had the speed to catch Sorceress, but obviously crew safety comes first. Having said that, Mark is in training for swimming the North Sound next month, so he had a bit of open ocean practice when he went overboard!"



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The RBVIYC are taking care to ensure that all four main islands are included on the Sailing calendar in 2011, and everyone who entered the race to BEYC thoroughly enjoyed the weekend. They would like to offer their sincere thanks to Bitter End Yacht Club for hosting and sponsoring the event, notably John Glynn the organiser and Jerome for organising the start on Sunday. Thanks also to the race committee boats and volunteers for RBVIYC – Bob Phillips, Jane Metcalf, Elizabeth Critchlow, Jasmine Caminada and Jon Charlton. Finally, thanks to all competitors for taking part, especially those from St Thomas who had a long way to come.

The next RBVIYC race takes place on the weekend of 21st May, and will be the Lowell Wheatley memorial race to Anegada. It will undoubtedly be another fun weekend, details are available at www.royalbviyc.org or contact the yacht club on sailing@royalbviyc.org or 494 3286.

Results in Detail:

Saturday	Yacht	Skipper	Corrected Time
1st	Wild T'Ing	Lawrence Aqui	2:42:35
2nd	Luxury Girl	Guy Phoenix	2:49:39
3rd	Hotel California	Steve Schmidt	2:56:44
4th	Sorceress	Heath Copland	3:15:25
5th	Simone's Voyage	Chuck Pessler	3:33:54
6th	Molly	Giles Wood	3:39:54

Sunday (Pursuit Race)	Yacht	Skipper
1 st	Sorceress	Heath Copland
2 nd	Hotel California	Steve Schmidt
Disqualified	Luxury Girl	Guy Phoenix