



News Release

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Marion Bermuda Celebrates a Close Race and a New Course Record

Hamilton, Bermuda - Sailors and guests joined in a final celebration of a fast and safe race on Saturday, June 25, as His Excellency the Governor of Bermuda, Sir Richard Gozney, and Royal Hamilton Amateur Dinghy Club Commodore Robert Mason, presented three-deep trophies for each of the four classes as well as nineteen fleet, special and regional prizes.

Over 200 guests arrived at the historic Commissioners House at the Royal Naval Dockyard after a harbour cruise aboard excursion boats, with the prize giving held on the veranda. The house is now one of Bermuda's main museums that tells the story of Bermuda's colorful four hundred year history much of which focuses on sailing... from pirating privateers and tall ships to modern cruising and racing yachts of all kinds and sizes. The prizes that these sailors took home were well deserved for excellent performance in a race that had a robust start, some dead calm midstream, and finished with wind again.

The big story of the race is **Lilla**, a Briand 76 (Skipper Simon Di Pietro) who set the Marion Bermuda Race course record with an elapsed time of 68:58:45 and a corrected time of 71:48:26. Previous course record was 72 ½ hours, set in 1989 by Warren Brown's **War Baby**, a custom 61 S&S design. With a crew of 12 multinational crew members, **Lilla** enjoyed quite a romp to the onion patch, making 10's and 11's consistently, with top speeds reaching 13.5. De Pietro's Class 'A' entry started the race at 1:30pm EDT from Buzzard's Bay Marion, Massachusetts last Friday and officially crossed the finish line at St David's Head, Bermuda at 11:28am on Monday, June 20.

Two formidable competitors came in behind **Lilla**, coincidentally, all of the top three boats hailing from the south coast region of Massachusetts (Mattapoisett and Marion). **Pescatore**, a Hinckley SW 59, skippered by George Tougas, arrived in Bermuda with an elapsed time of 86:50:57 and corrected time of 78:20:17. In 3rd place arrived **Margalo**, a Baltic 48 DP, with Skipper Chip Johns, the Commodore of the Beverly Yacht Club, one of the three sponsoring clubs of the Marion Bermuda Race. **Margalo** arrived with an elapsed time of 87:43:42 and corrected time of 78:46:48.

There were 53 boats registered this year – 50 at the starting line and 42 who finished the race – an increase in all categories from the 2009 race. Of the 50 who started, five retired early out of Buzzards Bay due to fatigue, injury or rigging failure (**Alastor, Patchwork, Aries Dream, Truant, Hotspur II**). **Hotspur II** rallied by fixing their rigging issues with a touch and go in Marion, and returning to the course after repairs the very same day to cruise to Bermuda. **Lyra, Sparky and Honeymoon** retired towards the end of the race, as they weren't making much headway with the very light winds.

Weather-wise, the start of the race was well controlled despite a very blustery and wet day, with winds in the 25 kt range gusting up to the 40s. Boats who legged out early were able to take advantage of cold eddies and the Gulf Stream currents and got on the right side of things. The slower boats ended up becalmed on two occasions mid-race but were able to catch a break on Wednesday with increased winds speeds in the range of 15 kts SW. The last batch of boats to arrived on Thursday, June 23, and ended up with virtually no wind, thus retiring and motoring inbound.

All of the skippers and crew interviewed exclaimed how welcomed they were in Marion and Bermuda, and throughout the entire preparation process. The competitors all felt accomplished and thrilled to be celebrating in Bermuda with their crew, family and friends. Over half the fleet took home trophies, with a few notable mentions – [click here for final Trophy Awards](#).

Simon DiPietro, skipper of **Lilla**, took home the lion's share of silver, winning First Place in Class A, the IRC Trophy, the Blue Water Sailing Club Board of Governors Trophy for the first yacht to finish "Line Honours", the RHADC Past Commodores Trophy for best performance by an electronically navigated yacht, the SAIL Magazine Bermuda Ocean Cruising Yacht Trophy for the best combined performance in consecutive Marion Bermuda and the cruiser division of the Newport Bermuda races and the Founders Trophy, for the monohull yacht with the best overall corrected time.

Chip Johns, skipper of **Margalo**, also garnered his fair share of the winnings, earning 3rd Place in Class A, the Beverly "Polaris" Trophy for best performance by a celestially navigated yacht, and the Navigators Trophy, presented to Larry Hall of **Margalo**, the Navigator of the first celestially navigated yacht.

Mark Stevens, skipper of **Kiva**, a Hinckley 51 CB won the Double-Handed Trophy, with teammate Hank Halsted, for being the first yacht to finish with a crew of 2, finishing fourth overall with a corrected time of 81:14:41. **Kiva** also won the Mini-Class trophy, for the best corrected time of a yacht in a "mini-class" of three or more yachts – in this case, Hinckley Yachts S'Wester.

The perfect summer evening set the stage for celebrations, with the sun setting and warm breezes wafting during the prize-giving ceremony. Following the prize-giving and photos, sailors, guests and the many volunteers who make this race possible enjoyed a gala banquet in the Keep, the parade ground below the Commissioner's House. The party spirit continued with music and dancing after dinner and a starlight harbour cruise back to the Royal Hamilton Amateur Dinghy Club.

The next Marion to Bermuda Cruising Yacht Race will be held in June 2013 with the exact date to be announced following meetings in Marion, MA.

About the Marion Bermuda Cruising Yacht Race Association

Since its inception in 1977, the Marion Bermuda Race has been a Corinthian event (amateur yachtsman who sails his own yacht without a professional skipper) and yachts are accepted by invitation. The spirit of the race is that all yachts and crew are participating for the joy and pleasure of sailing, competition, and the camaraderie that accompanies such an offshore event.

The Marion to Bermuda Cruising Yacht Race is organized by The Beverly Yacht Club, The Blue Water Sailing Club and The Royal Hamilton Amateur Dinghy Club for the Marion Bermuda Cruising Yacht Race Association.

Race PHOTOS: <http://www.spectrumphotofg.com/marionbermuda/index.html>

Race Results may be found here: <http://www.marionbermuda.com/index.php?page=results>

Website: www.marionbermuda.com

RACE TRACKING: http://cloud.iboattrack.com/r/start.php?r=2011_marion_bermuda

BLOG: <http://marionbermuda.wordpress.com>

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