

## BLACK DOG'S 2022 KISS RACES



***These are the stories of the sailing vessel, Black Dog, and its continuing mission to explore the Mighty Potomac River, to boldly go where no O'Day Dolphin has gone before.***

The bottom line for the 2022 Keep It Simple Stupid Races on Tuesday night is that Black Dog came in second to Sabrina in the truncated Spring series, and then won the Summer One, Summer Two, and Fall Series. Lots of first places, a few second place finishes behind Sabrina, and a few bad races.

How did we do it?

Excellent crew work, usually with Maura and Connie, also Dennis, Eric, and several others, doing all the right things, good race strategy and tactics most of the time, good starts— going fast over the line— if not always first over, staying focused on trim and boat speed, paying close attention to wind shifts and currents, good communication between crew and crew and skipper, fast mark roundings, good tacks, and having the bottom sanded down and coated with a diamond barrier coat. All that, together with a boatload of good luck, all contributed to our big string of first places. And don't forget our PHRF rating which guarantees that if we cross the finish line close behind any other boat in the fleet, we will win on corrected time.

On the other hand, some 2022 races were marred by bad starts, bad tactics, bad skipper communication to crew, rookie oversights (such as getting the course wrong), screwed up mark roundings, slow tacks,

missing wind shifts, crossing too much adverse current, and an assortment of other blunders. Fortunately, those were few enough in number to allow us to win a lot of races.

## **SPRING RACE NO. 1**

In a word, nothing. Nada. Zero. Race eventually abandoned for lack of wind.

The nonspin start was a disaster. Most boats were over early due to strong current and no wind, and all were called back. Engines on and all motored back for a second effort. Second start, same story except that only two boats were over early and one sailed on anyway. Black Dog was not over early (and a call to Committee Boat reaffirmed that). Many mysteries remain however. Apparently our handheld VHF was not picking up the committee boat, and we did not have the big VHF turned on.

However since the start times were not available to us on our handheld VHF for unknown reasons, and the flags were impossible to see with our Russian binoculars from the pin end, who really knows? We did not even know the course before asking another boat because the course boards were also invisible from the pin end with Russian binoculars.

Very frustrating. And baffling.

Commodore Peter tried to do the committee boat for this race with only one helper and things fell through the cracks.

All that being said, Black Dog somehow rounded the first Mark in first place and made it over into the shallows way ahead of the rest of her fleet. The abandon race call was made soon thereafter which prevented yet another Black Dog rout of the entire fleet. The Dawg played the outgoing current a little better than the rest by aiming directly at the mark and forgetting the wind (which was 0 anyway.)

Some of the foregoing may be delusional, but there you have it.

What did not work:

1. Our new single line reefing line was about 4 or 5 feet too short. This was not that critical this day.
2. The top batten on the main needs to be removed when we have less than 3 knots of wind because it cannot get past the backstay without some wind when we are tacking.
3. We did not get out early enough to practice the pole maneuver.
4. According to Hal and Witt at the marina Lark has a brand new slick bottom treated with special slippery stuff that they said cost a fortune. So again, the oligarchs in the fleet may be eventually causing us problems (although Lark is not in our fleet.)
5. We need to forget the new center cleat when coming back to the dock and use a long line on the bow. New Center cleat works well undocking.
6. Skipper forgot to put a stopper knot on the Genoa job sheets. One could have gone flying or swimming if there had been any wind.

7. We may need to keep the big VHF on and tuned to 69 no matter how irritating some of the chatter is. The handheld seems to be missing things.

8. Crew needs to practice lassoing a cleat with a long line from the boat. There is a method of doing this. Sometimes no one is on the dock to catch a line from us.

What worked:

1. We focused only on current and not the wind, which was nonexistent anyway. By putting the centerboard down fully we were able to steer the boat and get some forward momentum from the current only. This is what got us to the first mark when no other boat in our fleet got there.

2. Undocking. Maura's system (shown below) of placing the boat on the outer end of the dock to have it headed downriver when starting the engine. THANK YOU MAURA FOR TALKING THE SKIPPER OUT OF SOME OTHER COCKAMAINY UNDOCKING PLAN.



3. No one was badly hurt (small cut to Maura) and the crew did not throw the skipper overboard despite many tempting opportunities.

4. Maura almost figured out the engine. 99% there. Only thing missing was the top vent on the gas cap.

5. The crew had their stuff together in a baffling situation....so THANK YOU MAURA AND CONNIE for being a such pleasure to drift and motor around the river with.

## **SPRING RACE 2**

CANCELLED DUE TO TOO MUCH WIND

## **SPRING RACE 3 (4/26/22)**

The results tell the story. Blackie came in third in the B fleet. On corrected time (time on time) we were a minute and 43 seconds behind Falcon and 30 seconds behind Glider. Overall in the nonspin fleets, we also beat 2 boats from the A fleet, Alacrity and Summation but not Lark, which beat us by 8 minutes and 1 second! Holy Smokes! She was FAST! (That puts us 4<sup>th</sup> overall in nonspin.)

It was a disappointing race for Blackie with extremely unreliable wind patterns of every speed and direction imaginable, but mostly not much good breeze to work with. Nonetheless, in these difficult conditions, you can call it luck, but in my view, the best sailed boat will usually win.

It was an upriver and upwind first leg with light north west breezes which favored the committee boat side of the line, but since the line was nearly perpendicular to the wind, at least briefly, neither side was largely favored. Lark went to the pin side to start, and that worked for her. Much less crowded over there.

Blackie had a bad start at the committee boat end. We first took a bearing on the start line visually against the MD shore and also in the iPhone nautical chart. That was all good, but we hung back too far from the line before the count down, and then....of course...as often happens....the wind suddenly died to almost 0. We got mixed in with dirty air (what air there was) from a bunch of other boats ... so to get clear, we bore off on port tack across the current to get into clean air. This was an ok move, but there was not much air to work with anywhere, and we had to cross a strong adverse current (going out) on port tack to get across the entire river to the Maryland side shallows. At that point we were in the back of the fleet.

Eventually we recovered a bit when got out of the current over in the Maryland shallows. Still, it was looking very bad for the forlorn Blackie. Terrible actually. Then a little lucky NW wind found us half way up to the first mark. It lifted us well. We got up to over 3.5 knots briefly and closed in on the bulk of the fleet, passing most boats that were in the center of the current.

After passing one more boat at the mark with a near perfect mark turn in strong adverse current, we headed back to the finish on a shortened course, but the wind died again and we could not catch Falcon or Glider, much less Lark. Our big genny just hung limply.

The one thing that hurt us in this race the most was our failure to trim the sails properly. Normally on Blackie, the leeward side crew keeps their eyes glued to the jib telltales. If they are not all flying straight back on both sides, we are not sailing at our best. The skipper can handle the main telltales, but the jib shape must be set first. The leech of the main should parallel the leech of the jib. (The main trim follows the jib trim.) The laminar flow over the jib is where most of our power and speed comes from. If our jib is pinching or stalling, we ain't moving well. The skipper will know what's happening with the pressure across the course when lifts and knocks are happening so the crew can leave that to him and focus hard

on trim, watching at least the middle telltales if not all of them. It was extremely hard, impossible actually, to make that happen in this race because of the rapidly fluctuating wind direction, but if you want to move the boat with speed...you have to do it as best you can with sail shape no matter how frustrating it is.

Here is what the infamous Black Dog Manual (treatise?) says about jib trim:

Sheet tension: Genoa sheet crew must be constantly watching the Genoa tell tales and genoa chord depth. Another crew or skipper must watch main tell tales and main chord depth. In general, if Genoa tell tales on only one side are not flying, move the sail more to that side (or change heading) until all telltales on both sides fly straight aft. Sail trimmers adage is: "Trim to the flutter."

Sail trim can be managed by steering or by moving the sails in or out. Here is what Quantum Sails experts say about steering to Genoa tell tales:

For maximum power, the jib telltales need to stream straight aft. If the outside telltale spins or sags straight down head up. If the inside telltale lifts bear off. [**Note: Or you can keep the course and adjust the sheet in instead.**] The adage is: "move the tiller to the flutter."

In general, it is better to ride the inside telltales, having them just on the verge of lifting. In medium air with the boat going well, it is okay to have them lifting up so that the inside telltale is at a 45 degree angle, and the leeward telltale remains straight back. With good boat speed you will then be on the high side of the groove.

Remember another adage "speed first, then point?" In light air be careful about getting too high in the groove (inside telltale lifting). Press (head down) on the jib and make sure both telltales stream aft in light air, perhaps even allowing the outside bottom telltale to stall part of the time. Typically you are relying on the more visible telltales in the bottom set, but in light air it might be better to move your eyes up to the middle set of telltales because the bottom outside will tend to stall. This is when it is okay to steer from the leeward side so the skipper can see the whole sail. Your weight down will help create needed heel anyway. If the sail is stalled at the bottom all the time in order to keep the boat moving it may just be over trimmed – ease slightly. [**Note: When in doubt, ease out.**]

In windier conditions telltales become less important and the angle of heel rules. As a puff hits don't try to keep the telltales flowing, let the boat head up to maintain the same angle of heel and keep the helm pressure constant. The inside telltales will lift indicating a luffing sail. This is called "feathering." Feather, don't fight. Sail a constant angle of heel letting the boat come up



in the puffs and bearing off to add heel in the lulls.

One good thing I can say about the 4|26|22 race was that the crew effort was outstanding with Maura and Jim Beardsley going all out to find and use every little breath of air we could find. Again and again, Blackie benefits immensely from tightly focused crew work. We did our best, but just wasn't Blackie's day wind wise.

Also on the bright side, the skipper managed for the first time ever to put the boat in the water single handedly using the new port side center cleat with a long dock line. Amazed himself and all the onshore spectators (of which there were none.)

Before and after race notes:

1. Electrical problems were resolved using the Occam's Razor analysis (Try the simplest solution first). <sup>1</sup>Nothing was wrong with solar system or regulator. Battery was dead. New battery solved the problems. Solar panel charged well above 12.6 V (100%) in one day.
2. Rotted wood on cabin top fixed with plastic washers made from scrap plastic. Silicone sealer used. This may also fix the leak problem in that area.



3. One of the crew (Jim Beardsley) noticed that the port sheet winch was not working properly. I took it apart and found that the little springs were full of dirt and sticking. I cleaned them with gasoline (all I had available), lubed them with 3 in one oil, and put the whole thing back together. The winch needs a complete cleaning and lubrication and pawl replacement. That should be done soon. Pictures below show the operation:



---

<sup>1</sup> [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occam's\\_razor](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occam's_razor)

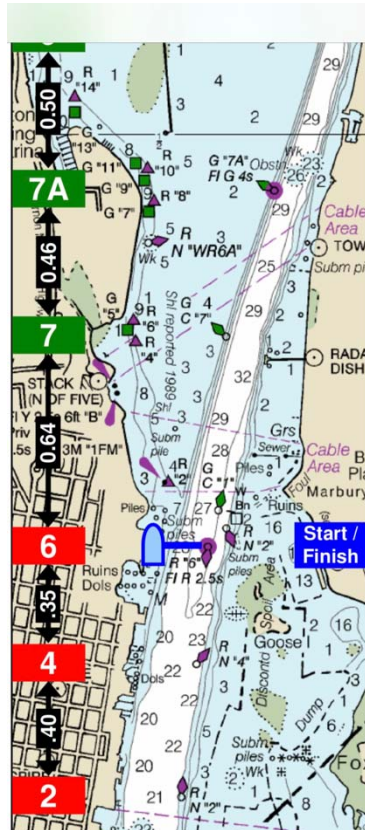
### **SPRING RACE 3 (4/26/22)**

There was a concern among the crew about my reassembling of the port side winch the previous week, but it checked out ok. Handle turns counter clockwise on those self tending winches in order to turn drum the opposite way.

Fortunately, the crew's winch repair anxiety did not affect our race. We managed to sail fast on all legs S to 4, 4 to 7a, 7A to 4, 4 to 7A, and 7A to the finish. (Course marks for the usual courses —the "middle course" are government buoys shown below. VA shore is to the left. MD to the right.) In the end, we bested the entire fleet, save one. Lark, of course. Lark was headed home before we even got near the finish line. It took us 5 legs of hard work, but finally beat everyone but Lark. It was not a runaway win for us. Glider was on our side or stern from beginning to end. She followed us by @ 3 minutes across the finish.

The story of this race is all about the start.





Wind was from SE with an incoming current. Our start strategy was to come down the line close hauled on starboard looking for an open area to tack to port before the start gun. We planned to then reach all the way to the first mark with only one tack at the very end next to the mark.

We timed the line at 1 min 31 seconds from boat end to pin end and headed out from the committee boat on starboard close hauled at 1 minute 15 seconds from the start. This might have worked, but we were too close to the start line and then there was Glider, gunning for us. They needed to beat us to get second place in the series.

We ended up with a crushingly bad start when Glider snuck up behind us on our downwind side after our (unfortunately very slow) tack just before we crossed the line. As leeward boat, under Rule 11, Glider had right of way. However, under Rule 17 with Glider within 2 boat lengths of Blackie, Glider could not legally sail above her proper course after coming in to overlap Blackie from behind. The interplay between Rule 11 and Rule 17 is extremely tricky, but luffing up is not a proper course. Glider was close to luffing up and luffing up Blackie also.

Importantly, this all happened AFTER the start gun and across the start line. Dennis on Glider was yelling at us: "Come up. Come up!" In my opinion, Glider was fouling Blackie since if either boat came up higher both would be luffing head to wind. Glider refused our verbal request that she sail her proper course and not try to luff us up.

We did not immediately fly a protest flag to protect our rights. Not wanting to get into a pissing match with Glider— which would let the rest of the fleet run away from both of us and then ending up in a protest hearing with people lying and making stuff up causing unpredictable results, and realizing that

the Rule 11 and Rule 17 interplay is a confusing impossible-to-prove mess, we slowed and ducked Glider.

This was a minor disaster for Blackie (but still not as bad as having to go to a protest hearing). We went from having a decent start to being last in the fleet; we were even starting behind the hapless "Big Sip."

Some lessons learned here. Starting on a tack down the line on starboard can be dangerous if you plan to tack just before the gun. It's even worse if another boat behind you is able to mess with you. More importantly, however, as we ran down the line on starboard, we were too close to the line to be able to tack to port as planned and then get up to speed, as well as be able at the same time to pick an open spot to cross the line avoiding bad air and leeward boats. In the future, if we plan to tack to port BEFORE THE START after a starboard run, we should be about 3 or 4 boat lengths back from the line on our initial starboard run. Then, we can look for clear space, tack to port and get up to full speed. Stay much deeper off the line if we need to tack before the start.

Our bad positioning at the start was not the end of the story. Luckily for us, it was a long 5-lap race in a big wind. Up to near 20 in gusts. We reached over deeply on port tack to get clean air and less current as we had originally planned and continued to focus on boat speed, mostly by careful steering to hold onto the wind shifts, minimizing weather helm, and obsessively trimming both sails as we usually do. We began to move up in the fleet until, when we reached the first mark ("4"), we had only half the fleet ahead of us.

An excellent mark rounding at #4 put another boat behind us and we were then on a very broad reach upriver, often Blackie's worst point of sail. However we trimmed well, got into the favorable current, and gradually passed the whole fleet (other than Lark). From then on, it was a case of maintaining a 3 or 4 boat lead with Glider and Falcon both hot on our tail.

Our tacks were a bit of a mess, not fast, but we improved on that as the race went on. Luckily on the broad reach up river, we did not need to tack at all until we got to the mark. Sail trim was good, but difficult. Winds were strong at 10+ and heavy gusts at much higher speeds. Sail trim, however, is what put us out front of most boats in this race. It often is. Thanks to Maura.

Falcon was well sailed in both the early spring races. A first in one and a second in the last race. She deserved to win the series. We need to watch out for her next series. And Glider seems to want to get close and brawl with us. Not going to happen.

For the Spring series, Blackie ended up in second place overall with one first and one third place finish (4 points total). Beaten by Falcon (3 points total), but we edged out Glider's 5 points total. Blackie is on the podium again, albeit not at the top spot!

The bad start was all on the skipper's poor tactics. The crew of Maura and Connie rescued Blackie in this by trimming the sails almost perfectly on all legs. Luckily we did not need to tack much because our tacking is a still a bit on the slow side.

## SUMMER I RACE 1

The old saying is that the boat that makes the least mistakes will win the race. But it should also be said that just one big freaking mistake can lose a race for a boat that was hands-down winning.

That is what happened to Blackie in the first 2022 Kiss Summer Series race. May 10, 2022.

It was a blustery evening to start with. Winds gusting up around 20. So Blackie's skipper and crew decided to use the #2 jib. This was not really a mistake, at least for the first 3 legs, but later in this long race, when the winds died to 2 knots or less, the big genny was sorely missed.

The race started out well. Blackie worked hard on the start tactics. She won the start with good speed hands down at the favored end. Then, on the first leg, Blackie continued to lead the fleet, except for Lark which gained a small lead before the first mark. Same story second downwind leg. The whole fleet but Lark was behind and not catching up. Blackie's tactics were to stay in the shallows on the VA side because the current was unusually strong going out due to major flooding on top of an ebb tide. This worked well and she did not tack over into the current to round the mark until she was well past the mark on the VA side. Three other boats were attaining the mark at the same time, but Blackie came in wide, swooped past, and headed downstream well ahead of all three. Best mark rounding for Blackie ever.

So far so good. The downwind leg went well and another good mark rounding with fast tacks from the excellent crew of Maura and Connie left Blackie far out in the lead for the next upwind leg to mark 9.

Then disaster. Well in the lead, the benighted skipper decided not to repeat the winning move of the previous run up river but instead to tack and cross the current to the Maryland side early to set up for the rounding of mark 9. This was extremely stupid.

There is no current diminution over near the Maryland shore. It's deep over there.

Blackie was passed by almost the entire fleet while she tacked and sailed across to the Maryland side with the current pushing The Dog rapidly downstream.



The crew pulled off a perfect tack around the Windward mark, gaining us some distance. Then it was a miserable windless run to the finish downriver.

Excellent crew work on sail trim, however brought Blackie back almost into the lead. Despite the huge blunder by the helmsman, somehow Blackie apparently recovered according to the scorekeepers and finished in third place.

I would like to say something about the race committee's decision to keep all the nonspin boats the water until long after dark, but I don't like to use too many obscenities in these wrap ups. I got home at 10 pm, wet, cold, and tired. They certainly messed up the finish scoring also in the dark, or maybe it was the scorekeeper?

## **SUMMER I RACE 2 (5/17/22)**

This race was a real puzzle. Blackie crossed the finish behind Lark and Sabrina, and also came in second behind Sabrina on corrected time. Blackie was never ahead of many boats until the last leg. The time on time scoring really hurt Lark, putting her in 8<sup>th</sup> place despite her crossing the line first!

We used the 155 genny because the gusts above 15, maybe at 20 or more, were infrequent enough that we could release the main, get some twist in it up top, and head up enough to get through them. Lots of stress on the old genny, however.

Blackie was behind Lark, Glider, Sabrina, Falcon, and some of the PSC boats as well as several others right from the start and for most of the first  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the race. Maura and Connie struggled with sail trim for the first 3 legs, with Maura watching the speedo like a hawk. Gradually we came from behind several boats, little by little until we got into the lead on the last leg, and never gave up. We could not trim to the tell tales most of the race because it was broad reaching both up and down river on a mostly west nw wind, and on that angle, the tell tales are not helpful.

Only Sabrina and Lark were ahead of us at the finish. Lark's is not in our class and anyway with corrections she was in 8<sup>th</sup> place.

Our start on port tack was well timed but nothing to write home about. We had very little space to leeward with a PSC boat right next to us and a few feet ahead with the committee boat close on our other side. Not an ideal spot. Bad planning of the start. Fairly quickly we found ourselves behind almost the whole fleet although we were on what we thought was the favored upwind side. Still not sure how that happened. But it meant that we had a lot of catching up to do. So we labored on trying to outsmart and out sail the entire fleet, and we eventually did catch up to and pass all but Lark and Sabrina.

Other than dogged persistent sail trim and trying to keep the boat on her feet in big gusts and quirky wind shifts, plus Blackie's amazing ability to hit 4.5 knots of boat speed and stay there, we did not do anything special. It was focus and concentration on sailing fast and catching every shift, together with outstanding sail trim, together with Blackie's inherent speed, that put us out in front of all but 2 boats during the last leg and then finally at the finish.

## MT VERNON BOOMERANG RACE SAT MAY 21

This was not my favorite race even though we won and won big, probably by close to a mile. It was hot, a record or near record temperature with a blazing sun for the whole race. Even the shortest course (7 miles) was misery. The wind started out ok but 1/3 of the way down from the start, it died and never really came back. An occasional gust of 3 or 4 knots. That was it

So we struggled down the river hugging the shallows because of an adverse current, which then switched on us when we rounded the mark (81) and became adverse again all the way home! Horrible!

One of the PSC boats, skippered by their fastest skipper, David Edismoe, somehow caught us and then got ahead of us just after the start and was dumping some bad air on us. That could not be tolerated, of course, so we cleaned up our act and passed him gradually to leeward and then returned the bad air to him for a while. Soon we were ahead by a few boat lengths. We focused on trim and playing to every wind shift and gust (usually a 3 knot gust but still welcome) and gradually we left David well behind, taking pictures of our stern, one of which is below (demonstrating our perfect sail trim.)

Finally when we rounded the downstream mark (81) and began to sail with the wind behind us, and eventually with the pole out, it was all over for the rest of the fleet. They got so far behind it was hard to see them. That experience would have been a lot more fun had the temperature been less nauseating, the blazing Sun less oppressive, and the wind more like a real wind instead of barely a breath.

One boat, at least, called it quits, and I sure don't blame them. If we had not been winning, I would have been tempted to do the same.

David took some pics of Blackie after we passed him. Look at that perfect sail trim!! At the time of the pic we are dumping our bad air on him. So what was he doing with a camera?



Back at the shore, our trailer began to disintegrate. One of the boards floated off. Also, our halyards and jib sheets are clearly on their last legs. Bought new sheets, but the halyards will have to wait.

## **SUMMER I RACE 3 (5/24/22).**

Blunder! Major blunder!

But we overcame it to win.

Let's get the ugly embarrassing mess out of the way first. On the third of four legs, the skipper turned Blackie smartly around mark 7 with perfect crew coordination and began to head quickly back down to mark 6 ahead of the entire fleet (except for Lark, of course). It was a beautiful fast rounding. Blackie's lead was going to grow even bigger.

Except for one small detail. The turning mark was 7A, not 7.

The course was Start, 7A, 6, 7A, finish. Written clearly on the cockpit seat in big black magic marker letters as usual.

As the rest of the fleet came past mark 7 going north after Blackie had turned on 7 and was heading south, the skipper overhead someone aboard one of the other boats say to their skipper "The turning mark is 7A isn't it?" Indeed it was. Lucky for us, we overheard that remark, realized our mistake, and quickly turned the boat around in the middle of the passing fleet, almost hitting mark 7, but getting back on course. But now we were in the middle of the fleet, having given up our nice comfy lead.

At least we did not hit the mark. Came close though. About an inch and a half.

We had written the course down carefully on the seat next to the skipper to avoid this very kind of screw up. Moreover, this was our second time rounding the upstream turning mark. Worse yet, Lark was obviously ahead and could be seen upstream rounding 7A, the correct mark.

All signs point to a "major senile brain fart".

Another consolation was that our closest rival, Sabrina, made an much worse mark miss on the second leg, passing right by 6 and continuing on downriver to ? Who knows which mark. This really hurt them in the race and the overall standings. They finished in 8th place!! (See below)

Apart from the brain fart, the race was good. Blackie won the start with fairly decent speed at the favored end of the line in clean air. We used a triangular start with 1 minute 20 second on each of the 3 legs so we could listen for the 4 minute horn. Unfortunately, our speed was slightly off on the last leg and we almost hit the line about 4 seconds early. So we had to slow slightly just a few seconds before the gun. We ended up getting passed at the gun by the boat to our leeward side and found ourselves in her bad air. This was quickly resolved by ducking her, speeding up and dumping bad air on that very same boat. Never saw them again. That was FUN!

Then it was off to the VA shallows in a high outgoing tide on a strong easterly breeze. Our strategy was to get out of the current. Most boats did not do that. Only one other, a PSC boat, did. The bulk of the fleet fought the current all the way up from the start to 7A. We got to 7A after Lark and in second place. A smart tack to the east very late on the run upstream, together with a smooth mark turn got us headed back on a broad reach. Most boats tacked east too soon, catching the bulk of the adverse current and



missing a bunch of nice lifts which we enjoyed while they fought the current. That was a critical tactical error on their part. We have been there and done that ourselves in an earlier race, but not this time.

It was a strong east wind as we headed south. But the breeze was diminishing. We could not use the pole on the broad reach, but our reaching speed was good, sometimes almost 4 kts. This is new for Blackie. In the past we used to lose ground on broad reaches. We were fast upwind and very fast dead downwind. But that era has ended. We are now fast also on a broad reach!

Riding the downstream current with a bunch of heavy gusts was mostly uneventful apart from radical heeling, and we rounded mark 6 in a great position (second to Lark) heading back upstream to the massive blunder at 7.

Crew work by Maura and Cynthia Miller (who was on temporary loan to us from the PRC gang) was excellent and saved the day in the face of the skipper's incipient senility. We had good speed and made it to 7A again near the front of the fleet, then ran swiftly downriver to the finish in a dying breeze to cross the line second to Lark and first in our class.

As Maura remarked after the race, "we did some pretty good sailing out there today." So true.

A critical decision was made early on. We had the NO. 2 genny on as we left the dock because it was blowing around 15 with bigger gusts. Earlier, I almost got blown off the dock by a 25+ gust. But checking the forecast, Maura found that it predicted a lessening breeze, so we switched to the big 155. Made all the difference. The boat was on her side with rails awash in some of the early gusts, but the wind did die as time went on and especially as the sun went down. The big genny saved our butts. Yet again.

**PHRF Non-Spin B (PHRF over 215) (10 boats) (top)**

**Series Standing - 3 races scored**

Information is provisional and subject to modification

Regatta results last updated: Wednesday, May 25, 2022 6:08:40 PM CDT

Click on race number to view detailed race information.

Pos	Sail	Boat	Rating	Skipper	Yacht Club	1	2	3	Total	Pos
1	59	Black Dog	255	Middleton Barrow [Non-Spin B]	DISC	2	2	1	5	1
2	158	Sabrina	231	Dana Shafie [Non-Spin B]	DISC, ODBC	1	1	8	10	2
3	1846	Rebecca	237	Gregory Prather [Non-Spin B]	Sailing Club of Washington (SCOW)	6/TLE	4	2	12	3
4	144	Kokomo	228	Andrew Shotwell Jason Powell, Joey Skoloda, Antony Maderal [Non-Spin B]	DISC	6/TLE	3	4	13	4
5	0511	Falcon	216	Falcon PSC [Non-Spin B]	PSC	3	6	6	15	5
6	6412	Glider	228	Dennis Tolliver Chris Harrington [Non-Spin B]	DISC	4	5	7	16	6
7	1058	Agulla	222	Agulla PSC [Non-Spin B]	PSC	6/TLE	8	3	17	7
8	56G	Sarah Elizabeth Gravel	240	Patrick Muldoon [Non-Spin B]	DISC	10/DNS	9	5	24T	8
9	1001	Peregrine	222	Peregrine PSC [Non-Spin B]	PSC	6/TLE	7	11/DNC	24T	9
10	7305	Big Stp	279	Travis Eagleson	DISC	11/DNC	11/DNC	11/DNC	33	10

## SUMMER I RACE 4 (5/31/22).

This will be a brief wrap up because it was a brief race. Not too many screwups to record. But we still cannot adjust the Genoa sheet leads under sail in anything above 5 k wind. Our Genoa trim suffers a good bit from that. The trusty Tohatsu sometimes stalls and won't start again, but often it has been starting on the first or second pull. Knock on wood for that! The regular crew of Maura and Connie have been really stepping up on the tacks and mark roundings, both of which are getting faster and smoother with each race.

Now for the details. When we got out to the course, there was no wind. Some incoming current, but 0 in the wind department. At 95+ degrees, it was looking to be a miserable race. We talked about quitting, but we were already out there, so....

The course was S, 2,7, F. We lined up the start line with shore transits on both ends. Worried about the effect of current pushing us with no wind, we stayed close to the line. Then the wind picked up a bit. We had a good start despite not timing our approach ahead of time (bad precedent). We were in the front line but were not first over the line. We were also a little early so we coasted down the line at half speed briefly allowing another boat to get a few feet ahead of us at the gun. They then did their best to block us and dump bad air on us. Of course, that did not work because Blackie is nothing if not a tactical monster. We came around her after first pulling some head fake moves on her which she tried desperately and a little pathetically to evade. Then we passed her and dumped A LOT of bad air on her. She stalled out. Never saw her again.

The race to the first mark, #2, saw Blackie leading the B fleet in second place behind Lark. We were a little too much to leeward of the mark unfortunately so we tried pinching like crazy to avoid a tack. Finally we had to tack and did a quick 2 tacks to approach the mark on starboard from a safe distance.

The wind picked up nicely from that point onward— thank goodness.

We stretched out our lead on the beat up to green mark #7, had to do two tacks again, 😞 darn it, to make our rounding. One boat almost caught us. She did not have an overlap at the entrance to the 3-boat length zone but she was close and inside us looking like she was ready to claim mark room regardless of her failure to get an overlap in the zone. Not wanting to end up in boat court again on the tricky overlap issue, we let her round mark 7 inside us while we went wide and picked up speed. She messed up the rounding and lost speed afterward because of making too sharp a turn and failing to get her sails set quickly for the new course, but we did not make those rookie mistakes. Maura and Connie made it a fast smooth rounding. We quickly passed the unfortunate boat, dumped a little token bad air on her for good measure and headed fast south, still with only Lark ahead.

Division: Non-Spin+B (9 boats)

Pos	Sail	Boat	Rating	Skipper	Yacht Club	1	2	3	4	Total Pos
1	59	Black Dog	255	Middleton Barrow [Non-Spin B]	DISC	2	2	1	1	6
2	1846	Rebecca	237	Gregory Prather [Non-Spin B]	Sailing Club of Washington (SCOW)	6/TLE	4	2	3	15
3	0511	Falcon	216	Falcon PSC [Non-Spin B]	PSC	3	6	6	2	17T
4	144	Kokomo	228	Andrew Shotwell Jason Powell, Joey Skoloda, Antony Maderal [Non-Spin B]	DISC	6/TLE	3	4	4	17T
5	158	Sabrina	231	Dana Shafie [Non-Spin B]	DISC, ODBC	1	1	8	11/DNC	21
6	1058	Agulla	222	Agulla PSC [Non-Spin B]	PSC	6/TLE	8	3	5	22T
7	6412	Glider	228	Dennis Tolliver Chris Harrington [Non-Spin B]	DISC	4	5	7	6	22T
8	1001	Peregrine	222	Peregrine PSC [Non-Spin B]	PSC	6/TLE	7	11/DNC	7	31
9	56G	Sarah Elizabeth Gravel	240	Patrick Muldoon [Non-Spin B]	DISC	10/RET-BF	9	5	11/DNC	35

As we approached the finish, Connie was watching a boat behind us, rapidly closing the gap. She said "It's Rebecca! They might catch us!" This was bad news because Rebecca is doing well in this series, in second place in the entire series. Panic set in. We did everything we could to make the finish line ahead of Rebecca with speed. It worked. We crossed in front. But it was not Rebecca after all, only a spin fleet boat of no consequence. My blood pressure dropped sharply.

We have some crew shortages coming up, so things may deteriorate next week with Maura trying to win a dance and then the following week with both crew gone, Connie trying to survive a tall ship voyage and Maura also gone. The crew search is on! Lots of spare crew around, but it's impossible to find crew who can stay focused, pay attention, and do everything right throughout an entire race at the level of Maura and Connie.

**SUMMER I RACE 5 (5/31/22).**

This was a race dominated by peculiar weather. Rain and no wind. Then a decent breeze blew in ending in more rain and less wind, enough to finish the race, however, on a shortened course. S 2 F. Crew were Connie and Dennis, both did a good job keeping boat speed up, telltales flying and making fast smooth tacks. Dennis was a little rusty after a 3-year hiatus, but he pulled it off well. Wind was out of the southeast, then and south east.

## **SUMMER II RACE 1 JULY 5**

Black Dog was Race Committee for the first race in this series, so I have no post mortem about our racing for that race. However, Dark Star ran aground on the course we set at marker 9 which we designated as a starboard rounding following instructions in the RC manual for low water courses. Dark Star then protested the "Race Organizers", which included the RC and requested redress.

The result of the protest hearing was as follows:

"The Protest Committee decided that Dark Star's score in Race 1 for the Summer II series has been, through no fault of her own, made significantly worse by an improper action of the organizing authority. The Protest Committee has decided to award Dark Star "average points" of her points in all the races in the Summer II series except Race 1 in accordance with Rule A9(a)."

This ruling is going cause trouble whenever marks 7, 7A, or 9 are part of the course. Boats are going to hit bottom and request redress every time. I suggested to Pete Fanta, Commodore, that the above average draft (>4.5) boats be allowed to opt to sail a different course in all races and be scored in a separate fleet. Have not heard how that idea has been received.

## SUMMER II RACE 2

Prior to the second summer II race, Blackie's bottom paint was removed by soda blasting and replaced with Interprotect 2000e barrier coat and then covered with another coat of the same with graphite dust incorporated. That final coat was sanded smooth. Very difficult to sand because it is carbon, basically hard as a diamond. The final coat may provide some UV protection, but that is uncertain. The much



smoother surface will enhance boat speed, especially in light air.

But Race 2 was not light air, and Blackie was heeled over too far much of the time upwind for us to reach maximum speed. The CB was down some of the race, but did not seem to help with the heeling although it did seem to help with our pointing. Our speed was in the high 3k and low 4k area much of the race, not enough to catch either Sabrina or Lark going upwind. We need to get closer to, or above 4 knots. We did have better speed downwind than Sabrina, but some of that may be due to an error on their part on the last downwind leg regarding which side to put their pole on. (Course was S4747F with a strong SSW wind and outgoing current)

Sabrina beat us by 20 seconds on corrected time.

We are up against a very tough competitor in Sabrina, an Alberg 30. She is a fast boat and is usually well sailed with a seemingly very competent skipper and crew—all wearing fancy red uniforms. To beat them in a strong wind, we have to get lucky or they have to make mistakes—which has happened occasionally. We can beat them upwind and down in a lighter breeze, however. Blackie is much faster when not heeling over 20 degrees. If we can keep her level, we may do better than Sabrina in the right breeze. Possibly we need to let the main flog more and put more twist in either the main or in both sails to try to dump wind out up top and level up the boat? Or possibly recruit a big fat heavy person to sit on the rail?

We did not have time to time our start in this race as we usually do because we were late getting out to the course. As a result, I misjudged our speed at the start, and we ended up sailing down to the pin end (wrong end) of the start line then coming back on port tack, having to duck the entire fleet. But we tacked on to starboard near the VA shore and made up our losses quickly, with only Lark and Sabrina ahead.

Meanwhile the rest of the fleet, except Aquila, was in the distant rear even with a wind that was not Blackie's best wind.

**PHRF Non-Spin B (PHRF over 215) (11 boats) (top)**  
**Series Standing - 2 races scored**

Information is provisional and subject to modification  
 Regatta results last updated: Tuesday, July 05, 2022 8:48:11 PM CDT  
 Click on race number to view detailed race information.

Pos	Sail	Boat	Rating	Skipper	Yacht Club	1	Corrected Time	2	Corrected Time	Total Pos	Total Corrected	
1	158	Sabrina	231	Dana Shafie	DISC/ODBC	1	00:41:52	1	01:00:56	2	1	01:42:48
2	59	Black Dng	255	Middleton Barrow	DISC	2/AVG-ALL	00:52:29	2	01:01:16	4	2	01:53:45
3	1058	Agulla	222	Agulla PSC	PSC	2	00:42:32	4	01:26:11	6	3	02:08:43
4	1846	Rebecca	237	Gregory Prather	Sailing Club of Washington (SCOW)	4	00:46:13	3	01:14:15	7	4	02:00:28
5	144	Kokomo	228	Andrew Shotwell Jason Powell, Joey Skoloda, Antony Maderal	DISC	3	00:45:50	5	01:28:15	8	5	02:14:05
6	315	Ginny	231	Dennis Tolliver	DISC	7	00:50:52	6	01:29:10	13	6	02:20:02
7	7305	Big Slip	279	Travis Eagleson John Boozer	DISC	5	00:49:38	12/DNC	01:30:10	17	7	02:19:48
8	1001	Peregrine	222	Peregrine PSC	PSC	6	00:50:24	12/DNC	01:30:10	18	8	02:20:34
9	6412	Glider	228	Dennis Tolliver Chris Harrington Tom Hammond	DISC	10/DNF	01:34:21	12/DNC	01:30:10	22	9	03:04:31
10	0511	Falcon	216	Falcon PSC	PSC	12/DNC	01:34:21	12/DNC	01:30:10	24T	10	03:04:31
10	000	Hero	249	Edward Wood	DISC	12/DNC	01:34:21	12/DNC	01:30:10	24T	10	03:04:31

Ace Crew of Connie and Maura did a FANTASTIC job of putting the boat to bed as well as an absolutely perfect job of sailing the boat as fast as she can go throughout the race. Fast smooth tacks, better pole handling, and good sail trim; in short, they gave the team everything you could want in a racing crew.

After the race, I cut off Blackie's prop with an angle grinder pursuant to the clearance I got from the Chesapeake Bay PHRF authorities who could said there would be no penalty for doing so because it was in an aperture anyway. Go figure? I believe this will reduce some minor turbulence and help increase our speed.

## SUMMER II RACE 4 (7/20/22)

This was one of Black Dog's best races ever, pushing my fun meter right off the chart. We smoked the entire fleet, often by minutes not seconds—in one case by as much as 28 minutes 25 seconds (corrected time)! That's pretty seriously fast. We took Lark by 39 seconds (corrected) and very nearly beat her



across the finish. (She crossed in real time 48 seconds ahead of us.) We rounded 2 marks with Lark and came out ahead in both cases. Those were both tactical roundings, in which we got the inside track with right of way and Lark screwed up by going outside. Of course, we don't compete against Lark for medals because she is an A fleet boat.

**PHRF Non-Spin B (PHRF over 215)** (top)  
**Series Standing - 3 races scored**  
 Information is provisional and subject to modification  
 Regatta results last updated: Wednesday, July 20, 2022 1:52:23 PM CDT  
 Click on race number to view detailed race information.

Pos	Sail	Boat	Rating	Skipper	Yacht Club	Corrected		Corrected	Corrected	Total	Total	
						Time	Time					Time
1	158	Sabrina	231	Dana Shafer	DISC/OORC	1	00:41:52	1	01:00:56	1	1	02:49:23
2	39	Black Dog	255	Houston	DISC	1.5/AVG	00:52:29	2	01:01:16	1	N/A	02:36:14
3	1058	Agata	222	Agata PSC	PSC	ALL	00:42:32	4	01:26:11	3	N/A	03:00:29
4	1846	Rebecca	237	Gregory Prather	Sailing Club of Washington (SCOW)	2	00:46:13	3	01:14:15	5	N/A	02:58:19
5	144	Hokuto	238	Andrew Shulman, Jason Powell, Jeff Schindler, Anthony Madoni	DISC	3	00:49:50	5	01:28:19	11/0NC	N/A	03:21:40
6	115	Janey	231	Deanna Talver	DISC	7	00:50:52	8	01:29:10	7	N/A	03:22:16
7	7305	Big Ship	279	Thomas Engstrom	DISC	5	00:49:38	11/0NC	01:30:10	4	N/A	03:16:00
8	1011	Patton	216	Patton PSC	PSC	11/0NC	01:34:21	11/0NC	01:30:10	2	N/A	03:54:09
9	1001	Penelope	222	Penelope PSC	PSC	6	00:50:24	11/0NC	01:30:10	8	N/A	03:25:38

The results still show Sabrina in the lead for the series in class B nonspin because she won two races in which we were either second or committee boat. Sabrina got the average of her two firsts as her score by being committee boat in Race 4. We got the average of a first place and a second place. That leaves us 1.5 points behind her for the series. *That needed to be fixed in the next races.*

Why was Blackie so fast? A decent start with speed. Good tactics on the first 3 legs (S to 2 to 6 to 2). Great crew teamwork. Very fast tacks. No screwups until the final leg (2 to F) on which we screwed something up with our sail trim, but as yet I don't know what it was. We had some issues with the pole and that did not go well, but luckily the wind suddenly went so far west, we could not use the pole anyway. It was a broad reach. So the pole was not a factor.

The big factor I believe was our **new bottom paint job and the removal of the prop.**

The only downside of the evening was that I broke Hell out of the trailer getting the boat in the water. That has now been fixed—with a lot of welding by Howell Crim at the marina—and it is as good as new. That mishap was no where near enough to spoil my joy in being able to get Blackie going so fast. I really do believe Sabrina is in trouble.





## SUMMER II RACE 5 (7/31/22)

This was a race dominated by peculiar weather. Rain and no wind. Then a decent breeze and ending in more rain and less wind, enough to finish the race, however, on a shortened course. S 2 F. Wind was out of the southeast, then south. Very variable. Rain stopped and help off until the race was over, then it poured again.

Crew were Connie and Dennis, both did a good job keeping boat speed up, telltales flying, and making fast smooth tacks. Dennis was a little rusty after a 3-year hiatus, but he pulled it off well.

Our start was not spectacular, and two other boats got slightly better starts by a half boat length or a little more, but we were faster and in cleaner air so ...pretty soon... we were up at the front of the fleet with Lark and the darn Alberg 30, Sabrina. We tacked first to line up for the mark had to duck both Rebecca and Lark. Both rounded the first mark ahead of us, but we had a good rounding and with good speed we slowly began to catch them while they were screwing with each other's wind and not realizing the danger from Blackie coming downwind behind them.

We almost did catch both boats, but disaster suddenly struck. Our pole was tightened heavily against the shroud so much that it bent in two. Part of the problem was that we failed to move the sheet lead forward, and the skipper failed to tell the crew what the pole angle needed to be. Brain fart again by skipper.

So much for the pole. Without the pole, we had to bear off from a direct shot at the finish and both Lark and Sabrina finished some seconds ahead of Blackie, but we corrected over both boats and **ending up in first place again**. Lark crossed 9 seconds ahead of us, but we corrected to beat her by 2 minutes, 15 seconds! Always good to beat Lark, even though she is in a different fleet!

## **SUMMER II RACE 6 (6/14/22)**

This was an interesting race on the North Course. Unfamiliar territory for some boats. In brief, our racing was a disaster. Fourth place finish. Our worst in a long time.

We had a very bad start trapped in another boat's bad air. It was a rough beginning altogether. Blackie's crew of Dennis and Eric were both stand ins for the regulars of Connie and Maura. They did an awesome job, but it takes a lot of races to learn the peculiar ins and out of how things are done on Black Dog. Just finding and understanding when to use the various control lines can be difficult, frustrating, and time consuming. Then to make matters worse, we almost did not make the start at all because of a halyard tangle on the mast.

By the time we got our sails up, I was really completely frazzled, and things started to go downhill even faster. As we checked in, we were all in a big soup of confusion, and I picked the green spin course instead of the blue nonspin course. This was fatal, although we did not know it at the time. I did not have time to double check the course with so many other basic sailing issues developing as the crew tried to digest a mountain of information. We did not have a practice start or a timing run or good transit lines. So our start was absolutely terrible, wind blocked by another boat, no boat speed and our timing was way way off. I was busy coaching the team about how to get Blackie to go fast, and that can get a bit complicated.

The race was just one mess up after another. After the line tangle, a winch handle went overboard. Gone for good. Our sheet leads were all wrong throughout the whole race. A lot of typical stuff that can go wrong when you are learning a new boat did go wrong. Our tacks were slow. Our mark roundings were not much better. Eric managed the pole well downwind, and that worked great for us allowing us to pass about 5 boats.

The capstone of our blunders was, of course, that since I had got the nonspin course wrong, we drove the boat way the Hell up the Anacostia before the realization set in that we were on the spin course and not the nonspin course! We turned around, but that huge brain fart put us in the back of the fleet for the next to last leg. We had been moving up reasonably well before that blunder despite our various learning the boat issues. Line tangles, bad tacks, and lost gear you can recover from, but....a massive mental screw up like going up the wrong river is not something you can recover from.

We finished in the middle of the fleet behind boats which were in total disbelief that they were beating us, boats that I have never seen ANYWHERE NEAR US in any previous race. So, in a way, we gave joy to the rest of the fleet and performed a public service by having a terrible race and allowing lots of boats to beat the pants off us. We corrected on our rating to 3<sup>rd</sup> place but I am not sure that the scores were calculated correctly. Perhaps they will be redone and we will drop a few places down.

I apologize to the crew and to Blackie for the critical course blunder. A brain dead skipper with new crew. Not a good formula. But, oddly I really enjoyed the race. Eric and Dennis were good company and fun to sail with. I hope to race with them again when regular crew cannot come. Maybe the Three Bridges Fiasco? We really badly screwed up this race but no body got too bent out of shape about it, and no one got hurt.

Dennis built us a new pole which is just as good as the broken one, and he and I fixed the broken eye bolt on the bow. The boat was hauled by marina staff and will have a new ultra slick bottom for the next race.

So alls well that does not end well. Or something.

## **SUMMER I RACE 7 (6/21/22).**

Another good race. Fun meter was in the red zone again for skipper and crew on Blackie from start to finish. We did not win, but we sailed fast downwind almost catching Sabrina (an Alberg 30). We finished 3 minutes and a few seconds too late. Excellent start for the Dog despite another boat fouling us to windward. Sadly, Sabrina got away from us on the last leg, a beat to windward. Crew of Maura and Connie were awesome. It is such a pleasure for me to sail with skilled crew like those two hard working sailors.

No huge mistakes in this race by Blackie but we do need to figure out how to get better speed on a windward beat in bigger winds. Some work is also needed on our tacks to speed those up a bit more. We need to shave off about 5 seconds on our tacks.

We won the series with 3 first and 3 second place finishes because, despite winning 4 races, Sabrina missed Race 4 and had a bad 8th place finish in race 3 which she cannot drop because she needs to drop race 4. As Woody Allen put it, 90% of life is showing up. Blackie showed up for every race and placed 1 or 2 in all but one race (4<sup>th</sup> place), which we will drop. Each boat gets one drop in Summer I.

Our jib luff had a kink which may have hurt us a little bit upwind (one shackle upside down). We heeled excessively upwind of the heavy wind close reaches although our main had a lot of twist—which should have helped. The excessive heeling and weather helm slowed us a lot.

Downwind we had too much mainsail twist because we forgot to tighten the vang. If we had done that we may have caught Sabrina. Clearly, going upwind we need to figure out how to reduce our heeling in heavy winds such as we had in this race. Not sure yet how to do that but probably we need to drop the centerboard in the big winds, which we did not do in this race. We could add more twist in the main also to let some more air out up top. Otherwise, not sure of our options. Research needed.

Our new bottom job is not yet finished. Only the barrier coat is on and it is not fine sanded. With the final slick paint and some fine sanding, coming next week, we will definitely be faster. Additionally PHRF of the Chesapeake says we can take off the prop with no penalty. That may also help. All we need is about 20 seconds in a race to catch Sabrina. A longer whisker pole will cost us 3 seconds per mile at any length so not planning to do that now.

Series final scores below:



## FALL RACE 1

Blackie won this race at the start. We raced the North Course, up the Anacostia and then also up the Potomac. The ole Dog eventually beat Sabrina by almost 18 minutes and Lark by 28 minutes (corrected). But we were baffled. What the Hell was the rest of the fleet doing? We crossed the finish line about ½ mile ahead of our competitors, and we were not doing anything special or unusual. Just trimming our sails for speed and trying to avoid any stupid blunders. We got far ahead at the start and stayed there. Blackie is so freaking fast sometimes that if you are behind her at the start—I feel sorry for you.

The start was won by tactics and strategy and great crew work. The start line was set for the spin boats going up the Potomac channel. This left the pin way closer than the committee boat in distance to the first mark for the nonspin boats up the Anacostia. While the wind was from the NNW which would favor the committee boat side of the start line if it was set square, it was far from square and the distance to the first mark was much greater from the committee boat side. Since the first mark up in the Anacostia could be reached from the pin side without tacking, even if Blackie had to sail a higher angle than the boats starting on the other side, the greater distance (about 15 boat lengths) that they had to sail more than compensated for Blackie's higher pointing and slightly slower sailing angle.

Blackie started fast at the pin with almost the whole fleet, except for one boat, starting on the other end of the line in what was probably a group-think blunder.

The first leg. Up the Anacostia to an obscure mark near the bridge. Some of the fleet seemed lost and confused about where to go, except not Sabrina. Sabrina was to windward of Blackie and keeping up closely on a good course for a while and then—they seemed to get lost also. They headed off to a location unknown. Who knows why?

The second leg back was down the Anacostia to the start pin with a starboard rounding at the pin. On this leg Blackie extended her already substantial lead over the whole fleet, most of whom were still trying to sail up the previous leg. We got some bad air from the dozen boats going the other way, but quickly broke through the mob still sailing up to the first mark. Then we immediately speeded up.

The third leg: Lots of tacking upwind up the Potomac in a NNW wind. The wind still held in the 7 or 8 knot range so we made it up to red mark 6 near the 14<sup>th</sup> street bridge ahead of everyone else by a huge margin.

Blackie in 0 wind.



The last leg down the upper Potomac from no. 6 to the finish: No wind. (See photo above.) We put the pole out, but the genny could not catch anything much. No boat could go above 1 knot. Lots of boats dropped out. In our fleet, only Black Dog and Sabrina finished properly. We persisted going 0.4 knots or less with the pole out, searching for any little puff. The outgoing current was almost all we had to move downstream. We worried that the race would be cancelled, but we finally crossed the finish line barely within the 2-hour time limit—about ½ mile ahead of anyone else. The RC extended the 2 hour time limit to allow for boats near the finish to try to make it, but the wind did not cooperate.

The

Blackie proved yet again that she can be a killer on the race course in any kind of wind, and even in no wind.



### FALL RACE 3

(Race #2 was cancelled due to weather.)

Race #3 is a tough race to recap. We had a gusty NE wind blowing about 5-9 K. Current going out pretty fast. (High tide at 5:30 pm.) There were 5 legs: Start, 7,4,7,4, and Finish. Along the way we experienced neck and neck speed trials, near collisions several times with too many boats way too close, difficult tactical decisions, an engine failure, crowding of boats at the dock afterwards, and one massive screw up by the skipper. Way too much stress and excitement.

Blackie won 4 legs, only to completely blow the race at mark 4 before heading back upstream for the last leg. We had a great start. After barging past Lark at the pin (very risky), we outran everyone for most of the race, including Lark, Skirmish, and Sabrina. Skirmish and Sabrina stayed neck and neck with us most of the race as Lark fell back slightly. It was reaching and broad reaching the whole way with no tacks except at the marks.

Our sail trim was good throughout as usual, thanks to excellent crew work by Maura and Connie. Our mark roundings were not that great, however. We lost a little ground to Sabrina and Skirmish at each rounding, but not too much... up until the last fatal blundering rounding.

Here is how it went at the last rounding. A disaster.

We came down to mark #4 slightly in the lead on a broad reach with Sabrina on our starboard side and in a better position to round wide and smoothly than us. Skirmish was going fast but way off to our port apparently unaware of the mark location. Sabrina clearly had the best approach for a fast and smooth rounding, although we were slightly ahead of her coming to the mark. Just before the mark Skirmish suddenly came flying in from our port side arriving at the same time as us. This made the whole thing a 3-boat mashup.

After royally screwing up our turn and exit, we ended up far behind both Skirmish and Sabrina. Sabrina rounded cleanly and left us desperately trying to round the mark —after briefly sailing backwards. I don't know exactly what Skirmish was doing, but their messed up maneuvers in front of us did not help us escape our own problems. (They apologized later, but...)

How did this happen? The skipper was focused way too much on the other two boats closing in on the mark at the same time as Blackie and failed to communicate any rounding and next leg plans to the crew. His secret plan was to round wide and continue on the same port tack over to the Maryland side of the channel. This would get Blackie clear of the other two nearby boats as well as all the other boats pounding down to the mark, and also get us out of the current. Then we could tack cleanly to port with clean air and less opportunity for collisions.

If we have learned anything from these races, it is that you need to plan ahead and communicate the plan to everyone. Plan the next rounding. Plan the tactics for the next leg, and plan the finish. Most of this planning was going on in the skipper's feeble brain. Unfortunately however...the ONLY person aware of these secret plans was the skipper. The crew anticipated a sharp rounding and simultaneous tack, taking off on starboard tack. So they began pulling the genny over to port as we came around the mark.

With the crew trying to get the boat on starboard tack and sail in one direction and the skipper steering in the other direction, Blackie stopped dead and even began to go backwards. At one point we almost did a backwards starboard rounding of the mark! Both Skirmish and Sabrina rounded properly, had a good laugh at our expense, and moved ahead. Both finished the last leg way out in front of Blackie. ***We lost more than 3 minutes extracting ourselves from this rounding screw up.***

Sad situation.

Bad Communication!!

We need to work on our mark roundings and the skipper needs to make sure that everyone understands the rounding plans and strategy for the upcoming leg.

The other worrisome thing about this race was that we nearly had 4 collisions, two of which were way way to close for comfort. Luckily, in one case, just after we finally rounded # 4— miraculously without hitting either Sabrina or Skirmish or the mark— Maura saw Lark coming right at us fast in the opposite direction, trying to make the mark. At the last minute and we changed course to steer past her with about an inch or less between the two boats. A crash into an \$85,000 boat would have been a total nightmare.

We also took a big chance barging next to Lark at the start. Had that been Sabrina with leeward rights instead of Lark, I am quite sure she would have closed us out and we would have hit the pin. But Lark generously let us squeeze by. Lark won the start by ½ a boat length but we were going faster and immediately moved into the lead which we held up until the last monumental screw up at mark #4.

We crossed the finish in third place overall, second to Sabrina in nonspin B, **3 minutes and 11 seconds behind her, corrected to second place just more than 1 minute behind.** Skirmish is a nonspin A boat. So we should tied for first with Sabrina for the fall series after two races. Two more races to go!

This final straw was when the engine mysteriously died on the way home. Mystery as to why, but Maura coaxed it back to life. Thankfully.

## FALL RACE 4

Although Blackie won this race, it was a race filled to overflowing with disappointments. The biggest disappointment was, of course, not catching Sabrina at the finish line and crossing ahead of her. That pain was relieved a good bit when we got close enough to her at the finish (1 minute and a half real time) to win the race by one minute on corrected time. That win insures that we had a good chance to either win the fall series outright or at least be tied for first with Sabrina —depending on the final race next week. After this race now Sabrina was only one point behind us for the series.

Right up there with the disappointment of not catching Sabrina at the finish was the fact that the greedy spin boat bastards got to the after-party first and ate all the kabobs, leaving exactly **nothing** for us. We then got this message from the club the next day, adding insult to injury:

*“A BIG THANK YOU TO BOB AND MARIA BRADY for the amazing dock party last night! Everyone came out, and it was incredible to dine on the deck with table cloths and terrific food. We are all so grateful to the Bradys for this wonderful annual event!”*

Apparently, to the club officers, “everyone” means only all the spin boat crews. As usual, nonspin boat people are second class citizens.

Then there was the committee boat mess. They arrived late. They anchored in a very weird spot. They set too long a course for nonspin boats to finish in two hours. They failed to shorten the course. Overall, they were awful.

Most critically, the RC failure to shorten the nonspin course when they had the chance had major consequences. They were not watching when Skirmish came by early on the next to last leg way ahead of the rest of the nonspin fleet. When Skirmish turned and continued on, the RC lost the chance to shorten the nonspin course. This allowed only the spin course to be shortened and only the spin fleet to finish in time to get to the kabob dinner.

The second critical effect of the CB being asleep at the switch was that it allowed Blackie to win the race with the mysterious time-on-time scoring correction. Blackie was very far behind Sabrina on the leg which would have been the short course finish leg. But on the next two legs Blackie changed tactics and nearly caught up to Sabrina. The short course would have put Blackie in second place without much time on time correction. Sailing 2 more legs gave Blackie the chance to win with the bigger scoring correction and a change in tactics.

So thank you RC for screwing up, sleeping at the switch, and thereby allowing Blackie to win this race and possibly the whole series.

Also on the list of disappointments was our failure— yet again— to make swift and efficient mark turns into a strong incoming tide. We did not get pushed backwards like we did last week, but we came within inches of hitting mark No. 2 twice, and at all mark turns, we lost ground to Sabrina.

In a conversation after the race with Sabrina’s tactician (yes, they actually have a tactician, a helmsman, a main trimmer and two jib trimmers!), I learned that Sabrina also had similar problems at mark No.2 with the dying breeze and very strong incoming tide. But our problems were worse than theirs because of our tactical error of not approaching the mark at a much wider angle.

Sabrina's tactician said that he advised their helmsman to take the starboard rounding extremely wide, and that is what enabled them to keep their speed up during the turn. The current was helping them with the rounding. In our case we started our turn to the starboard rounding much too early. The current was then on our nose, not helping at all, but instead almost forcing us to hit the mark.

We need better rounding tactics and more mark rounding practice if we want to beat Sabrina around the marks in the next race, especially in strong current and light wind.

On the other side of the ledger, we (belatedly) realized before the next to last leg that we needed to go over to the MD shore and get out of the very strong adverse current on that leg. That tactic does not always work, depending on how far you have to go to get out of the current, but in this race it got Blackie going a good bit faster than Sabrina. This was one of the two tactical moves that, together with the RC screw ups, won the race for us. However, going to the shallows on the MD side meant we had to make a risky crossing of a lot more deep water adverse current than anyone else did to make the mark. Sabrina and all other boats went down the middle of the river fighting current all the way.

Sabrina's tactician advised their skipper to do the same thing we did, he told me later, but his advice was not followed. Probably because crossing so much river in that nearly 2 knot current head to wind to get over to the mark was a pretty risky move. Nevertheless, our risky tactics worked very well for us on that leg, and our crossing was not terrible.

The other move we made that helped us win the race was, at Connie's suggestion, dropping the centerboard on the last leg upriver with the current behind us going up to No.6. The current caught the board and that strong push damn near shoved us up onto Sabrina's stern. Not quite enough to cross the line ahead of her, however. But close enough to win on corrected time. Thank you Connie for good thinking!

The centerboard is not painted with the slick diamond bottom paint we have elsewhere below water, and it has an especially heavy friction surface.

The crowd of spin boats blocking the entire dock on both sides when we came home was not fun, but missing the the kabob dinner was the biggest disappointment.

## FALL RACE 5

First, the results: They were fairly good. We crossed the finish line in second place, 33 seconds behind Sabrina. On corrected time, however, we were 26 seconds ahead of her, winning the race, and the whole fall series...thanks to the mysterious algorithms of time-on-time scoring. Thank you algorithms.

**DISC KISS Fall Series**  
**Daingerfield Island Sailing Club |**  
**PHRF Non-Spin B (PHRF over 215) (11 boats)**  
**Race 5 | September 20, 2022**  
**Race Information: Start Date/Time = September 20, 2022 18:40:00, Length (NM) = 2.2, A: 650 B: 550**

Sail	Skipper	Boat	Club	Rating	Finish Time	Elapsed	Time Allow	Corrected	Time Behind	Penalty	Pts	
1	59	Middleton Barrow	Black Dog	DISC	255	19:16:03	00:36:03	00:06:56	00:29:07	00:00:00	/0.00	1
2	158	Dana Shafie	Sabrina	DISC, ODBC	231	19:15:30	00:35:30	00:05:57	00:29:33	00:00:26	/0.00	2
3	1846	Gregory Prather	Rebecca	Sailing Club of Washington (SCOW)	237	19:27:45	00:47:45	00:08:19	00:39:26	00:10:19	/0.00	3
4	144	Andrew Shotwell	Kokomo	DISC	228	19:27:16	00:47:16	00:07:47	00:39:29	00:10:22	TIE/4.00	4.5
5	144	Andrew Shotwell	Kokomo	DISC	228	19:27:16	00:47:16	00:07:47	00:39:29	00:10:22	TIE/4.00	4.5
6	315	Dennis Tolliver	Ginny	DISC	219	19:30:30	00:50:30	00:07:49	00:42:41	00:13:34	/0.00	6
7	0511	Falcon PSC	Falcon	PSC	216	NO TIME	NO TIME	NO TIME	NO TIME	00:14:34	RET-BF/0.00	9
8	1058	Agula PSC	Agula	PSC	222	NO TIME	NO TIME	NO TIME	NO TIME	00:14:34	RET-BF/0.00	9
9	1001	Peregrine PSC	Peregrine	PSC	222	NO TIME	NO TIME	NO TIME	NO TIME	NO TIME	DNC/0.00	12
10	6412	Tom Hammond	Glider	DISC	228	NO TIME	NO TIME	NO TIME	NO TIME	NO TIME	DNC/0.00	12
11	7305	Travis Eagleson	Big Slp	DISC	279	NO TIME	NO TIME	NO TIME	NO TIME	NO TIME	DNC/0.00	12

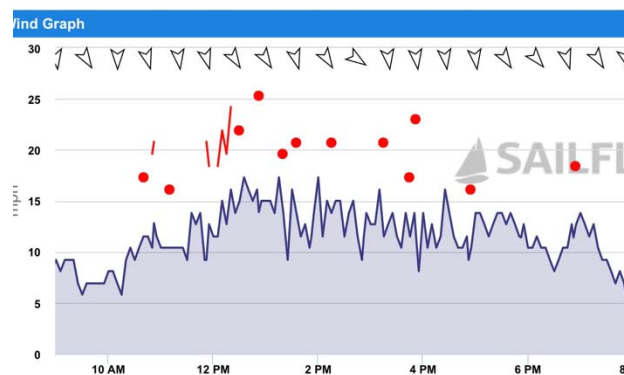
**Race Information: Start Date/Time = September 20, 2022 18:40:00, Length (NM) = 2.2, A: 650 B: 550**  
**Principal Race Officer: Nelson Pemberton**  
**Information is provisional and subject to modification**

**PHRF Non-Spin B (PHRF over 215) (11 boats) (top)**  
**Series Standing - 4 races scored**  
**Information is provisional and subject to modification**  
**Regatta results last updated: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 8:55:01 PM CDT**  
**Click on race number to view detailed race information.**

Pos	Sail	Boat	Rating	Skipper	Yacht Club	1	3	4	5	Total	Pos	Corrected
1	59	Black Dog	255	Middleton Barrow	DISC	1	2	1	1	5	1	03:47:25
2	158	Sabrina	231	Dana Shafie	DISC, ODBC	2	1	2	2	7	2	04:05:29
3	315	Ginny	219	Dennis Tolliver	DISC	4/TLE	3	5/TLE	6	18	3	05:22:25
4	0511	Falcon	216	Falcon PSC	PSC	4/TLE	4	3	9/RET-BF	20	4	05:19:26
5	1846	Rebecca	237	Gregory Prather	Sailing Club of Washington (SCOW)	4/TLE	12/DNC	6.3/AVG-ALL	3	25.3	5	05:15:38
6	144	Kokomo	228	Andrew Shotwell, Jason Powell, Joey Skolea, Antony Maderal	DISC	12/DNC	12/DNC	5/TLE	4.5/TIE	33.5T	6	03:21:11
6	144	Kokomo	228	Andrew Shotwell, Jason Powell, Joey Skolea, Antony Maderal	DISC	12/DNC	12/DNC	5/TLE	4.5/TIE	33.5T	6	03:21:11
7	1058	Agula	222	Agula PSC	PSC	9/RET-BF	6/DNF	11/RET-BF	9/RET-BF	35	7	05:27:21
8	6412	Glider	228	Tom Hammond, Chris Harrington	DISC	9/RET-BF	12/DNC	11/RET-BF	12/DNC	44	8	05:27:21
9	1001	Peregrine	222	Peregrine PSC	PSC	11.7/AVG-ALL	12/DNC	11/RET-BF	12/DNC	46.7	9	05:25:26
10	7305	Big Slp	279	Travis Eagleson, John Boezer	DISC	12/DNC	12/DNC	12/DNC	12/DNC	48	10	05:27:21

That 26 seconds also gave us the first place trophy for the entire Fall KISS Series, adding to our 2022 top spots in both the Summer One and Summer Two Series. (Second in the spring series was not too shabby either although there were only 2 races. Our worst score in 2022 was our bad finish in the very first spring race.)

RACE CONDITIONS: We had an outgoing current—but not as strong as last week. We put the CB down briefly to catch more friction in the current as we had done last week going downstream, but it was not



clear that it helped much, if any, speed-over-ground. We did not check that on the gps, however. So uncertainty remains about the tactic. Winds were from the NE and much higher than predicted, above 10 knots for the entire race, gusting once to almost 19 knots. (See red dot @7pm on the wind graph above).

The wind speeds made it difficult to use the pole, although we did practice it once before the race started. The practice indicated that we were not ready yet to use the pole in a high to moderate wind on a short course. The pole length had also slipped and it was not long enough to use anyway. It needs to be bolted in place.

We were heeling a lot in the gusts which slowed us on the upwind leg considerably. Constantly had to spill air from the main.

THE START: After several practice starts, although the committee boat side was favored, we decided against a port tack start at the committee boat and instead ran down the line on starboard from the pin. Most boats were using a port tack start near the CB. Our start strategy worked for us although we were a little early and had to slow down twice to avoid being over too soon.

FIRST LEG: For the first leg we tacked to port right at the start and were well ahead of Sabrina and most boats, other than Lark and Skirmish, for the first part of the first leg. We were almost keeping pace with Sabrina but decided to risk crossing the entire river over to the VA shallows to get out of the current, a tactic that had worked extremely well for us last week. We crossed over just below green mark 7 before the big industrial dock on the Maryland side.

This was a tactical blunder in this race in so many ways. First, the current was less powerful this week and the lesser current did not help our speed as much as the previous week. Second, it ***took us too long to cross over to the shallows with the current at right angles to the boat pushing us back downstream in the wrong direction.*** Most importantly, we violated the sacrosanct rule of sailboat racing: **STAY BETWEEN YOUR COMPETITION AND THE NEXT MARK AND CONTINUE TO BLOCK THEIR WIND TACKING EACH TIME THEY DO.**

Sabrina stayed sailing forward in the adverse current on port tack and reached the first windward mark (green 7A) several boat lengths ahead of us. Score 1 for Sabrina's tactician. Zero for Black Dog's skipper.

THE MARK ROUNDING: We had an ok rounding with no conflicts, but, again, were not quite as fast rounding as Sabrina and she moved a teeny bit further ahead of us at the mark.

THE SECOND LEG: The downwind leg was supposed to be a run down to No.4, but the RC shortened the course and it became the finish leg. Downwind, even sans pole, Blackie was slightly faster than Sabrina. We slowly gained a lot of ground on her, crossing the finish just 33 second behind her. We sailed a slightly higher angle than Sabrina. This was possible because we did not have to cross between the pin and the CB due to the shortened course. This gave us a good bit better speed. It was a tactical mistake on Sabrina's part, I believe, to sail lower and slower. Score 1 for Blackie's tactics.

Crew of Connie and Maura, as usual, tuned the sails to perfection on this run, allowing Blackie to strut her fast downwind stuff as she always does.

Fun meter blew past the red zone again.

