



Edgartown Race Weekend: One to Remember

EDGARTOWN, MARTHA'S VINEYARD, MASS. (June 19, 2023) – One of the most testing 'Round-the-Island ('RTI) races in recent history topped off three days of racing at Edgartown Yacht Club's 86th [Edgartown Race Weekend](#). The June 15-17 regatta started with two days of 'Round-the-Sound ('RTS) races for 17 teams that started Thursday in moderate breezes and finished up Friday in light air. Saturday's RTI, a circumnavigation of Martha's Vineyard and one of America's oldest distance races, saw 40 teams in seven classes at the 8 a.m. start, which was beset with rain, a strong opposing current, and a slight eight knots of breeze. By the time the last boat finished in an 18-knot northeasterly, a midnight time limit was quickly approaching.



Rikki (foreground), *Africa* and *Denali* at the start of Edgartown Race Weekend's 'Round-the-Island' race.
Photo by Stephen Cloutier

"They will remember this race for a long time, that's for sure," said Principal Race Officer

Bob Hurst. “It was wet, becalmed, heavy air, storms, you name it, but that’s what brings sailors back every year – the wide variety of challenging conditions that you get here. It’s not just up-and-down racing.”

Hurst explained that there were two two-hour gaps in the wind, one at the south end of Muskeget Channel that fleet leader *Denali* (the J/V 66 skippered by Michael D'Amelio in PHRF Spinnaker A) escaped, and a second east of East Chop that allowed everyone to catch up. *Denali* drifted across the finish line first, but by that time Ed Dailey’s J/109 *Raptor*, in PHRF Spinnaker C with Wyley Wakeman helming, had lessened its distance on the leader enough to win its class and the coveted Venona Trophy for best corrected time overall among all spinnaker classes.

“We have an option for shortening course for the slower classes,” said Hurst, “but at 4 p.m. we saw the potential for boats in spinnaker classes A through D and the double-handed spinnaker class to take the Venona Trophy. The majority of the boats were still on the south side of the island at that point, but the leaders in each class were doing well enough to finish between 8 p.m. and the midnight deadline.”



Michael D'Amelio’s J/V66 *Denali* won PHRF Spinnaker A class in the ‘Round-the-Sound races while defending champion Mo Flam’s (Edgartown) Alerion Express 28 *Penelope* won the 'RTS Non-Spinnaker class. Photo by Stephen Cloutier

Dailey has raced Edgartown Race Weekend more than ten times and has won his class here before but never overall. “It’s one of our favorite events,” he said, “because it’s so well

managed, and the Race Committee was prudent to do what it did. Maybe if you wanted to just go home, you wouldn't agree, but for us, when it's a sought-after race and a sought-after trophy, you stick it out."

According to Dailey, after the doldrums on the south side of the island no one had a clear advantage. *Raptor's* break came when some boats, including the class's eventual second-place finisher *Dark 'N Stormy* (a J/105), went inshore looking for wind and were going a knot faster. "But then the wind filled in where we were, and *Dark 'N Stormy*, which we owed 22 minutes to, crossed our stern. After West Chop, we set our Code Zero (a sail bigger than our genoa) and it lengthened our (corrected time) distance on the class and the fleet."

Denali, which won Class 1 PHRF Spinnaker in the 'RTS races, wound up sixth out of eight boats in its 'RTI Spinnaker A class. Winning that class was another long-time participant Donald Tofias aboard his W Class 76 *Wild Horses*.

"It's right up there with our most memorable races," said Tofias, adding that all but one boat in his class stuck it out. "We never stopped, but at one point I could have sworn we were moving backward. It took us 10 ½ hours to finish, compared to a record-breaking elapsed time of six hours, 41 minutes we posted in the year 2000."

The 'RTS races (one scheduled for each day) were scored separately from the 'RTI, with separate prizes given. The 'RTS races were coastal sprints of between 11 and 19 nautical miles around various government buoys within Vineyard and Nantucket Sounds, while the 'RTI was 55 nautical miles.

Winning Class 2 PHRF Non-Spinnaker in 'RTS was defending champion Mo Flam in his *Alerion Express 28 Penelope*.

Other class winners in 'RTI were Scott Bearse's First 447 *Slide Rule* (PHRF Spinnaker B), Ted Herlihy's J/109 *Gut Feeling* (PHRF Doublehanded Spinnaker), Ross McCaig's J/30 *Off Piste* (PHRF Spinnaker D), Peter Soule's Beneteau 311 *Saylavee* (PHRF Non-Spinnaker), and Larry Phillips' *Midtown Racing* (Multihull).

Full results here: <https://bit.ly/42RFKEa>

Sponsors of Edgartown Race Weekend are [Mount Gay Rum](#), [North Sails](#), [J Boats](#), [Regatta Craft Mixers](#), and [Team One Newport](#).

For more information on Edgartown Race Weekend, go to www.rtirace.org or contact Margaret Passafiume, raceadministrator@edgartownyc.org, (508) 627-4364 x18. Follow the regatta on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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