



Edgartown Race Weekend: Back to Normal and Then Some

MARTHA'S VINEYARD, MASS. (July 22, 2021) – With a whopping 78 entries in Saturday's 'Round-the-Island Race ('RTI) plus the return of its 'Round-the-Buoy Races ('RTB) that were suspended in 2020, the annual Edgartown Race Weekend, hosted by Edgartown Yacht Club, has come roaring back for a 2021 edition.

"Last year's COVID-19 restrictions forced us to keep things very low key in order to stay safe," said Event Co-Chair Alex Nugent, adding that despite the restrictions, 46 boats showed up to sail the 'RTI in 2020. "We even went so far as to hold virtual skippers' meetings and virtual awards ceremonies, so it will be great to get back to the normal rhythm of things. We are locked and loaded for a full schedule of happenings on the water as well as ashore at the club."



The three-day Edgartown Race Weekend starts Thursday (July 22) with 'Round-the-Buoy Racing that will continue on Friday. The marquee event is Saturday (July 23) at 8 a.m. when 78 boats will circumnavigate Martha's Vineyard in the 56-nautical-mile 'Round-the-Island Race, one of America's oldest distance races.
(Photo by Stephen Cloutier)

Starting at 1 p.m. on both Thursday and Friday afternoons (July 22 and 23), 19 boats will participate in 'RTB Races that will start and end near Edgartown's Outer Harbor. Those races are scored separately from Saturday's 'RTI, which starts at 8 a.m., a bit farther offshore but still within viewing distance for those with boats or who care to find vantage points on land as the fleet circumnavigates Martha's Vineyard.

The 56-nautical-mile 'RTI has been an annual tradition on Martha's Vineyard for 83 years, making it one of America's oldest distance races. Normally it is possible for both cruising and racing boats to finish the course by late afternoon or early evening. If the tidal currents or wind conditions make going slow, the Race Committee will finish the race just north of Menemsha.

"I'm delighted to see the big turnout this year," said Jim Swartz (Edgartown/Park City), who will sail his 72-foot Mini Maxi *Vesper* (formerly known as *MoMo* on the Maxi World Circuit) in the 'RTI. "People are tired of Zooming and hibernating...sailing is the best cure."

Swartz, who summers in Edgartown, bought *Vesper* in August of 2019. His team sailed the Maxi Worlds and won the first race out of the box, ultimately finishing second overall in the Mini Maxi Class. Next, it finished first in class at Les Voiles de Saint Tropez before the COVID-19 pandemic stopped the campaign dead in its tracks. Swartz has owned a number of boats with names referencing things in James Bond movies. (A *Vesper Martini* was Bond's cocktail of choice.) During the COVID-19 break, *Vesper* went into the shed for a graphic transformation; it makes a bold statement, using imaging from a painting of acclaimed artist Susan Swartz (Swartz's wife) on both its hull and main sail.

"I love sailing the 'RTI in any boat," said Swartz. "We have raced *Money Penny* numerous times as well as the TP52 *Vesper* and the Melges 32 *Q*. Coastal sailing is my favorite type of racing. Each 'RTI has its unique challenges, which is what makes us keep coming back year after year."

Some, like Art Santry (Washington, D.C./Newport, R.I.) aboard the Kerr 53 *Temptation - Oakcliff*, have chosen to sail all three days of Edgartown Race Weekend. Santry has sailed Edgartown Race Weekend for eight years in this boat but has been competing in the race since 1967, mostly with his father aboard other boats also named *Temptation*. He is making a week of it, staying with a childhood friend on the island.

"It's always lots of fun. We usually do pretty well, with a crew of guys and girls that have sailed a long time with me," said Santry, explaining that many of them are graduates or students from Oakcliff Sailing Center, an organization that he supports in Oyster Bay, N.Y. "We also have Christina Wiley, who teaches sailing at Edgartown Yacht Club."

Santry especially looks forward to one-on-one 'RTB battles with Brian Cunha's (Newport, R.I.) *Irie 2*, a Kerr 55 that has won its class at this event many times. "We always seem to be trading places with *Irie 2*, sometimes going back and forth to win, at events where we are in the same racing class." It could be a different game this time, however: Santry has rebuilt *Temptation-Oakcliff's* entire keel structure and made other major upgrades, including buying all new jibs and adding 20" to the bowsprit so it now carries a spinnaker that is 274 ft. bigger than the previous one.

"It won't take much for me to be happy," said Santry. "In the 55 years that I've raced in Edgartown, the Edgartown Yacht Club has come a long way. Its welcoming attitude is spectacular, and they run a very professional but fun operation. It's hard to find anyone who doesn't say it's the most fun regatta of the season. I'm a big fan!"

Divisions are for PHRF, ORC, Multihull and One-Design. Social events at Edgartown YC start Friday at 5 p.m. with the 'RTI Skipper's Meeting, Mount Gay Welcome Party and Dinner. The combined 'RTI/'RTB Awards are Sunday at 11 a.m., also at the club.

Sponsors of Edgartown Race Weekend are [Mount Gay Rum](#), [North Sails](#), [J Boats](#), [Regatta Craft Mixers](#), [Hinckley Yachts](#), [Storm Trysail Club](#), 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](#).

'RTB Master Roster

https://yachtscoring.com/current_event_entries.cfm?eid=13248

'RTI Master Roster

https://yachtscoring.com/current_event_entries.cfm?eID=13249

'RTI scratch sheet

<https://bit.ly/3f0baTq>

'RTB scratch sheet

<https://bit.ly/3hWxTRJ>

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