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N2E #70: Boats vs Elements;
equals a race, not a cruise

ENSENADA, Mexico; May 2, 2017 – Reports by sailors of the 70th annual Newport to Ensenada International Yacht Race where consistent: winds were notoriously inconsistent. The lesson; this is N2E, not the Baja Ha-Ha. This was a sailboat race and sailors in every class were challenged by choices, potential remedies and the ability to adapt to changing conditions.

“It was tricky, very tricky,” said Ben Mitchell while signing for the big three trophies won by Roy P. Disney’s Andrews 70 and the rest of the ***Pyewacket*** crew. Although not caught in the great lull off San Diego, he said the race challenged them with unusual conditions. It was not as windy as forecasted, he said. Mitchell praised all ***Pyewacket’s*** competitors including ***Holua***, ***Catapult*** and ***Grand Illusion*** with whom they exchanged the lead along the way.

Mitchell collected the President of Mexico Trophy for Best Corrected Maxi, the Tommy Bahama Trophy, for Best Corrected Overall, and the President of USA Trophy for Best Corrected, All PHRF. “Roy enjoys the race; he started sailing with his Dad at just 13 years old,” said Mitchell. About the 70th anniversary win, being back on the podium “feels real good,” he said. ***Pyewacket*** and the Disney family have a long and winning history racing N2E.

Roy E. Disney was honored at the 50th annual N2E as Grand Marshall who lead the parade of boats from the harbor to the starting area. At the time, Roy E. had already sailed in more than half of N3E races on one of five boats, including ***Pyewacket***.

To the roar of the crowd behind him, cheering and chanting DPYC - that once again claimed honors for the most entries from a yacht club (18) and the most winners from a yacht club - Viggo Torbensen picked up the Governor of California Trophy. Not only did he take home some hardware for the Best Corrected Time PHRF A win for ***Timeshaver***, a J/125, he placed second in the new category of Best Elapsed Time, PHRF A. The last six hours were difficult, Torbensen said. “The ocean was like a washboard. We finished upwind in 23 knots; we’ve never tried that before.”

The trying part was key to Barry Senescu’s success. His ***Yippee Kai Yay***, a water-ballasted Class 40 racer built for crossing the Atlantic and for withstanding strong forward winds, was spending a little too much time at the dock. He and his wife Sue had been active sailors for 25 years. When she became not well enough to sail a couple of years before sadly passing in 2015, his sailing aspirations waned.

Collecting the City of Newport Beach Trophy for Best Corrected Time, PHRF B, he rightfully described his win as a comeback story.

Former and long-time crewmate, now girlfriend Betsy Crowfoot, was an integral part of pulling everything back together, Senescu said. She added a stability factor; logistically and spiritually in getting the team (that included ***Yippee’s*** boat designer Jim Antrim) and the boat in shape to race. “That gave me the confidence to put the money into sails, and the confidence to go race,” he said.

While many boats hit lulls and were stuck in holes, huge winds filled in the gaps and *Yippee Kai Yay* took advantage. “The conditions were perfect for a major portion of the race,” he said. “And the crew worked really well together.”

“I had an awesome crew,” said David Nelson of the Royal Lake of the Woods Yacht Club. Adding another element to the truly international event, the crew of *Kite 35* consisted of two honorary Canadians and four real ones. One of the honorary ones, a Quantum Sails rep, offered some tips and tactics that helped the ID35 win PHRF C.

“We made a lot of right calls per conditions and did a good job of adapting,” Nelson said. At one point, the boat hit 19 knots, 2 more than he thought possible after last year’s speedy trip. Nelson bought the boat in Newport Beach 4 years ago with the intent of taking it to Northern Ontario to race it on home turf; a lake peppered with 140,000 islands. Someone talked him into racing N2E and now he’s hooked. “I’ve come to the realization that it’s not going back to Canada,” he said of the boat. Neither will the beautiful Newport Harbor Chamber of Commerce Trophy, but only because it is not acceptable carry-on luggage.

Echoing the importance of making the right calls, Bill Gibbs of *Wahoo* accurately summed up the entire race: “If you zig when you should have zagged, it will make hours of difference in your results.” Last year’s Tommy Bahama Trophy winner for First Overall Corrected and multiple N2E champ, placed second to *Chim Chim*, a Gunboat 62, in the ORCA class.

But we do this for the adventure; results are incidental, he said. The fastest *Wahoo* hit this race was almost 24 knots. The slowest was zero. The downside of swells created the only breeze. “It’s frustrating as heck, but it builds character. So it’s OK,” he smiled.

Andy Rose of *It’s OK*, an Andrews 50, described this year’s race as the most fascinating N2E they’ve done. Lots of choices; it becomes tactical, he said. “This is the reason we do this, for races like this.” At one point they hit 20 knots, but also reported dropping to zero. The familiarity of a regular crew helped, but they were joined this year by 15-year-old Jeffrey Peterson. “I have shirts older than you,” said one of the crew while waiting to pick up the Secretary of State USA Trophy. Peterson worked a couple positions on the boat on this his first N2E and learned a lot about sail changes as the crew did about 20 of them. “He’s a future (sailing) rock star,” said Rose.

Angelina Garcia started her first N2E Friday aboard *Jazz*. She said the boat got off to a good start, but then floated around for 8 hours. After discovering an issue with the engine, they finally limped to San Diego Yacht Club. From there, she and other crew members took an Uber to the border then a taxi from Tijuana so they could enjoy the festivities. That’s determination, she said.

Those discouraged by the sometime floatfest can take solace in knowing that this was not a record setting year for slow. That was in 1954 when Howard Ahmanson’s *Sirius* arrived first with an elapsed time of 31:09:15.

“N2E is always an adventure; it’s different every year,” said NOSA Vice Commodore Daniel Hodge. “Yet we are truly pleased when racers tell us that it’s always a fabulous event for everyone.”

The Newport Ocean Sailing Association, hosts of the race, are grateful for all those who persevered the elements; for its valued cruisers, some of whom reported wallowing in lulls for more than 14 hours and those who made judgement calls to float less and enjoy Ensenada more.

Please see NewporttoEnsenada.com for full results and complete list of trophy winners. For additional insights on competitors and their stories, or for contact information, please contact Laurie Morrison at 310-720-9011 or lmorrisonventures@gmail.com

**Baja HaHa is a fabulous, well-managed and respected cruising event every October for those seeking a comfortable coastal rally from San Diego to Cabo San Lucas.*

All times shown are corrected unless otherwise noted.

N2E 70 RESULTS

MAXI

| | | | |
|--------------|--------------|------|----------|
| Pyewacket | Roy Disney | CYC | 19:38:23 |
| Aszhou | Steve Maheen | SDYC | 19:41:14 |
| Medicine Man | Bob Lane | LBYC | 20:10:47 |

ORCA

| | | | |
|-----------|----------------|------|----------|
| Chim Chim | John Gallagher | MBYC | 19:46:29 |
| Wahoo | Bill Gibbs | PBYC | 20:28:51 |
| Freestyle | Jerry Wetzler | DWYC | 23:50:18 |

FAST 50

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|-----------|------------------|------|----------|
| It's OK | Lewis Berry | BYC | 19:41:16 |
| Horizon | John Schultz | BYC | 20:32:00 |
| Staghound | Alec Oberschmidt | SWYC | 20:46:00 |

PHRF-A

| | | | |
|------------|-----------------|-------|----------|
| TimeShaver | Viggo Torbensen | DPYC | 20:22:16 |
| Flaquita | Paul Casanova | SBYRC | 20:48:02 |
| Blue Flash | Scott Grealish | | 21:07:33 |

PHRF-B

| | | | |
|----------------|----------------|-------|----------|
| Yippee Kai Yay | Barry Senescu | DPYC | 21:40:01 |
| Temptress | Raymond Godwin | LBYC | 22:17:01 |
| Lodge Hall | Guy Rosenlof | NYCLB | 23:07:39 |

PHRF-C

| | | | |
|----------------|--------------|-------|----------|
| Kite35 | David Nelson | RLWYC | 20:26:34 |
| Captain Sluggo | Rick Yabsley | SBYV | 22:09:33 |
| Warrior | John Seitz | DPYC | 22:31:35 |

PHRF-D

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|---------------|-------------|-------|----------|
| Problem Child | Dan Rosen | BCYC | 21:26:59 |
| Buena Vista | Dwight Rowe | VNTYC | 21:58:25 |
| Marisol | Seth Hall | CRA | 22:35:31 |

PHRF-E

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|------------|--------------|------|----------|
| Sleeper | Ron Simonson | CBYC | 23:06:15 |
| Kookaburra | Mark Mallaby | OYC | 23:25:14 |

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|------------------------|-------------------|--------|----------|
| Uncle Bob | Larry Leveille | SBYC | 24:01:53 |
| PHRF-F | | | |
| Gray Goose | Jeremy Quinton | DPYC | 22:04:48 |
| Scott Clapp | | | |
| Rocinante | Juan Lois | SBYRC | 23:05:38 |
| Orca | Matthew Florez | SDYC | 24:40:15 |
| PHRF-G | | | |
| Day Tripper II | Andy Horning | SLBYC | 21:56:17 |
| Dorado | Matt Brooks | STFYC | 22:07:30 |
| Renegade | Ben Smith | NYCLB | 26:03:58 |
| PHRF-H | | | |
| Celebrity | Jerry Finnegan | KHYC | 25:32:08 |
| LuLu | Dave Booker | SLBRC | 26:12:22 |
| Hassle | Larry Malmberg | SYCLB | 32:40:54 |
| PHRF-I | | | |
| Sheridan Mae | Steve Davis | KHYC | 22:34:00 |
| Cimarron | David Basham | CRA | 22:39:46 |
| Betty | Scott McKenney | SCCYC | 24:13:27 |
| PHRF-J | | | |
| Midnight Run | John Dean | KHYC | 26:35:04 |
| Cardinal Sin | Matthew Rustigian | ABYC | 26:43:24 |
| Aries | Tim Racisz | HGYC | 29:18:53 |
| PHRF-K | | | |
| Bon Vivant | Richard Caselli | DPYC | 28:03:38 |
| Cruz-Gen A | | | |
| Mare 'Zia | James Lee | KHYC | 24:31:32 |
| Cruz Gen B | | | |
| Runaway Blues | Thomas Lehtonen | SBYRC | 24:16:31 |
| Rylacade | Stuart Leigh | BCYC | 27:17:57 |
| Imagine Too | Larry Goshorn | SYCLB | 29:58:35 |
| Cruz – Non Spin | | | |
| Paramethia | Philip Herzfeld | DPYC | 29:15:26 |
| Traveler | Michael Lawler | CORSYC | 37:18:03 |
| Both and World | Daniel Perrine | AYC | 38:38:03 |
| CRUZ – Spin | | | |
| Freedom | David Normandin | DPYC | 21:10:13 |
| Cabernet Sky | Charles Buckner | DPYC | 25:04:04 |
| ShadowFax | Steve George | ABYC | 31:06:40 |
| SHORT | | | |
| Honu Kai | William Cason | SDYC | 32:01:46 |
| Miss Lorelei | Michael Niggle | SDYC | 32:59:03 |
| Atsa My Yacht | Lorenzo Colarossi | CRA | 33:36:40 |