

## Casco Bay RTI 2019 as seen from Lunch

This was an unusually good race for me and it came at a time when I was recovering from hip surgery, so I had the time to “pay attention.” Since I have sailed on a J 80 for the past 15 years, whenever there is a race with a J 80 it seems to be more fun. I will confess that my years of experience on the boat do little or nothing to help me in the SOL races.

The start and the course to Ram Island was pretty easy, a straight line, and get decent mark roundings. There was nothing to be gained straying from the rhumb line.

The leg to Long Birch Island was a little more interesting. I started the leg sailing 140 AWA while most of the competition went for a course much closer to the straight line rhumb line. (I should have remembered the mantra for sailing a J 80 downwind- unless you can get it on a plan, soak as far down as possible) About 60% down the leg, seeing that I was losing contact with the leaders and the fleet, I decided to turn down and go straight for the mark. I was convinced that my chance for a good finish was over as I was now sailing lower and slower than my competition. I must have gained enough while sailing high and approached the mark in the top 10. Through the luck of the game and computers, I had a perfect mark rounding- my boat went .01 past the mark and I turned. Some of my competitors were not so fortunate, and I sailed away from the top mark in 1<sup>st</sup>.

The course to Great Diamond Island, again for me a straight line. Depending on the computer I would vary from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>, but I saw no value in varying my course, I concentrated on sailing the shortest possible distance with the best mark roundings possible.

The race came down to the last 2.3-mile beat, the question being when to tack. I choose to tack early and get left, there was a bit more breeze on that side, but it put you on the wrong side of a small knock, I was joined by Collegefund, Wolfe, and Starship. We seemed collectively convinced that the additional wind speed would be the difference. Meanwhile a strong group, with Winston, Sassy, and Rafa carried the port tack longer. In the end it was Collegefund, Winston and myself (Lunch). I didn't think I could get Collegefund as with every movement he was just ahead of me, but I thought I might get Winston (but I have thought that before as I am sure many have- tough boat to beat!). Congrats to everyone in the top 20 as only 1:36 separated the group with the top 13 separated by less than a minute.

Great race for me, any time I can finish in the company of some of the top SOL sailors it is a great day.