

Inaugural Quahog Cup 2020

With the whole country hopefully staying home and practicing proper social distancing, the Quahog Cup sprint race (6 hour?) seemed like just the thing to do. Starting at 8:00 AM local time for me, it was perfect. Coffee in hand I got ready for a long beat. Going from memory, I will try to remember my thinking at the time that managed to get me to a rare podium with a 3rd place finish.

The first leg to Rose Island was a simple point at the mark and go. But the mark for me posed the first decision. Harden up and go west or tack at the mark and play the east shore? There was a bit more breeze of the east side of the course and I tacked immediately after rounding. My plan was to aggressively play the east side of the course with slightly more air and get to the Hog Island Buoy in the top 3. I followed my plan but only managed the top 6 as some of my competitors did a better job. They worked the east side, but not as aggressively, making fewer tacks. Well done guys.

There was little any of us could on the next leg to Poppasquash Buoy but hold tight to the tiller and point at the mark.

Once around Poppasquash, you could almost lay the next mark, Rumstick Rock, if it hadn't been for that wide point of land. But again, there were no passing lanes on this leg for me and rounded in 6th-7th.

The crew did a fall away set at Rumstick but once up to full speed the skipper called for a gybe to the east, again chasing higher velocities. Maybe some minor gain, but I rounded Patience Island in 6th, with passing lanes again closed on the leg to Jamestown Bridge.

Jamestown Bridge to Newton Rock presented a potential opportunity. Which side of island would provide the fastest way to Newton Rock? My instinct said the west side, but my distance calculations showed the east shorter. I went east. Leaving Jamestown would provide me with a hotter angle and a faster ride than the west course to the point on the island. Then I was faced with the .5 mile run @ 156 AWA to get back in the channel. Painfully slow! Once back in the channel, the boats to the west still had a hotter angle than I did, but we were closer and

we were at a point on the polar curve that was relatively flat. Hence the speed difference was small.

I arrived at Newton Rock in 3rd and total muffed the rounding and soon found myself back in the familiar 5th-6th.

The beat from Newton Rock again had the east side of the course again favored and the majority of the fleet went east and played the shore to the lay line at Fort Andrew.

Between there and the finish I managed to get a little good luck and rounded Fort Andrews in 4th and soon went to 3rd. I wish I could say I did something tactically that was brilliant, but sometimes, a little luck makes the difference.

Calmxxy sailed a great race as did all in the top 10. Reviewing the finish times, only 89 seconds, over a 6 hour race separated the top 10.

Thanks to the RC for a great race. These short races on a weekend, especially in these strange times, helps pass the time while we wait for this crazy virus to leave us.

LUNCH