

Kids' Camp continues to surprise and delight. The 2015 tribe, right, takes a cruise on the multi-masted Suva, built more than 90 years ago in British Hong Kong, and designed by the renowned Seattle naval architect Ted Geary. Recently relocated from Port Townsend, Suva is now owned by the city of Coupeville's newly formed Coupeville Maritime Heritage Foundation and helmed by Captain Mark Saia. Those not racing can ride aboard Wednesday through Friday for spectator cruises 11:00 to 2:00. Or make the road trip to Port Townsend Labor Day Weekend to check her out at the wooden boat festival.



The Oak Harbor Yacht Club continues to serve up victuals to the voracious racers, from hot breakfast to mouth-watering dinners, such as Tuesday evening's pig roast. (Ya gotta feed the machine.) If you missed Monday's mussels, which sold out by the way, head to the club early Wednesday evening for what might be the freshest catch you'll ever enjoy, landing on your plate straight from the waters of Penn Cove. Didn't fair well in the races there? If you can't beat 'em, eat 'em.

Even after two days of bumpy racing and broaches too numerous to count (case in point, the Penticton based Blusail 24 Blu Velvet went skipping like a pebble across Saratoga Passage on Monday) festivities continue portside. Kids of all ages burn excess energy playing beach ball volleyball and corn hole at the Brenda Van Fossen Kids Zone. More live music is lined up for the evenings. And if you didn't get down and jump up to Tuesday's rocking bluegrass band, Rabbit Wilde, you'll probably see them one day soon on the Grammy's.

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WHIDBEY ISLAND Race Week



Tuesday morning of the 33rd Whidbey Island Race Week dawned calm, but no sooner had the fleet headed out of the Oak Harbor Marina than the wind began to build. Was it a southerly? A westerly? At Blower's Bluff there was no telltale bovine smell for confirmation. To the south dark skies, overhead, cumulus clouds. A convergence zone?

With the marks eventually set in Penn Cove to the east up near Captain Whidbey's Inn, and with the flukey puffs and northerly bent to the breeze, the usual elevator west along Penn Cove's was out of commission. The resulting charge up, as well as the usual down, the east beach gave the out-of-owners not just a true Pacific northwest spectacle, but an up-close and hands-on one at that. The J/24 Itchy & Scratchy skied a halyard, giving the crew an opportunity to also retrieve their perhaps rusty skills at good old-fashioned bareheaded sail changing. So they made an unplanned stop at Coupeville's red barn, and with some eager help from the spectator gallery above, the halyard was back on deck in no time flat. The collective good karma ensured Itchy & Scratchy made it back to the course in time for the day's second race, and after it was all over the day's first place finish was theirs.

After just two days Whidbey Island Race Week 2015 has five races per class in the logbook. Multi-minute leads by the front runners were the signature moves in Tuesday's three races.

The elusive Mike Goldfarb wasn't on hand to pick up his first place award on Tuesday at the after-race party, and because of his hefty lead it's probable the other Farr 30s were even doubtful of his existence. It's a tight class nonetheless and the fleet — including Lance Staughton's Bat Out of Hell, Bruce Chan's 65 Red Roses from Canada, and Chris Tutmark's gorgeous Patricia — will doubtless make a fine showing at the Farr 30 Worlds this October in Seattle. When not helming his Farr in Pacific waters, Tutmark spends his time going solo in his Mini Transat somewhere in the Atlantic.

Others in the one-percent included ken Chin's Olson 911 Kowloon, Stuart Burnell's J/109 Tantivy, John Hoag's 1D35, Shrek, and Judy Buttons' C&C 115, Rags. Appropriately, first to finish on Tuesday was Brad Butler's Sierra 26, Uno.

The one-design fleets saw some fresh faces on Tuesday when the J/105 from Portland, Free Bowl of Soup gave Last Tango a scare. Also knocking at the door was Incontheivable, representing the younger generation of the Cohen armada.



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After Mikey did one of the week's first over earlys, Marc Noel's Kelowna-based Melges 24, Eclipse, above, jumped into the fleet ray and sailed the day with a 'no mistakes' motto. Mikey crawled back leg by leg, however, and by the day's end had horized the fleet with a multi-minute lead. Still in the mix was the Linrothe clan's Comfort Monkey with a strong showing in every race. Alex Smyth's Aquaholics from West Van YC showed some bursts of inspiration on Tuesday so don't count them out.



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