

WAVELENGTH 24 ARTICLES

Wavelength 24 #100 Wins Its First Regatta

Wavelength 24 #100, the first Wavelength to be built with the new deck design, left the factory on June 10 and headed straight for Gulfport, Mississippi, for the 2005 GYC Challenge Cup. This is a highly competitive annual event that is a race for both individual and team prizes. This year's regatta involved 3- and 4-boat teams from 12 yacht clubs. OuttaSchock was skippered by Tom Schock and represented the Ponchartrain Yacht Club. This brand new Wavelength won PHRF Class D and led its PYC team to a fourth place team score.

The Wavelength definitely proved that it is still an absolutely great performer. After all of these years, it is truly a boat that does everything well. It is fast upwind and downwind, in light air and heavy air. Tom and his crew (three of his regular crew from California plus two from the local Mississippi circuit) had the opportunity to sail against the best boats of its time – two J-24s, two S-27.9s an Irwin 24, a J-22, a Peterson ½ Ton, and Cat 36 and two other WL-24s.

During one of the races, the classes became entangled, which gave the Wavelength the chance to square off against the Melges 24. In the light to moderate conditions upwind, the Melges couldn't point nearly as high – maybe 10 degrees lower. So the WL got to the weather mark slightly ahead. And off-the-wind the Melges, with its asymmetrical spinnaker, had to sail really high, while the WL and its symmetrical kite could sail deep and fast. The Melges had just three guys onboard, the WL had six. The Melges rated 96, the WL 162. And at the bottom of the course, in less than 10 knots, the Melges rounded the leeward mark just slightly ahead of the WL.

In what should have been a 7-race series, the committee had to settle for just four races due to conditions that were primarily extremely light and variable. Whenever the new Wavelength was able to square off against the older Wavelengths in the fleet, Tom found the new boat to be measurably faster upwind. He attributes this to the fact that the deck hardware and gear is positioned and designed to give the crew the ability to change sail shape really quickly and easily. The jib halyard leads to a dedicated winch

and a cleat rather than to a stopper, so the trimmer was able to change jib halyard tension in every puff and lull. The boat is also equipped with moveable genoa cars and a 32:1 backstay system with most of the tackle under deck. The backstay cleats onto the barney post within really easy reach.

Being able to control forestay sag was absolutely vital in these conditions. And the trimmer was able to control the jib and backstay tension without shifting his body weight. When the boat hit a little lull, the backstay went off immediately, and the jib lead was moved forward to make the jib deep and powerful. In a puff, the trimmer put more tension on the backstay, moved the lead aft, and sheeted in the jib. Because of the



placement of the hardware and the design of the new deck, the trimmer was able to make these adjustments in unison with breeze without moving.

The Wavelength was racing against a J-22 with a genoa and just three guys onboard. In light air they were really tough. On one occasion, the J was to leeward and pinching up. Not wanting to pinch in such light air, Tom and his team decided to tack away. During the first three tacks, the J-22 gave the WL a really hard time.

He was three to four degrees high, but the WL had so much more speed that they rounded the weather mark about 400 yards ahead of the J. In 7 knots and below, the WL sailed lower than the J. As the breeze built, the WL sailed higher and higher. At the end of the regatta, WL-24 #100 was first in its class. A J-24 was just one point behind them. A modified Irwin 24 placed third.

There has been a lot of conversation regarding the fact that the new Wavelength 24 was penalized 3 seconds a mile. The older WLs rated 165 for this event, while WL-24 #100 was rated at 162. Here is the scoop. In order to avoid a conflict during the regatta, the committee was provided with the details regarding the new deck. They were convinced that the new boat is truly a Wavelength 24, built to one-design specifications; and they were prepared to let it race with a 165 rating. Then one of the members of the committee pointed out that he had modified the deck on his Merit 25 years ago, and the committee had given him a 3-second per mile penalty for the modifications. He felt the committee had set a precedent, and the committee felt compelled to give us a penalty as well. This was a local issue. It shouldn't affect the ratings of new boats in other sailing venues.

The new Wavelength is faster than the older boats primarily because the sails can be adjusted so easily – the improvements in hardware design over the years have made a

huge difference. The new boat has properly sized and strategically located equipment and it has properly sized lines. The halyards are 3/16 Spectra with 5/16 covers. The boat is equipped with one jib halyard and one spinnaker halyard, while the older boats generally have several halyards. Fewer lines and less hardware make for a lighter mast. The deck layout is also more efficient, and the older boats have accumulated too much hardware. As an example, Carbo Ti-Lite lead blocks are used instead of big, heavy removable genoa lead blocks which are better suited for today's 35 footers. Most of the older Wavelengths also have dozens of holes from rearranged hardware layouts, which leads you to wonder whether water has gotten into the decks. The new Wavelength is definitely one-design . . . It is just new.

Key West 2004 Race Week

An Event to Remember

An email from Lydia King-Rayner, who sailed her Wavelength 24 to a second place finish in PHRF 11:

What a thrill it was to take two beautiful Wavelength 24s – "Outtasight" and "Outtamind" – to Key West. Just seeing them make their way down the interstate to Key West was outtasight. Then to meet the greatest bunch of sailors was equally electrifying. More than 3,000 sailors from across the continent and around the world traveled to Key West. The B&B Cypress House was represented by 5 countries. The hospitality was great. Every morning we awoke to fresh baked goods; and every afternoon food and drink on the deck. One of the boats treated us to three-hour old King Mackrel. While racing, the 25 pound fish jumped in their boat. "Mad Max" Jerry Carney threw a Sushi party the following evening. "Outtasight" brought La. Gumbo for the first night, and Spicy beer Chili for the second night. The crew from Italy made several trips to the kitchen for the Gumbo.

Race headquarters was located in the Historic Seaport district. Racecourse action was run on five screens under the big top tent. Trophies were awarded each evening, and Mount Gay Rum flowed in the center of the tent. Our trips to the stage were accompanied by music fit for a King or Princess. Pictures of our boats and the names of the boats flashed from the large screens.

Old Sailor friends converged and exchanged tales of racing. The popularity of racing in Key West has spread around the world. Sailor's traveled from Europe, Australia and the Far East.

Division 1 was made up of 44 boats. Handicap boats competing in Divisions 2 and 4 made up 40 percent of the total entries. Division 3 had more than 100 boats on 3-4 square miles of ocean. Division 4 had 78 boats divided up into 5 handicap and 3 one design classes. A total of 301 sailboats made their way over the waters off Key West. All four divisions got in two races each day and the last day one race. Race 1 was sailed in a 7-10 knot southwesterly, which grew to 13-15 knots. On Wednesday Sam Vasquez had "Outtasight" in second place in PHRF 11. "We were two points behind J/30 "Circus". The morning race was a really tight one, with "Outtasight" two seconds behind "Circus". It was heavy air, so they had the advantage.

What a week! "Outtasight" was thrilled to accept a beautiful cut glass crystal piece for 2nd overall in our class. And I might say, two of our crew members walked away with an overall 1st and 2nd in the Knot and Shot feat at Schooners Bar. I can't tell all of you what a downer it was to pack up the boats and head North.

Lydia

Matt Patterson Wins Wavelength 24 Championships

Seven Schock-built Wavelength 24s headed for Florida February 13, 14 and 15 and turned the St. Pete NOOD Regatta into their 2004 Class Championships. Matt Patterson and his crew, in their recently refurbished *White Donkey*, finished the four-race event with just eight points. Second place went to Richard Karran with 11 points, and third to the Choate family with 14 points.

The racing, as in years past, was very close and competitive. Friday was pretty light with racing postponed for a few hours. The wind picked up eventually and the committee was able to get a start off, but the race was later abandoned as the little wind that did develop faded back to nothing. Saturday provided 6 to 8 knots in the morning. This increased to about 20 knots later in the day. After two good races, the third race was canceled because there was too much wind and a front was moving in. Sunday was great. The Wavelengths sailed two more races, with the last one being five legs.

The Wavelength sailors enjoyed the opportunity to sail one-design and to fine tune their boat speed and crew performance. It gave them a chance to discuss go-fast topics like keel location, mast rake, shroud tension, crew weight, and deck gear. A good example was that last year's winner had inboard sheeting ability for the #1. This year, over half of the boats came back with this added to their boats. These are regular topics at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wavelength24> but it is always nice to talk face to face.

The results were as listed below. Everyone had their moments. Finishers were often separated by just seconds, and first place went to a different boat each race.

	Skipper	Boat Name	#1	#2	#3	#4	Total
1	Matt Patterson	White Donkey	2	1	3	2	8
2	Richard Karran	Mal de Mer	4	4	2	1	11
3	S & C Choate	The BEAR	5	3	1	5	14
4	Kirk Woodle	Schock Therapy	1	6	6	3	16
5	Lydia King-Rayner	Outasight	3	5	5	4	17
6	Alan Capellin	O'tay	6	2	4	7	19
7	Nicholi Lenn	Outtamind	7	7	7	6	27

