

Seventh Annual Champions Regatta

by Frank Angel

Seventeen of the top skippers from the Florida Cup, Dixie Cup, Colonial Cup and the New England Cup series met at the James Island County Park in Charleston, SC on March 14 and 15 to contest for the Sir Francis of Graham Trophy. Additional information on this series can be found on the web at this link. [CRS](#)

Saturday morning dawned with overcast skies and a forecast for showers. We had a light but steady cool breeze from the Northeast. The tents went up as the Captains renewed their friendships and prepared for the Captains Meeting held by Mark Rinehart who had kindly volunteered to act as Regatta Director along with the able assistance of Bob Kjellberg. Linda and I would be scorekeepers.

The event was only marred by the absence of David Brawner who had to withdraw at the last minute due a case of the London Flu he picked up on his recent trip to watch some football (soccer) matches in Great Britain.

Racing got underway a little after 9:30 and we were able to complete 6 heats before lunch. That may not sound like much but keep in mind we run very long two and a half lap heats. Three heats are run followed by a fifteen-minute break to let the skippers and batteries recover.

It first appeared that Jarl Wathne was going to take charge and repeat his win from last year but a racing incident in the fifth heat took down his mast and his mojo. Reichard Kahle soon percolated to the top of the leader board with Dave Ramos close on his stern. That left Jarl Wathne, Ricky Gerry and Baron Bremer contesting for the rest of the trophies.

Except for Kahle, the racing among the remaining captains was very close with nine different skippers scoring at least one heat win. All the captains are to be commended for their seamanship and temper control on the water. It's always a pleasure to be involved with this group as the name of the event indicates. Each skipper at this event has earned the right to be called Champions.

Fourteen heats were completed by the time we finished on Saturday and broke for the traditional excellent dinner at Gilligan's Restaurant where Al Sellers was forced to dine on a huge plate of shrimp because he was wary of injuring his delicate hands shucking oysters. After dinner it was back to the hotel for a toast to Jimmy Buffett's "Margaritaville" provided by one of the skippers.

Sunday broke with very little wind and a few sprinkles on the lake. Even with almost no wind and the arrival of the gnats, three more heats were run. Finally when Joe Walter got his act together and won the last heat it was decided with the wind speed at zero to call it a day.

This event would not have been possible without all the work David Brawner did in handling the registrations, making the trophies and getting the commemorative T-shirts that were given to each constant. Likewise, the local support provided by Reichard Kahle, Rick Gerry and most of all Bill Coates for supplying equipment, this event could not take place.

I've prepared a short photo/slide show on [PICASA](#) so those of you not familiar with the constants will be able to put a face with the name. You'll notice that I shoot mostly people and not many boat photos. John McMillin was at the lake and was taking photos of the boats in action. As soon as those become available they will be posted on the web.

The scores are on the chart below. You'll notice that almost everyone had a major throw out and there are many close scores.

Name	Raw Score	Throw out	Final Score	Finish
Reichard Kahle	75	16	59	1
Dave Ramos	91	11	80	2
Jarl Wathne	102.4	16	86.4	3
Rick Gerry	117.4	17	100.4	4
Baron Bremer	117	13	104	5
John Bottensek	135	15	120	6
Chuck Luscomb	142	15	127	7
Tony Rieck	145	16	129	8
Rick West	153	17	136	9*
Chris Kakavas	153	17	136	10*
Gerry Cobley	161	17	144	11
Robert Greer	169	16	153	12
Al Sellers	170	16	154	13
Joe Walter	189	16	173	14
Ernest Freeland	212	17	195	15
Bob Dudinsky	215	17	198	16
Doug Wotring	229	17	212	17

* Tie Breaker