

## 2016 ROCK HALL ONE DESIGN

*By Paul Heffernan*

Live in the moment. It's an adage that sailors know well. Winds may be strong one day and light the next, and the sailor always goes with what nature has brought that day. It's an adage that applies to both time and place, I feel, as topography affects how we interact with land and sea. I had these thoughts in mind as I left my New Jersey home and drove south to the eastern shore of Chesapeake Bay. Freeway gave way to state road, which in turn led to back road, until I reached my destination, the Rock Hall Yacht Club, on a spit of land reaching into the water. I was there to join the fleet of Wayfarer sailors at the Rock Hall Summer One Design Regatta, on the weekend of the summer solstice, the longest days of the year.

The other Wayfarer sailors had raced that afternoon in the Downriver Regatta, beginning in Chestertown, Maryland, and sailing down the Chester River to its juncture with Langford Creek. The Downriver is a multi-class affair with handicapped scoring, and I was quickly brought up to speed on the day's results. The Wayfarers had acquitted themselves well, with Marc Bennett and Julie Seraphinoff leading the way, first in class and third overall.

I had arrived just in time for evening cocktails and dinner. With the spirit of living in the moment, I opted for the RHYC specialty, the Dark & Stormy, made just so with Gosling's Dark rum and a strong ginger beer. For dinner, my choice was an easy one: crab cakes, one of my favorites, but only when done right. I knew from past visits that the yacht club restaurant made the best crab cakes I have tasted, and I was not disappointed.

We rose on Saturday morning ready to sail. There was no need for alarm clocks for those of us camping on site, as the sun and the birds ensured we woke early. The Rock Hall One Design Regatta is the feature event of the Rock Hall Yacht Club, an annual gathering that attracts boats from many states. We gathered on the deck of the club for the Skippers meeting. The monohulls would race together on Course A and the catamarans further out in the Chester on Course B. The monohull races would feature separate starts, grouping the four Wayfarers with three Hamptons and a sole Day Sailor, while the Windmills and Chesapeake 20's

would go off together. In addition to Marc and Julie, *W10861*, the other Wayfarers included AnneMarie Covington with Nick Seraphinoff as crew, *W11134*, and Phil and Cathy Leonard, *W864*, from the Lake Townsend Yacht Club in North Carolina. I would be crewing for my dad, Jim, the cagiest of old salts. Providing shore support were Linda Heffernan and Mary Seraphinoff.

Winds were light that morning as we made our way into Langford Creek. The races were laid out in a single-M course, with a windward leg followed by a long downwind run and a shorter windward leg to finish. Marc and Julie showed that the previous day's Downriver finish was no fluke, taking first in the first two races. In the third and final race, however, AnnMarie and Nick guessed right in the light air and current, and grabbed the top spot.

On shore we passed a relaxing evening at the club. Wayfarer events have always been as much about the fellowship as the sailing, it seems, and we enjoyed the long daylight of the solstice with good conversation.

The next morning was Father's Day, and it was a blessing to be able to spend it with my father. This day brings the annual question: what to get for the man who has everything. Tie? Don't be ridiculous, Captain Jim has long been retired. Garden shears? Nah, Dad is traveling so much from one regatta to the next that gardening hasn't been a priority.

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*Paul finds perfect Father's Day gift for his Dad, Jim.*

crew. I ended up having to do a 720, which we feared would cost us our place on the podium. Again we didn't know our placing until the results were announced though we ended up on equal points with the second boat.

There was great competition in the Gold Fleet too as all races on the last day counted. First prize went to Danish team, Mogens Just and Ander Friis, second to UK team, Michael McNamara and Simon Townsend, third to Danes Peter and Samuel Boje, fourth to UK's Richard and Mark Hartley, fifth to Danes Christian and Jorgen Iversen.

First prize in the Silver Fleet, went to the Danish crew of Bjarne Lindquist and Jan Tantholt Nielsen, second to Jamie and Wendy Wheatly of Cambridge, third, Margaret and Sean Hynes, Cullaun SC, fourth, UK's Nigel and Belinda O' Donnell, and fifth, Jim and Sean Heffernan.

Three trophies were awarded in the Bronze Fleet. First went to Johannes Jacobs and Ruud Risseeuw of the Netherlands,, second to David and Eunice Siggins from the UK, third to the UK/US combo John Cadman and Charles Child.



*John and Charles win 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Bronze, Pic by Ton Jaspers*

The thousand kilometer drive home started again, but with silverware on display, it didn't seem quite so long, and we were happy to see Limerick. At least it didn't seem so long to Sean and me. Tom may have a different story. We have lots of memories and I am so happy that my family could get a taste of the wider Wayfarer family. The next worlds will be nearer home at an Irish venue and we will look forward to meeting our friends from America and Canada, as well as from Europe. I would encourage the extended family to come too. Do give yourselves a little time after the sailing to explore, relax and enjoy visiting a different

place we would never see without our precious Wayfarers.

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*Frisian For Dummies?* After all, the Worlds would be in Friesland in a few short weeks. Try as I might, I couldn't find it on Amazon. I settled for the old standards of a bottle of Scotch and a water bottle made for outdoor use. But I realized I was giving him the best Father's Day of all by sharing a day on the water together. With stronger winds than the previous day, we set out to sail with high hopes.

Sailing at Rock Hall brings its challenges. In the upper reaches of the Chesapeake, the water is tidal, and with the course set where the Chester River nears the bay, there is current to consider as well. Throw in the shifty winds that come with sailing close to land, and the skipper has plenty to take into account. Marc and Julie displayed their sailing mastery again, crossing the line first in five of the six races. Dad and I had our moment of glory, however, winning the third race. We were rewarded for our decision to hug the land on the downwind run, avoiding the residual current of the Chester, more pronounced as the tide was beginning to turn. Captain Jim always has a few tricks up his sleeve.

Awards were in the air-conditioned clubhouse, a welcome spot after a day in the sun. Marc and Julie took top honors, having finished first in seven of the nine races. Second place went to AnnMarie and crew Nick, consistent throughout the two days. Jim and I brought home third place, a fine finish to our father-son effort, with Phil and Cathy in fourth place. All of us extended warm thanks to members of the yacht club who put it so much of their time to make this event happen. They had welcomed us to their club, manned the committee boat, and made us feel right at home.

A few weeks later, back in New Jersey, I went to lunch with work colleagues at a newly-opened restaurant. They featured a range of specialty cocktails, befitting of a place trying to be trendy. How excited I was to see the Dark & Stormy on the menu. Reading the description, however, I noticed that something wasn't right. They weren't using Gosling's Dark rum! If you're going to do something, I say, do it right. It's all part of living in the moment.