

2007-08 BYC Midwinter Series



This year's midwinter series contained some of the best conditions imaginable, great fleet competition, and the most fun I have had in a midwinter series in many years. Sixteen boats ventured out in these epic conditions and enjoyed the midwinter racing. Seven different boats achieved podium status in at least one of the three races. Now that is really spreading out the competition in our growing fleet!

The first weekend of racing was cancelled due to the oil spill all over our beautiful bay. But with lots of time and money, the majority of the mess was cleaned up within a couple weeks. The second weekend saw sunny skies and shifty, light winds. The race was shortened at the second leeward mark as the wind diminished. These conditions made for a real close finish between the top boats in the race. In the end Motorcycle Irene took line honors with Moxie in second and Xena in third.

The third weekend of the series (second actual race) blessed us yet again with sunny skies and perfect winds. The winds were again out of the North and in the 5-10 knot range. This time the wind was solid for the whole race allowing the fleet to complete both laps around the race course. Moxie took the bullet, with Motorcycle Irene in second and Mirage in third.

The final weekend blessed us with sunny skies, but the wind was the missing element. After two postponements, the race committee got the competition started toward the East. Wind from the East is always short-lived, and as the fleet rounded the top mark, two new winds from the West and then the North shuffled the fleet. In the end, Witchy Woman took the win, with Swamp Donkey in second and Strega in third. Overall, Magic Bus took the bronze, Motorcycle Irene the silver, and Moxie the gold.

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	<u>Race 1</u>	<u>Race 2</u>	<u>Race 3</u>	<u>Total</u>
1 Moxie	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>9</u>
2 Motorcycle Irene	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>11</u>
3 Magic Bus	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>15</u>
4 Strega	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>17</u>
5 Dianne	<u>10</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>20</u>
6 Swamp Donkey	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>21</u>
7 Xena	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>22</u>
8 Peaches	<u>5</u>	<u>8.5</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>24.5</u>
9 Witchy Woman	<u>8</u>	<u>DNC</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>25</u>
10 Mirage	<u>DNC</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>28</u>
11 Wile E. Coyote	<u>11</u>	<u>8.5</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>31.5</u>
12 Ergo	<u>DNC</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>33</u>
13 Expressway	<u>6</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>DNC</u>	<u>36</u>
14 Elise	<u>12</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>36</u>
15 Opa!	<u>DNC</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>40</u>
16 Radio Flyer	<u>13</u>	<u>DNC</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>44</u>

2008 Midwinter Photos



2008 3-Bridge Fiasco wrap-up



How Not to Sail the 3-Bridge Fiasco Mark Lowry, Xena #68

Racing in the winter is not something that yours truly does much of. That's my excuse and I'm stickin' to it. There's a reason for that: I keep relearning painful lessons. One of the lessons that I relearned during this Fiasco was that you can pretty much throw the tide book in the bilge during the winter. But, I 'spose I'm getting ahead of myself.

In preparation for this race, I half-jokingly emailed Jason Crowson that my plan was simple – follow Motorcycle Irene...more on that later.

Jim Bonlie, my bowman of many years, was my partner in this Fiasco. As we prepared for this race, the forecast for wind was pretty good. Lots of talk of 15+ knots. The forecast for rain – not so good. So, we figured that it was going to be a windy, rainy affair and we planned accordingly (double rations of hot rum and such). The night before I had looked through the tide book (major mistake) and concluded, looking at all the nice, neat little arrows on the current maps and painstakingly doing the vector calculus in my head-- not as easy as it used to be ☺-- that the path to best take advantage of all those nice, neat little current vectors, was to proceed in the following way: Start, Blackaller, Yerba-Buena (followed by Myba-buena), Red Rock, Finish.

As we positioned ourselves for this pursuit-format start, nervously trying to figure out if we actually knew our starting time, we noticed that...hmmm... all (well the vast majority) of the Moore 24's were setting up to go through the start line in the other direction... they clearly weren't going toward Blackaller first. We had also noticed that the predicted flood was appearing along the city front, so they would be starting with the current. Reflecting upon this, but mostly reflecting on the fact that the Moore fleet does this race en mass every year, we made the snap decision to start in the other direction and head toward Yerba-Buena— Plan B was on. So much for having the courage of your convictions—peer pressure trumps all. **Fiasco indeed.**



Our last minute change of plans got us to the line late, but hopefully in the right direction, and this was reinforced by our realization that the rock-stars in our fleet were starting in this direction as well: Motorcycle Irene, Moxie, Witchy Woman, Magic Bus, and in fact most of the fleet was going this way. OK, so Plan B must be right. But why?

The wind was out of the SE, so we were on a starboard tack fetch toward Yerba-Buena, and beginning to make time on some of the boats ahead of us. A hole just to the SE of Yerba-Buena, caught several boats and gave us a passing lane, allowing us to catch up to the leaders even more. Just

past this hole we set, and headed towards Red Rock on a starboard pole. Magic Bus close in to Yerba-Buena, was briefly caught up in a hole allowing both us and Wile E. Coyote to close further on them.

So now what? Referring back to that damn little book with all the nice, neat little arrows and stuff we figured that we really needed to position ourselves to be the first to reach the promised flood taking us toward Red Rock, which should happen right around the Berkeley Pier. Right about then we noticed that most boats were sailing deep, heading for shallow water along the Emeryville shore, to get out of the “flood” coming around TI. Our GPS and speedo were telling us that we were in some adverse current, but less than a knot. However, we wanted to be in position to get in that promised lane of flood taking us to Red Rock. Do we follow the pack to shallow water, or do we invest in positioning for better current later? Looking down the course, we see Motorcycle Irene’s brightly colored kite, straight ahead of us. They weren’t heading for shallow water. Well, that settles it then. We will follow Will, he must be planning on doing the same thing that we were discussing – get into that promised lane of big flood to Red Rock...Or not.

As we pass TI and near the Berkeley Pier, we figure that it is time to gybe out toward deeper water and the promised lane of big flood. Hmm... Will’s not gybing... he’s still not gybing. Well, we will pass him for sure when we find that flood. So split we did, sailing damn near all the way to Pt. Blunt (yeah, I exaggerate a bit) looking for flood, we stared at the GPS and the speedo offering x-rated incantations to both instruments and each other. Why no flood? By now, we were way, way too far committed to this plan, to head back towards Richmond. We had to find some flood. As we came abeam of Raccoon Straits we finally found our flood, it was but a pathetic little dribble however, perhaps 0.75 knots in our favor. About a mile out of Red Rock in a dying breeze, a handful of synapses started to fire correctly—then I understood. All the nice, neat little arrows in that damn little book don’t mean anything if its been raining a lot. Run-off, oh yeah, now I remember. Learning things can be painful, relearning them is torturous.

That dying breeze was all but totally gone as we limped around Red Rock, clearly DFL in the Express fleet. Dejected, we noted how close we were to home dock and a nice warm bar. But, we decided to at least go to Raccoon Straits and see what develops there. As the rest of the fleet footed-off towards the Marin Shore (to get out of that dribble of flood, presumably), we doggedly sailed a higher course, hoping for better breeze than those heading for shore (yeah, another flier, but at least we were consistent).

By the time we approached Raccoon Straits, *everybody*, was out of sight. But, we stuck with our plan of sailing to the Straits, before bailing out. As we rounded the point, against about a knot of flood, we began to note that the pressure was better further out in the strait and comparing our way to those boats rounding the point with us, staying out in the channel for breeze was clearly better than hugging the N shore to stay out of flood. As we got further out into the straits we finally saw a welcome sight. There must have been 30 boats (or more) piled up over by the Corinthian and other little bights, where they had gone to evade the flood. We had wind and they did not.



Further we could see a northerly beginning to fill over toward Red Rock, and we were beginning to get a bit of it. We hoisted the kite before anybody around us and began to take advantage of a little NE zephyr. We sailed past all the boats in the Corinthian parking lot and all of the boats in the straits. This little breeze then took us most of the way across to Blackaller, where we could see what must have been almost the rest of the fleet (looked like over 40 boats) piled up fighting an ebb to get past Blackaller. As we ranged on the mark the breeze went through some oscillations forcing us to gybe a couple of times. We kept the last port-pole leg for some time to position us way up current, so we could come up to the mark, hot on starboard to minimize our struggle to get around the mark against the current. Doing this allowed us to pass at least 6 boats that we crossed with.

However, now we were in a position that really called for a Mexican douse at the mark. Hmm... not sure we can pull that off with just 2 of us—in lots of traffic to boot—kinda scary... especially now that the wind has decided to really fill in (it was probably only 12 knots, but seemed like a lot after drifting around most of the day), better do a leeward take-down early, get the pole away and then gybe. Sounded like a good plan, but since we hardly ever do leeward take-downs, we managed to get a few things tangled up and couldn't sheet the jib in all the way. So a couple of the boats that we passed in our setup to the mark, now passed us in the freshening breeze before Jim could clean up the carnage on the foredeck.

It wasn't long before Jim had us untangled and we could settle down and start sailing again. I had been sailing really high on just the main on port to keep us in clear air (which was still out of the N-NE), while many boats were diving down toward shore, presumably for relief from the ebb, but in dirty air from this huge fleet of boats that were now approaching the finish—I'm guessing that we were now in a pack of over 40 boats that were all converging on the finish line in a dense cluster. God help the race committee... I have no idea how they sorted this mess out. All of a sudden we were back in it... kinda. We could clearly see Magic Bus, El Raton, and Wile E. Coyote below us, but ahead. Wow, we were glad we didn't bail out earlier, this was going to be quite a drag race to the finish...maybe, just maybe our clear air would trump their current relief...or not.

So, after all that screwing up that we did we wound up finishing around the middle of the Express fleet and only about 8 minutes behind the 2nd place Express, Moxie. After Moxie followed Desperado, Witchy Woman, Magic Bus, El Raton, Wile E. Coyote, and Xena. Not far behind us were Strega, Elise, Wetsu, Archimedes, Peaches, Mirage (they were single-handing), and Kolibri.



My question is how the hell did the 1st place Express, Motorcycle Irene, wind up finishing almost an hour ahead of the 2nd place Express, Moxie? That earned Will an impressive 2nd place overall...we should've followed our plan of just following Will, huh.

Photos courtesy of both
www.sfbama.org and
www.norcalssailing.com

Road to the 2008 Nationals at StFYC (Part 1)

by Jason Crowson

This year will mark my tenth nationals on an e27. While I still have not managed to place in the top three of an e27 Nationals (hopefully the lucky 10th will change that), I have had plenty of experience in preparing for the Nationals. So I thought I might share with the rest of the fleet what I feel is essential in preparing for a National event. There are two major categories that need to be covered regarding the preparations for any major event such as the Nationals. So, I will make this a two-part article focusing on one of the two sections in each article. The first part will focus on what you need to work on leading up to the Nationals, while the second will focus more on what you need to concentrate on during the event.

- 1) Rigging – The deck layout is one of the first things that should be given a serious amount of thought if you really want to excel in the fleet. Anything that can be done to make the maneuvers happen easier and quicker will make the biggest difference in your ability to get around the buoys efficiently. Take a look at how some of the top boats have their deck layouts and copy them. If it is working for them, odds are it will help you as well. The boom vang should be able to be adjusted by your mast person while keeping their weight on the rail. Same for the topping lift as your foredeck puts the pole on the mast at the top mark. Being able to keep the weight on the rail while performing the necessary duties will result in you being able to sail the boat flatter, which equates to faster. Once you have evaluated your deck layout and have everything in the proper place, or removed if it is not essential, turn your focus to the standing rigging. On average, the standing rigging should be thoroughly checked every year and replaced every 5-7 years. Many a masts have come down in heavy breezes due to failed rigging. And there is nothing slower than losing your mast. So, make sure you inspect all the fittings and replace anything that could be questionable. When you are replacing the standing rigging, it would be a good time to change out the shives as well. The original metal shives are not ideal for the new high tech halyards and usually results in damaging the lines in the form of chafing. As for the running rigging, you want to make sure everything runs smoothly and quickly. The halyards should be tapered to minimize the weight aloft and allow the halyards to run smooth. Spin sheets should be tapered as well to minimize the weight on the clews of the spinnaker for the light air races. All other control lines should be looked at and replaced if there is any sign of wear and tear.
- 2) Boat Prep – There are several important topics that need to be covered with regards to boat prep. The boat itself needs to be as light as possible which means clearing out all the unnecessary clutter that has made its way on the boat. You should only have the bare essentials and the required equipment on the boat when it comes to preparing for a National event. After you have all the extra weight removed from the inside of the boat, it is time to start looking at the deck and rigging of the boat. Again, light is always best. If there are extra

lines, cleats, winches that are not being used, get rid of them. Now it is time to move your focus to the hull and appendages. Smooth is fast! Start planning some weekends of wet sanding. We are fortunate that our boats came stock with a very fair finish, but a little neglect can result in a finish that just is not fast. I have found that using 400-grit on the hull will achieve a smooth enough finish to minimize the formation of turbulent flow on the hull (i.e. – fast!). On the keel and rudder you want to go a little smoother, either 600 or 800-grit should suffice. Make sure you are using a long board or some sort of flat surface to ensure the hull remains fair. Just using your hand and the sandpaper will result in small ridges and is not the finish we are looking for. Also, ensure you keep the motion of your sanding in the fore and aft directions. A few scheduled “sanding sessions” and you will have the fairest hull in all the land.

- 3) Crew – This is one area that is very important and can make or break your goals for the Nationals. Ideally, you will have a crew formulated of friends that have sailed together for years. Hopefully you will even know each other well enough that you each know what the other is going to do before they do it. If you don’t have this luxury, then at least make sure you sail together in your positions for at least one or two regattas. And plan some practice sessions to ensure you have the mechanics of rounding the buoys down to a science. You can wet sand the bottom of the boat to perfection and have the lightest boat in the fleet, but if you can’t round the marks smoothly it really won’t matter. So get out there and practice the maneuvers to perfection. There is nothing better than time on the water!

The final aspect of the crew formula is ensuring your team is as close as possible to the max weight limit. Our one design rules limit the max weight of the entire crew to 880 lbs. and this should be the goal for your crew. Being 50, 30, or even 20 lbs. under the weight limit and you will be giving the heavier crews a leg-up (no pun intended) on the upwind legs.

- 4) Sails – Sure, your regular beer can sails will get you around the course just fine. But if you want that extra edge, then you want to have new sails or near new when you head to the starting line of the Nationals. If you have planned things correctly, you should have one set of sails that are set aside for the big events, and another set that you use throughout the rest of the year. I generally advise owners to plan on buying 1-2 sails a year. This will set you up to have a full set of crispy new sails by your second year. Take care of them and use them only in the important regattas, and you will easily get 3-4 years out of those sails.

I’m sure I could spend quite a lot more time talking about each of the above topics, but I really just want to get everyone thinking about the above topics. The Nationals will be here before we know it. Start your planning early and the rewards will certainly present themselves at the end of the year!

Interview with Will Paxton

by Jason Crowson



San Francisco Bay sailor Will Paxton is the owner of the e27 *Motorcycle Irene*. Will has obtained podium finishes at the e27 Nationals 7 times, and achieved the National Champion status in 1999, 2005, & 2007. Will also won almost every e27 event at one time or another, sometimes more than once. Most recently his team bested the 14 boat e27 fleet in the 3-Bridge Fiasco, while also placing 2nd overall in a close to 300 registered boat event.

JC: Will, how did you get into sailing?

WP: My Grandfather observed German civilians sailing after WWII and thought it looked pretty cool. Later in life he taught his sons Fred (My Dad) and Greg how to sail- they both became very competitive and were professional sailors at some point in their careers. My parents met on their college sailing team and joined the Richmond Yacht Club soon after they were married. I started sailing in the RYC Junior Program when I was 7 years old...

JC: What attracted you to the e27 and the e27 class?

WP: The guys on “Light’n’Up”, and especially Michael Henry, were big supporters of Junior sailing at RYC. When I was in High School they recruited myself and several friends to sail many beer can races, ocean races, and on big boats they were also racing at the time. After a couple good burns back from the Farallones I was hooked on the boat and sailed on them whenever I could. Another friend of mine, Mike Duvall, owned the “Motorcycle Irene” and would loan it out to myself and my junior team. When he moved he sold it to me and my friend Jay Lambiotte. That was 12 years ago and counting...

Let me encourage everyone who is looking to build crew long term to go back to Junior Programs wherever you sail and get kids sailing on your boat!

JC: Tell us about your favorite e27 event, and why it is your favorite?

WP: Easy- The Ditch Run. Warm, Downwind, and always about on my birthday weekend- a good time for a party! Also the Double-Handed Farallones Race- Yehaa! Need I say more?

JC: You seem to have upwind speed in any type of conditions. What advice would you give other owners on what you do and what it takes to drive an e27 fast upwind?

WP: Trim your sails and crew weight to steer as little as possible. The rudder should be viewed as a trim tab that tells you when things are wrong. Backstay, traveler, and mainsheet should be constantly trimmed to balance the helm. One trick that was showed to me by a very good J-24 sailor right before we won our first Nationals in 1999 was to trim the main in before taking a wave or puff- that would head the boat up- and then easing it out afterwards to put the bow down and accelerate. The rudder stays straight for the entire sequence.

JC: I know you are incredibly comfortable driving downwind when it is blowing and with big waves, how did you develop this skill and any advice to sailors on how to develop it?

WP: Speed is your friend! Don't try to de-power, put the bow up and start planning. Moving weight back to keep the rudder in the water is essential. If it is really blowing someone goes and sits behind the driver immediately after setting the kite. Keeping the vang on some to reduce rolling to weather is also key.

JC: You have changed your deck layout quite a bit from a stock e27. Can you tell us about some of those changes and which ones you think are most beneficial to you and your crew?

WP: The best thing about cleaning up the deck is removing excess stuff from the cabin top. This allows the crew to cross the deck much quicker (and less painfully!) and will make for better tacks. Another big thing is the backstay cleat being lead to the middle of the cockpit where the driver or jib trimmer can easily make big adjustments. The ability to pull several feet of backstay on at once is key to upwind speed in big puffs or at leeward mark roundings. We also have a jib tensioning system that eliminates the need for a jib halyard winch. You could get by without it- but it is probably my favorite toy!

JC: How does your e27 sailing schedule look like this year?

WP: It is all in pencil. I am going to be captain of a new Trans Pac 52 to the area and we are sailing to Hawaii and back and doing any other local ocean race we can. Currently planning to race from LA to Cabo San Lucas as soon as the boat arrives here from Florida. We are racing the Express in the Spring Keel- unless I have to fly to Florida. The Nationals look to be clear of conflicts... Other than that it is catch a race whenever I can!

JC: Thank you Will, it's great to have you in the e27 class.

Commodore's Corner by **Eric Deeds**



I am honored to be your incoming Class President, and I am looking forward to another season of great racing. I have big shoes to fill and will be doing my best. I'd like to thank Mark Lowry for his service as Class President over the last few seasons, and for his willingness to continue in the role as Co-President as I get up to speed.

For those I've not met yet, I own hull #41 (Magic Bus) with my brother Paul, and we've been racing it on the Bay since the 2000 season. Our sister Sarah has sailed with us quite a bit as well over the years. We're California transplants, and before we moved out here and got the Bus we raced Express 27s on Lake St. Clair in Michigan. As many of you know, my dad (Ralph) bought hull #107 new in the mid 80s and helped create the Detroit fleet. I love sailing these boats, my bias has been towards buoy racing as a former dinghy and collegiate (University of Michigan) sailor, but I've done the Coastal Cup a couple of times (once as crew and once as skipper), and I'm interested in doing more of the local ocean races.

I love racing in this fleet because of the quality of the competition and the large number of boats that participate. For me, more and better boats on the starting line translates to more fun in regattas, whether we're near the front, in the middle or near the back. Big healthy one design fleets offer something to racers at every level.

A lot of thought went into the schedule for 2008, and one of the major goals behind the changes compared to the 2007 schedule is increasing participation at each scheduled regatta. We've maintained the separate buoy and long distance / fun series concept for now, but we've tried to focus the schedule on fewer high quality events to make it easier for more boats to turn out. We are all very open to further ideas for bringing new owners into the fleet, and motivating those we've got to come out and sail, so please don't hesitate to share your thoughts.

One idea that has been suggested, that I think is a good one and that we are working to implement this season, is to ask a different member of the fleet (owner or crew) to volunteer as regatta "cheerleader" for each event on the calendar. The role would essentially be to hound your fellow fleet members to sign up, to make sure the SIs and entry forms for each event get distributed to the fleet, perhaps to help interested boats find crew, serve as a point of contact between the host club and the fleet for the regatta, all with the general goal of getting more boats on the starting line.

I believe Jason Crowson has been performing this role well for at least the last 8 years, and we think its time he had help. So please consider volunteering, and anyone who is interested please contact me, Mark Lowry, or one of the other fleet officers to let us know. We're going to identify the regatta cheerleaders in the event pages on the website, and provide some tools (principally the ability to spam the SF Bay fleet via the email list) to help perform the role.

I'm looking forward to a great 2008 season starting with the Spring Keel on March 1 and 2nd, and to getting to know more of the Express 27 owners and crew. Please don't hesitate to come up and say hello at regattas, but more importantly, come out and race!

Upcoming Express 27 Events

March 1,2 – St.Francis YC Spring Keel Regatta

March 22 – YRA Lightship race

March 29 – BAMA Doublehanded Farallones

April 12, 13 – San Francisco YC Resin Regatta

May 3, 4 – YRA Vallejo Season Opener

May 17, 18 – San Francisco YC Elite Keel Regatta

***Start making your plans now so you don't miss any of these great events!**

NEWLETTER EDITOR'S NOTES

I just wanted to give a big "Thank You" to the professional photographers who contributed to our e27 Newsletter. Their talent provided for some great shots of the fleet, like the one below by Peter Lyons of Lyons Imaging. Take a moment, check out each of their websites, and order some nice pictures of your boat!

www.h2oshots.com

www.lyonsimaging.smugmug.com

www.norcalsailing.com





Mail Form and Dues to:
Express 27 Class Association
C/O Dan Pruzan
2402 Harding Ave.
Redwood City, CA 94062

**Express 27 Class Association
Membership Form
2008 Membership Year
(January 1 thru December 31)**

Only boats that have paid their dues for that year will be able to vote on fleet issues and race in the Nationals.

San Francisco boats must have paid to qualify for the season and long-distance/laid back series.

The annual dues for Bay Area boats have been increased from \$40 to \$70. Of this, \$60 will go to the local fleet account and \$10 will go to the national account. The additional local fleet funds will be used to increase the number of boats receiving awards at the end of each season, subsidize an on-the-water training session, and increase the number of social functions held each year.

The annual dues for non-bay area boats have been decreased from \$20 to \$10. The entire \$10 will go into the national account. Over the past few years, the national account has only been used to pay for website-related fees which aren't much.

Member Name _____

E-mail(s) _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone Number _____

E27 hull# _____ Boat Name _____

Make checks payable to “**Express 27 Fleet**”.

Add \$10 late fee for dues paid after May 1, 2008.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY		
Date Received	Check Number	Check Amount