



2017 Edgartown Yacht Club Race Weekend

Emotional Victory for Benjamins in 'Round-the-Island Race

EDGARTOWN, MASS., (July 24, 2017) — The most prestigious trophy in the event's ['Round-the-Island Race'](#), the Venona Trophy, was won by Heidi and Steve Benjamin's 52-foot SPOOKIE. The 54.62 mile race around Martha's Vineyard is one of the classic races of the summer season in New England. It has been running every year since 1938 (except for a few years during World War II), when the first "SPOOKIE" owned by Harold T. White, Jr. was the overall winner, bringing home the coveted Venona Trophy for the first overall finish by a racing yacht with spinnaker.



(left) The original SPOOKIE, an S&S 45' racing sloop. (right) SPOOKIE III won its class in the Edgartown Yacht Club Race Weekend's 'Round-the-Buoy Races as well as the Venona Trophy for best overall performance in the 'Round-the-Island Race. (credit Stephen Cloutier)

Ten years later, in 1948, William Ziegler III (Heidi Benjamin's father) won the Venona Trophy for the first of three times with the same SPOOKIE. He followed up the overall win two more times in 1950 and 1955. SPOOKIE was a

Sparkman & Stephens (design #153), with length overall of 45.3 feet, built by Lemos Brothers of Riverside, RI and launched in 1937.

Upon being presented with the Venona Trophy today, Heidi Benjamin said, "It's an incredible honor to receive the Venona Trophy, especially after my Dad won it three times. Congratulations to the whole *SPOOKIE* team, and a special thanks to the Edgartown Yacht Club for hosting such a challenging and exciting race."



*Heidi and Steve Benjamin, with the Venona Trophy at Edgartown Yacht Club
(courtesy Steve Benjamin) [Click to download](#)*

SPOOKIE III is a 52' racing yacht that sails with 9 to 15 crew depending on the conditions. Built new in 2011, and designed by Botin Partners – Heidi and Steve Benjamin have been campaigning it in many major races.

The 2017 'Round-the-Island Race was particularly challenging due to the light winds. After a short postponement the Race Committee got the race underway around 9 AM for the 57 entrants in 9 classes at the start off of Edgartown. The fleet rounded a mark off Cape Poge and proceeded South along Chappaquiddick Island to the turning mark RW "MC," the red and white Mo(A) marking the shoals South and East of Martha's Vineyard. From there the faster boats proceeded West toward Devil's Bridge. Ultimately, the Race was shortened to the first virtual scoring gate, a longitude line on the South side of the island.

SPOOKIE's corrected time was 5 hours 47 minutes and 48 seconds, over 2 hours ahead of second place finisher *Wahoo*, from the United States Naval Academy. Fourteen boats completed the shortened course, including one multihull in Class 0, two IRC racing yachts in Class 8, two doublehanded yachts in Class 4, 2 non-spinnaker yachts in Classes 2 and 3, and 7 PHRF spinnaker racing yachts in Classes 5, 6, and 7.

(end)
(results below)

**2017 Edgartown Yacht Club
'Round-the-Island Race Results**

Class 2 – PHRF N/S B

1. BREEZING UP, Roy Catignani, Hyannis YC

Class 3 – PHRF N/S A

1. PANASEA, Kent Nicholas, Red Brook Harbor

Class 4 – Double-Handed

1. INIKI, Paul Stafford, Edgartown Yacht Club
2. ATALANTA, Richard Sides, Eastern YC

Class 5 – PHRF C

1. SPARKLE PONY, Francis Shiman-Hackett, Bill Finn, Savin Hill YC

Class 6 – PHRF B

1. HAFAADAI, Eliot Shanabrook, Marblehead YC
2. PRESSURE DROP, David Alexander, Constituion YC

Class 7 – PHRF A

1. SPOOKIE, Steve & Heidi Benjamin, Seawanhaka/Corinthian/Noroton YCs
2. WAHOO, William Johnson, Naval Academy
3. WHITE RHINO 2, Todd Stuart, NYYC

Class 8- IRC

1. AURORA, Gus Carlson, NYYC & Larchmont YC, Sail #50085
2. AZURA, Jamie Walker, Ryal Bermuda YC, Sail #60454

'Round-the-Island Special Awards

J Boats – Overall Best Corrected Time

- 1st HAFA ADAI, Eliot Shanabrook, Marblehead YC
2nd PANASEA, Kent Nicholas, Red Brook Harbor YC

Yacht Club Team Trophy – Best Corrected time of a 3-boat team from a given yacht club with entries in more than one division

Savin Hill YC – SPARKLE PONY, Francis Shiman-Hacket, Bill Finn; TONGA, Mark Fitzgerald; PRESSURE DROP, David Alexander

Martha's Vineyard Ocean Race - Best Corrected Time among entries by EYC members

Paul Stafford/INIKI

Hobart A. H. Cook – Best Corrected Time among Service Academy entries

William Johnson/WAHOO

Commodores' Concord Cup - Lowest Elapsed Time

Steve & Heidi Benjamin/SPOOKIE

UPBEAT CUP - Overall winner Best Corrected Time, Non-Spinnaker

Paul Stafford/INIKI

Venona Trophy - Overall Winner Best Corrected Time Spinnaker

Steve & Heidi Benjamin/SPOOKIE