

WCSC

The Good Dam Distance Race

Welcome to the 'new and improved' Dam Distance Race. Traditionally, this race has brought the very casual racers and the non racers together for a semi- structured sailing experience, not so loose as individual day sailing, but not so formal as Keelboat

Fleet racing. The 2014 edition is an attempt to tweak the distance race concept by leaning a little more towards the 'race' side, (on the water), and including the all-important post race party (on shore). We want to provide the fun of **friendly** competition without the anxieties of the cut-throat sailing often associated with formal racing. **And** we are going to provide a written guide that will explain to you how to understand, participate, and hopefully enjoy, this 'low key' race: The Good Dam Distance Race.

You should notice two distinctions in the event title.

First: This is a "**distance**" event. We plan to have boats out on the lake most of the day. The event starts earlier than most and may continue as late as (on the water) 17:30.

Second: This is a "**race**". The boats will have to correctly start, pass certain government buoys on a specified side of the boat, pass those buoys in a particular order, and finish correctly. Boats will be ranked 1st, 2nd, 3^d, and so on. There will be winners and, well..., not winners.

Notwithstanding (I've always wanted to use that word) the previous statement, this race is somewhat different than what the Club keelboat fleet 'does'. The race organizers (Allison and Rick) are attempting to 'soften' traditional sailboat racing so that novice and non racer can enjoy competition without the more-rigorous aspects of traditional windward/leeward buoy racing. The major difference is the start. It is our belief that the start of a sailboat race is the cause of greatest anxiety for the novice/non racer. We certainly felt that way when we began racing years ago. I mean, come on, all the boats want to be at the same place at the same time! That can't be what Chapman's calls "seaman like". Racers can mostly manage this (starting) because they understand (mostly) the somewhat-intricate rules. Cruisers and day sailors, forget about it! However, the Good Dam Distance Race is going to use what is called a **pursuit start**. Slower boats will start sooner than faster boats. How much sooner is determined by the boats rating. RC will distribute a table that tells each boat at what time they can start. In this manner, the starting line **shouldn't be crowded** with the entire fleet at the start, as there actually are **many** starts. In fact, other than two boats having the same rating, each boat will have her own starting time.

There are two additional perks with a pursuit start race. At the end of their race, boats are scored in the order of their finish. If you cross the finish line ahead of another boat, you beat her! You don't have to wait till after the race is over for RC to calculate the corrected times. Some may call this instant gratification. Some may call this "I kicked your..." As I was saying, the other perk of the pursuit start race is that the fleet will likely finish the race at near



the same time. This allows everyone to get back to the Club for the **most important** aspect of sailboat racing: the post-race party. A beverage (or two) enhances the re telling of antics witnessed on the race course.

We are making a point of having a post-race gathering for this event. A day of racing is fun, but not near as fun as a day of racing followed by the camaraderie of the racers having drinks and dinner. To that end, the Club is providing a modest buffet dinner and you are providing your own beverages (Booze). Not-so-valuable prizes will be awarded to the top finishers.

See the Club website for more documents that further describe the event. We hope to see you there. We **welcome** questions, comments, or conversation.

Allison and Rick Fontenot Email cowardlylion@charter.net cell 334-332-2025