

AMERICAN YACHT CLUB

SCOTCH CAPS

SUMMER EDITION



40° 56.448N – 73° 41.938W

Why Attend America's Cup?

Sure there are plenty of cool colorful racecourse graphics and insightful commentary when you watch the world's greatest sailing race on TV. But when those hydro-foiling winged AC50 catamarans are soaring right at you, across the Great Sound of Bermuda in the 35th America's Cup, as you sway to and fro astride a luxurious spectator boat, with a Goslings rum swizzle in hand, and a warm salty breeze is blowing, nothing beats it.

In the words of ExperienceBermuda.com, the America's Cup, which is held every four years, is the "pin-nacle of international sailing, and has generated intense excitement and fierce rivalries for more than 160 years." And "it is not only the oldest trophy, in international sport; it predates the modern Olympic Games by 45 years and is yachting's biggest prize." This year, 2017 is the first time it has ever been held in Bermuda.

Rewind to April 30, 2016, when American Yacht Club provided some up close and personal time to its members with the "Auld Mug." Then a few months later, in July 2016, we were fortunate enough to get to spend time with Team Oracle USA at Coral Beach & Tennis Club

and their boat. It was around then that I made a personal pact to return to Bermuda in 2017 to see them defend the Cup, on this island full of my favorite childhood memories.

The pure physics of this particular regatta are difficult to comprehend. But we all do our best. These boats behave more like man-powered airplanes as they hover and glide above the sea, tacking and swooping like birds in the deep turquoise waters off of Royal Naval Dockyard.

So we fly to Bermuda on June 14, 2017, and land amidst Day Two of the SuperYacht Regatta over on the St. George's side of the island. Although we had planned to take an official spectator boat out to watch them, the boat breaks and cannot be fixed in time. Ah, island life... So, we decide to relax on the pink sands of Coral Beach Club instead.

Team Oracle gets the day off, so we spend quality time with team member Juan Vila, who is a friend of the family. Juan is meteorologist and tactician and he rides in the first chase boat during the races. Juan is also "possibly the best and most experienced Spanish sailor of all time. Winner of some of the most important sailing events worldwide

he is the only Spanish competitive sailor to have won both a round-the-world race with stop-overs (Whitbread/Volvo Ocean Race) and the America's Cup. As if this was not enough, he broke the Jules Verne record (round the world non-stop) on board the maxi-trimaran

Banque Populaire," according to Trofeocondegodo in May 2012.

Spending time with Juan, a Barcelona native, it's impossible not to think about how few Americans are actually on "the American team". Perhaps the rules will change and going forward, teams will be comprised of nationals only. We will see.

We head out the next day, on June 16th to watch the J-class boats, but there is not enough wind for racing, so we just enjoy the jovial camaraderie aboard the sailboat. As we motor around this "coral cap," as our Captain refers to it, he educates us on how a volcanic eruption mixed with the winds, temperatures and currents of the Gulf Stream to create this, the most northern coral island in the world.

Captain Bob—whose family's been in Bermuda for 300+ years—proceeds to regale us in his lovely Bermudian lilt, with maritime wisdom. He tells us about how Bermuda was discovered by Spanish pilot, Juan de Bermudez in 1505. But he also touches on the sinking Sea Venture coming upon Bermuda in 1609 after a hurricane. The story of salvation of those aboard and their miraculous arrival on 2 small ships the following May in Jamestown is widely thought to be the inspiration for Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.

Bob also describes the "thick slurry of lyme" created for use in the island's signature limestone roofs, designed to collect rainwater. This is all how the island gets its water. He delves into a discussion about the endangered cedar trees, crystal caves, and that magical grotto at the entrance to the old Castle Harbour Hotel.

For Day 1 and Day 2 of America's Cup Match, presented by Louis Vuitton, we board America's Cup ferries, spectator sailboats, catamarans and even manage some time aboard a



Left, Lisa Miller, Margi Arquitt, Right



floating pirate ship (Calico Jack's) in Dockyards, complete with "walk the plank."

Aboard the spectator boat, we revel in the atmosphere and variety of boats surrounding us now, here at the America's Cup: everything from Ross Perot's Buzzi 39 foot rib to Charles Simonyi's luxury 233 foot yacht. The atmosphere is one of genteel majesty and the sun is so hot, the beverages so refreshing, the turquoise water so inviting, and the limestone roofs atop pastel homes dotting the shoreline, so charming. It all mixes together and allows us to feel a heady America's Cup high.

Between the regalia and relaxation, we notice Team Oracle has had a few missteps: losing precious time up on foil, incurring various penalties, and not keeping their speed up while foil tacking and gybing. We all bristle whenever the hulls of the Oracle boat come off foil and touch down, causing unstable flight.

And yes, we speculate—along with the rest of the world—about whether the decision by the New Zealanders to bank on bigger leg muscles to power the boat's hydraulic system will pay off. They certainly took an innovative gamble by swapping out the traditional arm-

powered winches with cycle-style grinders to provide power to raise and lower the foils and pull in the huge wing-sail. This has the added benefit of keeping their hands free, which leaves less in the hands of helmsman, Peter Burling, and wing trimmer, Glenn Ashby.

The shape of their daggerboards, favoring light wind conditions, might factor in too. But it's all just banter and speculation on our part. But, as is commonly said, we all can agree that this race has become a technology race almost more than anything else.

So, in spite of a few exhilarating moments of potential, Team Oracle USA has fallen behind the Kiwis, giving up all 4 races—over the course of both days—despite all our cheering from the spectator boat line up.

We numb the pain after Day One by dancing it away to music by the Queen of Soca in the America's Cup Village, then eat a somewhat somber dinner with Oracle Team members at The Frog and Onion in Dockyards. We leave to catch the last ferry to Hamilton to enjoy live music at The Hog Penny pub and dancing at Café Cairo.

I head home from Bermuda to Rye, New York while Team Oracle USA spends the next week (June 19-24) shedding about 200 pounds off of it, according to skipper Jimmy Spithill. And under his watch, Oracle manages a critical win in their effort to defend the Cup, maneuvering in shifting winds in the 6th race on June 24th.

I watch the win on TV in my kitchen in Rye, and can almost taste the Goslings, smell the saltwater, and feel the boat sway.

Almost.

Post Script: Team Oracle was shut out the next day in both races, giving way to even greater speculation about the innovative advantages that the Kiwis held. We watched it at AYC, cringing and also acquiescing. The last blow was their solid win in the last race on June 26th, cementing 7-1 as the final score, leaving it hard to deny the Kiwis as victors in this technology race.

Submitted by Lisa duBosc Miller



AYC Standup Paddleboarding Update: Finding Balance Amidst Wind & Waves

AYC Standup Paddleboarding is off to a great start! An intrepid group of moms spent Mother's Day evening blissfully on the JAYC dock. We held some basic yoga poses while balancing on boards, in order to find stability and balance. We found a special zen while hovering inches above the water with waves lapping all around us.

The wind was trying its best to unsteady us, but that only made the balancing an even better core strengthener. The Mother's Day brunch bustle was earlier in the day so the Club was serenely empty and quiet. The intermittent stormy moments all afternoon certainly made for a dramatic day.

It's hard to convey the enveloping collective calm that was felt when the golden hour glow washed over the harbor as we held our warrior poses and namastes. The waves picked up all around us, then laid back down just in time for us to grab our paddles and boards and venture out into the harbor.

We headed upwind toward the Marshlands and Rye Golf Club, with Garrett trailing after us in a launch for safety. We then turned around when we approached the marshes and let the current carry us back to AYC, as if on auto pilot. As we got closer to the Club, our competitive sides came out and we raced each other back, getting a cardio high complete with plenty of laughter and bonding. We got back to the JAYC dock in time to watch an intense sunset, while putting the AYC paddleboards away and calling it a day.

We all wished each other a Happy Mother's Day and felt strong and salty. Being out on the water is a powerful experience, and you don't always need a sail and a hull to take part in it.

The rest of May brought even more strength and confidence out onto the water, as we have been practicing balance poses, even in choppy water and strong currents.

But we always make sure to nurture and embrace the beauty of our beloved Long Island Sound. And what better way to do that than by always leaving it a little bit cleaner every time we go out for a paddle.

