

Going The Distance

The very long and not-so-short of sailboat racing

Boats appear to collide in a close cross during the 2014 Ida Lewis Long Distance Race off the coast of Newport, Rhode Island.

MEGHAN SEPE

The Ida Lewis Distance Race held annually off the coast of Rhode Island celebrated its 10-year anniversary in August by adding a video contest to showcase the excitement of competitive sailing to young people. The race fleet included IRC, PHRF, multihull, and double-handed divisions, as well as the popular Youth Challenge and Collegiate Challenge for boats crewed by teenagers and young adults. To qualify for the Youth Challenge, 40 percent of the crew had to be at least 14 but not turn 20 prior to the race start on August 15th.

The 150-nm race was wracked by high winds gusting to 25 knots and tumultuous seas that forced 12 of the 47 boats to retire. "The seas were rougher than usual," said Steve Benjamin, skipper of the Carkeep 40 *Spookie*, which triumphed in the IRC division. "We have a technique on board *Spookie* where we heel over to cut through the waves, which was very valuable in this particular race."

Spookie also claimed line honors, a particularly impressive feat considering multihulls were allowed to enter for the first time in the history of the Ida Lewis race. Benjamin and crew successfully outdueled *Bazinga!*, an F-31 trimaran skippered by Dave Lussier that was the lone survivor among the multis—the rest of the fleet retired. Lussier says he and his crew were "determined to finish, and finishing ended up meaning winning."

Odyssey, a J/111 skippered by Alfred Van Liew, won the Youth Challenge division. Van Liew was one of just two adults in the seven-member team, and he heaped praise upon his young crew. "The youth sailors we had with us were very competent. Offshore racing calls for a different kind of sailing and teamwork than buoy

racing. It's a matter of pacing yourself and trying to take care of yourself and your team. Everybody has multiple responsibilities, because you move around for watches." The *Odyssey* crew also won the event's video contest. <http://youtube/qdd8wnhP3so>.

Volvo Ocean Race Under Way

At the opposite end of the spectrum from the two-day Ida Lewis Distance Race is the Volvo Ocean Race, held every three years and covering nearly 40,000 nautical miles. The 2014-15 edition kicked off on October 11th in Alicante, Spain, and will include 11 stopovers in ports around the world. First up is Cape Town, South Africa, followed by Abu Dhabi, UAE; Sanya, China; Auckland, New Zealand; Itajai, Brazil; Newport, Rhode Island; Lisbon, Portugal; Lorient, France; The Hague, Netherlands; and finally, Gothenburg, Sweden, where the boats are expected to finish sometime between June 21st and 24th, 2015.

Seven teams, including an all-female crew led by Great Britain's Sam Davies, will vie for the win, which offers no cash prize but merely the satisfaction of accomplishing one of sailing's all-time great feats, symbolized by the Volvo Ocean Race trophy. American Charlie Enright is skippering Team Alvimedica, a syndicate jointly sponsored by U.S. and Turkish supporters. All teams will compete in the new one-design Volvo Ocean 65, which replaces the Volvo Ocean 70 and was conceived by Farr Yacht Design to lower the financial bar to enter the race. A smaller, one-design vessel will reduce the number of crew required (from 11 to 10) and should put greater emphasis on sailing skills as opposed to pure speed. volvooceanrace.com 

BY BRIAN HARTZ