

Classic Boat Rally 2019

Invitation and Supplementary Information

Summary

The 13th annual Classic Boat Rally will be April 24-26. This event is for sailboats of classic design with a minimum overall length of 16 feet, and non-planing hulls. The emphasis is on classic *design*, not the actual age of the boat. The Rally officially starts at Savannah Yacht Club with dinner there on April 24, then the fleet sails on the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW) to Hilton Head's South Carolina Yacht Club (23 nm) on April 25, then to Beaufort Yacht and Sailing Club on the ICW (17 nm) April 26. Refer to the Notice of Race (NOR) for more details about qualifying to participate, but each boat is required to have

- A working motor capable of propelling the boat at 3.5 kts for 8 hours
- Detailed Charts for the area and/or GPS
- VHF Radio
- Navigational Running lights (can be portable/temporary)
- Safety equipment as per Coast Guard regulations
- Daily provisions of water and lunch

Entry and Registration

The Registration form is at the end of the NOR and must be received by the Chairman, with the fees, by April 10 to obtain the discounted fee of \$85 for the regatta and \$33 per person for the dinner at SYC. As the number of permissible entries is restricted by space at the host clubs, early registration is highly recommended as when the maximum is reached, subsequent submitted registrations will be placed on a wait list and cleared for entry only if a previously accepted entry drops out.

Sailing Venue and Weather

The Rally's sailing venue is all on the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW) between Savannah, GA, and Beaufort, SC ("The Lowcountry"). This includes two large bodies of water, Calibogue Sound and Port Royal Sound, which can have steep waves in heavy weather. Most of the distance is on broad tidal rivers. The tides are 6 to 7 vertical feet and typically have 1 kt currents. The Rally requires that all navigational aids (buoys) are observed (obeyed) by the participants. Due to shoaling, a GPS and depth sounder are recommended.

Mid-to-late April is the absolute best time to be sailing in the Lowcountry. The winter storms are over and the summer showers have not arrived. The prevailing wind is from the southwest to southeast, and we will be sailing to the northeast. Daytime temperatures are typically in the low 80s, and nights are in the 60s. For those coming from the north, this is a great way to start your season.

Cruise from Beaufort to Savannah

Logistics are vastly simplified by cruising to Savannah from Beaufort as you can leave your car and trailer at Beaufort Yacht and Sailing Club for the duration of the event.

- For those who would like to experience a leisurely cruise and an overnight anchorage, you can depart at mid-morning on Tuesday, April 23, anchor at Bull Creek just past Calibogue Sound off Cooper River across from Daufuskie Island (24 nm), and then arrive at SYC around noon on Wednesday (18 nm).
- If you want to make the trip to SYC in one day (42 nm) you can depart Beaufort *early* on Wednesday, April 24, and probably with some help from your motor, arrive at SYC by 5 PM. Note that you must clear the Causton Bluff draw bridge in Savannah before 5 PM.

The Racing

We know that when two or more sailboats are going in fundamentally the same direction, the race is on. So, we organize the racing for fun, real competition, and safety. We assign handicaps based on PHRF ratings and use staggered starts, with the inherently slowest going first, so there is not the intimidating crowded starting lines that are often experienced in other regattas. We divide each day (Thursday and Friday) into two races of about 7 to 10 nm each. We expect everyone to finish each race within 20 minutes of the race winner, and this keeps the fleet somewhat together for safety. The second race each day starts after time for a sandwich or two. We anticipate arriving each day at our destination before 5 PM. The racing will be governed by the Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS) and Sailing Instructions (SIs) will be made available to all participants well in advance of the event and will be available upon request not later than Feb 1, 2019.

Safety

We plan to have a Race Committee boat (“Signal”) and a Safety boat accompanying our fleet throughout the Rally. However, each sailing skipper makes his or her decision whether and how to race or to continue racing as conditions develop. If you run aground you are expected to do all possible to promptly get off the shoal (mud or sand in the Lowcountry). If the tide is ebbing you are especially in need of quick removal. As a courtesy the Safety boat may attempt to help, if requested, but may not remain more than 20 minutes. This is why you must have night navigation lights, in case you are stuck on an ebbing tide you might have to finish after sundown.

We require a VHF radio not only for important racing communications from and with the Race Committee also as a matter but also as a matter of safety and communications with the yacht clubs. Bring extra batteries. We also require a noise maker to attract attention in case your VHF malfunctions.

The Host Clubs and Lodging

Savannah Yacht Club (<http://www.savannahyachtclub.org>) on the Wilmington River east of Downtown Savannah, was founded in 1869 and served as host for the 1996 Sailing Olympics. We will tie up at the “Regatta Docks”. Contact the club on channel 16 when you arrive, and the dockmaster will show you where to tie up and check you in. They will have a cash bar for us. Their members like to come down to see our boats, and we welcome their inspection. We will have dinner as a group together at 6:30, serving our plates at their wonderful monthly “Family Buffet”. You can stay overnight on your boat (there are shower facilities) or at a motel (go in groups by Uber). Many in the group stay at The Best Western Central Inn, 45 Eisenhower Drive, (912) 355-1000 (mention “Classic Boat Rally”).

South Carolina Yacht Club (<http://www.scyachtclub.com>) in Windmill Harbour just off Calibogue Sound on Hilton Head is a first-class facility that is uniquely entered through a lock because it is above sea level. We enter the lock 3 or 4 boats at a time, the water rises, and we exit into a glorious snug harbor and tie up, rafting 2 or 3 deep, right in front of the club house. Bring your blazer sport coat for this occasion. We spruce up our boats for the concours judging (Most Bristol and Most Authentic). We register for temporary membership cards (backed by your credit card) that are good for the bar and for a sit-down dinner. The staff will remind you to remove your cap when you enter the clubhouse if you forget. You can stay in your boat overnight here, or use a motel. Many of the non-sailing spouses come down from Beaufort for this dining experience. We recommend either of two motels:

- **Hilton Garden Inn**, 1575 Fording Island Road, Hilton Head/Bluffton, (845) 837-8111. This is the closest (5-minute drive from SCYC) but is more expensive, with a pricey (but very good) breakfast at an extra cost. Mention Classic Boat Rally.
- **Holiday Inn Express**, 35 Bluffton Road, Bluffton, (844) 245-0248. This is 10 minutes farther from SCYC than Hilton Garden Inn, but it is less expensive and breakfast is typically included in the price. Mention Classic Boat Rally.

Beaufort Yacht and Sailing Club (<http://www.byscnet.com>) on Lady's Island just across the Beaufort River from Beaufort, is the Organizing Authority for this event and your principal host club. This is an informal sailing club, largely oriented to small boats, and is a new hotbed for Marshall 18 Sanderling catboats. You can stay on your boat here (showers available) or book at any of the numerous motels in Beaufort or Port Royal. Everything in Beaufort is within a 10-minute drive, including a West Marine on Ribaut Road. You can leave your car and trailer here while sailing in the Rally. The Friday evening dinner is a pot-luck informal affair at no charge. Bring something to share. There is a Publix grocery store about 5 minutes' drive away on Lady's Island.

Special Notice: Geoff and Kristen Marshall, makers of the Marshall catboats, plan to come down from South Dartmouth, MA for Friday and Saturday and will be speaking Saturday late afternoon at The Lowcountry Catboat Gathering at BYSC about the making and maintenance of catboats. This will be open to all in the Classic Boat Rally, participants in the Gathering, and members of BYSC.

Third Annual Lowcountry Catboat Gathering April 27-28: This is a separate event from the Classic Boat Rally but is mentioned here because it is of interest to catboat owners, many of whom participate in the Classic Boat Rally. The NOR and details about the Gathering will be forthcoming, and questions about the Gathering can be addressed to Marvin Day, at MarvDay@msn.com.

Questions about the Classic Boat Rally should be sent to me, Sam "Woody" Norwood, at snorwood3@me.com or 678-427-2937.