



A New Wave Rating Solution

By Wednesday afternoon, it was obvious to the rest of the PHRF 3 fleet—nine Henderson 30s and five assorted 30-foot sportboats—that the modified Melges 30 *Tiburon* was a force not to be reckoned with. John Dane and his crew had won four of the first five races by an average of a minute and a half on corrected time and with just three races remaining, they were 8 points ahead of the second-place boat, Mike Carroll's

Henderson 30 *New Wave*.

"We saw a type of boat that we'd historically been competitive against prove almost impossible to catch," says Carroll.

Such complaints aren't exactly uncommon in PHRF racing. In Key West, where the rating committee must compile ratings for a variety of boats, it's tough to please everyone. But Carroll and a few other skippers felt that *Tiburon's* rating—among the modifications was the removal of the diesel and saildrive unit—was far



Mike Carroll and the *New Wave* crew on board John Dane's Melges 30 *Tiburon* (above). Carroll and Dane, Friday morning.

enough out of whack to warrant the committee revisiting it.

Thursday evening, after his protest to change the rating was disallowed, Carroll played his final card, hoping he might still take home a small measure of pride. He latched onto a bit of boasting by Dane and proposed that the two teams swap boats for the final race. "There was no way we could lose the series," says Dane. "So for fun, we did it."

In Friday's sobering, early-morning sunlight, two restrained, but relatively genial, crews stood by their promises and showed each other the basics of their boats. As the harbor start sounded, *Tiburon's* tender took both boats under tow, leaving in their wake a fleet full of dropped jaws. Carroll and skipper Marty Kullman won the start, forcing Dane to tack, and never looked back. "Once you're 100 yards ahead," says Kullman. "Life's easy." They finished first, correcting four minutes and 14 seconds ahead of the nearest competitor. *New Wave*, with Dane driving, finished fourth, over 5 minutes behind.

Cole, a contractor from Seattle. "But we did fine; the boat is really quick."

Cole and Charlie Adams bought the boat as a kit from Concept Marine in New Zealand and put on all the hardware themselves. They had hoped to be focused solely on sailing by the time they reached Key West but spent Sunday night milling down a halyard sheave that broke during practice.

The Steve Thompson-designed 28-footer was the smallest boat in PHRF 3, competing against Henderson 30s, Melges 30s, a Thompson 30, and a J/90. Cole says they had no idea how the boat

would fare against the closely-matched competition. "We weren't sure how fast we were going to be until we sheeted in at the start line," he says. "We started evaluating our boatspeed against the fleet right away, and by the end of the first race, when we finished fourth, we started to think top three might be possible."

With uncanny consistency, especially for a new boat, Cole and Adams did just that, finishing third overall. "We concentrated on having good, clean starts and tried to tack on the faster boats," says Cole. "We were pretty excited to be able to hang in with that fleet."

Farr 40: The honors program

The glitter on the Farr 40 class at Key West this year was due largely to the unprecedented convergence of top-shelf talent recruited to call tactics for each of the 37 entrants. While hiring an Olympic medalist or world champion to call the shots is old hat for this class, the 2001 fleet set a new standard.

"I think it's the toughest regatta we've ever sailed," says 1984 Olympic gold medalist Robbie Haines, who helped George Andreadis defend the title they won in 2000. "You go down the list of

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KEY WEST 2001

◆ Wednesday ◆

9:15 P.M.

With a time of 19 seconds, Charlie Clifton of Sarasota, Fla., defends the title he won Monday at the Schooner Wharf Bar's Knot and Shot contest. The contest, run nightly during Race Week, involves doing a shot, tying a bowline, roping a moveable post, and chugging a beer.

12:04 P.M.

With Jim Greenwell of Washington, D.C., at the helm, J World Annapolis' J/80 *Willy T* wins Race 5 in the J/80 class. The boat is crewed by three "students" and one coach, J World Annapolis owner Jahn Tihansky. It's the first time a J World Annapolis program boat has won a race at Key West.

2:32 P.M.

Bert Carp's brand new PHRF/MORC racer *Remedy*, a Donovan 27, finishes second in the second race of the day. A second in the first race was Carp's first top-three finish in the regatta.

10:00 P.M.

Karen Gottwald's third annual Melges 24 class party in Truman Annex ends. However, en route to Duval Street, sailors discover the main gates are locked and many are forced to scramble over the 8-foot high fence.

KIM HART, TIM WILKES