

SOL CAT FLEET SHEET

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**Sol Cat
Nationals
Special Edition**

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Regionals -- Another Christensen-Wetmore Duel

The Sol Cat Regional Championship Regattas were the high point of fleet activities throughout the country this summer. Competition was understandably intense. In addition to the usual trophies, first place winners received airfare and accommodations at the Nationals in California as well as a boat to sail at the Nationals. Skippers were pushing themselves, their boats and their crews to the limit.

Approximately 20 to 25 boats competed in each of the regionals, which were two-day events. The reporting on the races varies. Some of the area fleet captains submitted complete reports, others called and said, "I won and I'm planning to come. How do I get there?"

So here are the final results that we've gathered together. Congratulations to the winners and to all the competitors.

Florida

The Florida Sol Cat sailors have really gotten it together, as their performance in the Sol Cat Nationals proves. Their regional regatta was raced in Miami and the battle for first place between Rick Wetmore and Mack Wiggins sailing Sol Cat 246 with Chris and Pauline Christensen was to be repeated two weeks later in the waters of Los Angeles Harbor.

The Florida Regionals were run on Biscayne Bay. The six race series with one throw out was sailed in winds that varied from 0 to 15 knots. The temperature was well into the 90's and even higher on the boats that were vying for first place. It came down to the final race of the series with the point standings tied between Christensen and Wetmore. Chris got a beautiful start and maintained his lead throughout the race. Wetmore and Wiggins placed second with only a quarter of a point separating them from the winner. Julio Sigueroa and Bob Gruber from Miami placed third.

California

Malibu Yacht Club offered the perfect site for the California Regionals. The wind and weather were ideal for the beach sailing that Malibu is famous for. The trickiest part of sailing from Malibu

is getting the boats launched through the surf and back to the beach safely. The help from the local Malibu sailors was invaluable, and only one Sol Cat experienced the thrill of a surf line capsizefortunately without damage.

Terry Dahl sailed a near perfect regatta with Gene Vernon and Diego Kahr providing hot competition in the A Fleet. Tom Wickenhauser, one of the hot Florida skippers, was in town for the regatta. The race was marked with port tack starts, some made good and others with disastrous results. The elation a skipper feels after a port start made good can only be compared with the doom he feels as he inspects a gaping hole in his port hull and realizes that the rest of the regatta will be spent soothing himself with beer on the beach.

Terry took first place in A Division, followed by Gene Vernon, Tom Wickenhauser, Diego Kahr and Lamar Case. B Fleet honors were taken by Kelley Connell and Bob Anderson sailing Sol Cat 806. Steve Aranyos was second; Bullett, sailing his brand new Sol Cat, "Bullett and Cannonball Express Company," was third and Blake Metzger, fourth.

In addition to the fleet trophies, the Sol Cat California Regional Perpetual Trophy was awarded to Terry Dahl for his performance in A Fleet. And for those guy and girl crews who have to cope with each other as well as sail the boat, special trophies were awarded to the couples who placed in that division. Gene and Chris Vernon took first place with Steve Aranyos and Carolyn Cohen, second.

Texas

The wind wasn't howling at Lake Somerville, but 18 Sol Cats battled it out for the Texas Regional Championship title on June 30.

Sean Holland, Sol Cat's representative at the regionals, reports that the series was held in wind under 10 knots and competition for the top places was a close contest among Bruce Badeau, Kyle Preston, Steve Colwell and Rick Vander Weel.

The final results: Bruce Badeau, first; Steve Colwell, second; Kyle Preston,

third; R. Vander Weel, fourth and Jerry Bishop, fifth.

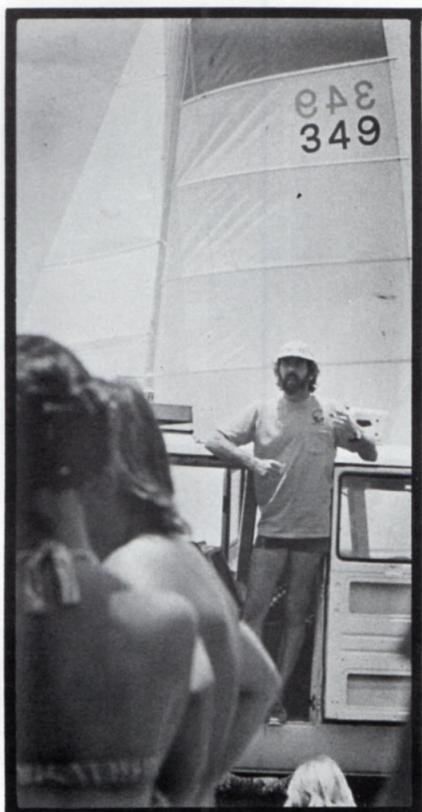
Midwest

It was a close contest for the top three places in the Michigan area Sol Cat regionals. The regatta was held at Lexington in varying conditions.

Walt and Wilma Stanley put together a consistent series to take top honors in the event. They were followed closely by the Ward Brothers, Dave and Tom, in second place and Glenn Hallett in third.

Northeast

There are only sketchy reports from the North East Regionals. We do know for a fact who won and where they were held. But the exact particulars, including the other winners, are unfortunately not available. Hank Waite from North Beach, New Jersey won the Regional title on Cedar Creek at Barnagat Bay.



Sol Cat Nationals Special Edition



Rick Wetmore: Our Cool, Consistent Champion

Remember walking into your local watering hole and seeing the gag card over the bar which read, "Two weeks ago I couldn't even spell bartender . . . now I are one."

Well, a little over a year ago, Rick Wetmore of Miami probably wasn't too sure how to spell catamaran much less sail one. But he had the burning ambition to go fast and that prompted him to learn how to sail a catamaran. He started out with a Sea Spray and soon gravitated to a Sol Cat-18. Today, Wetmore is the holder of the first annual national Sol Cat championship after sailing a consistent series in the area known as Hurricane Gulch near Los Angeles Harbor August 9, 10, 11.

Wetmore, an affable 20-year-old sailor who works at Underwood Marine in Miami, acknowledges the fact that he's new to the game of catamaran racing.

"Five months ago, Gene Vernon was visiting Miami and I asked him why my boat wasn't going fast. I rigged the boat for him and found out—much to my embarrassment—that I was sailing with the battens backwards."

Needless to say, Wetmore has come a long way since that time. Consistency was the name of the game in Wetmore's victory.





Everyone knows it takes lots of skill and agility to race a Sol Cat as shown in the pictures above, but it took even more finesse to catch the cans of beer and soft drinks provided by the race committee during the Nationals.



Vernon Hits 23.23 mph, Wins PMA Speed Trials

"I told my crew (Mack Wiggins) before the series that the most consistent boat and not the fastest would win. We kept our nose clean throughout the series. In nearly all port tack situations, we kept clear and avoided confrontation.

For the seven race series, Wetmore's finishes were 3-4-9-2-1-1-3. His closest competition came from some veteran catamaran sailors from the South. Steve and Claudette Colwell, Houston, Texas, with finishes of 2-1-2-DNF-2-4-4 placed second, and Chris and Pauline Christensen, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, took third with a 1-3-1-1-18-DSQ-2 record. Other trophy winners were Don Pardee of Santa Monica, California, fourth; Kelley Connell, Marina Del Rey, California, fifth and Hank Waite, North Beach, New Jersey, sixth.

The Sol Cat title isn't Wetmore's first national championship. His first experience in go-fast racing was with Go-Karts and he won the 1970 and '71 national titles.

Wetmore said he enjoyed racing outside the breakwater of Los Angeles Harbor, but didn't like the fact that the water was much colder than the climes he's used to in Florida. Although sailing in a borrowed boat, he brought his own sails for the regatta.

Thirty-six boats competed in the nationals, 15 of which were from out of the state of California . . . New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Texas, Florida and Oregon.

The nationals were held in conjunction with the Pacific Multihull Association World Championships at Cabrillo Beach Yacht Club. Two races were held on Friday, three on Saturday and two on Sunday. Wind velocity reached up to 25 knots.

Sol Cat provided on-the-spot repair service by using a Boston Whaler to deliver parts to competitors who encountered breakdowns. Sol Cat also delivered lunch and drinks to each competitor between races each day. A spectator boat as well as several chase boats were provided to follow the fleet throughout the races.

Social activities also played in an important role in the nationals. On Thursday evening, Sol Cat hosted a cheese-and-wine party during registration. On Friday, the competitors, press

and interested parties attended an open house at the factory in Santa Ana. After the party and plant tour, Sol Cat entertained out-of-state competitors and dealers at a dinner at the Balboa Yacht Club. On Saturday, regatta participants attended a free steak barbecue and beer party at Cabrillo Beach Yacht Club. The party was held with the Pacific Multihull Association entries and more than 230 persons attended the event.

The trophy presentation was held on Sunday and the first six finishers and crews were awarded custom-made ceramic plaques. The first-place winner also received the Sol Cat Perpetual Trophy—a carved wood-and-bronze sculpture.

Here are the final results of the first annual national regatta:

1. Rick Wetmore, Miami, FL, 3-4-9-2-1-1-3;
2. Steve Colwell, Houston, TX, 2-1-2-dnf-2-4-4;
3. Chris Christensen, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, 1-3-1-1-18-dsq-2;
4. Don Pardee, Santa Monica, CA, 17-8-3-6-3-5-8;
5. Kelley Connell, Marina del Rey, CA, 22-7-4-3-15-9-1;
6. Hank Waite, North Beach, NJ, 5-11-7-4-17-2-11;
7. Greg Beytin, Culver City, CA, 18-2-12-8-7-dnf-5;
8. (tie between) Steve Tobin, Long Beach, CA, 7-5-8-5-dsq-17-12, and Bruce Lane, Newport Beach, CA, 13-dnf-6-7-6-12-10;
10. Gus Linell, Broadalbin, NY, 11-30-15-9-4-8-9.
11. Kyle Preston, Beaumont, TX, 4-6-20-12-5-15-15;
12. Blair Lord, Davis, CA, 10-12-10-13-8-13-13;
13. Dan Largent, San Mateo, CA, 15-19-21-10-11-7-7;
14. Dennis Redman, San Diego, CA, 6-14-19-dnf-10-6-16;
15. Steve Aranyos, Long Beach, CA, 14-10-18-21-14-11-6;
16. (three-way tie among) Gary Crawford, 8-13-14-15-12-18-17; Rick Ruiz, Costa Mesa, CA, 9-9-17-16-9-19-dnf; and Roger Janos, El Cajon, CA, 12-17-11-14-19-16-20.
19. Ken Vernon, Philadelphia, PA, 19-dnf-16-11-13-3-18;
20. Dave Ward, Grand Rapids, MI, 16-dnf-5-18-dsq-22-21.
21. Jim Buell, Marina del Rey, CA, 30-21-13-17-16-21-dns;
22. Mark Hansen, Manhattan Beach, CA, 23-18-dsq-25-dsq-23-dnf;
23. Philip Hartwell, Essez Junction, VT, 29-22-23-20-dnf-14-14;
24. Larry Laux, Los Angeles, CA, 24-16-dsq-dsq-18-20-19;
25. Nic Spitzer, Middleton, WI, 21-20-24-23-20-dns-dns;
26. Art Sueltz, Long Beach, CA, 20-15-dnf-dns-dns-dns-dns;
27. Jerry Carpenter, Santa Ana, CA, 27-24-25-29-dns-2-22;
28. Peter Levine, Marina del Rey, CA, 26-23-dsq-28-dns-25-dns;
29. Randy Monelli, Long Beach, CA, dns-dns-22-19-dns-dns-dns;
30. Lynn Nelson, San Diego, CA, 25-dnf-dsq-22-dsq-27-dns;
31. Mark Harrison, Alhambra, CA, 28-25-dsq-24-dns-24-dns;
32. Jerry Daniel, Whittier, CA, dns-dns-26-30-dns-dnf-dns;
33. Doug Johns, Anaheim, CA, 31-dns-dsq-27-dns-dns-dns;
34. Bullett, Long Beach, CA, dns-dns-34-dns-dns-dns-dns.

Sol Cat's speed and efficiency—the stuff that owners already know their boats are made of—achieved high marks in the World Multihull Championships held August 9 in Los Angeles Harbor.

Clocked over an 815-meter course (a few hull lengths over half a mile) for four runs, Gene Vernon skippered his Sol Cat-18 to a first place in the Division II Speed Trials with an impressive 23.23 mile-per-hour sprint and took second in that division's efficiency trials.

The course was laid out for a broad reach, initially measuring 100 degrees off true wind. A race committee spokesman noted that the measurement was 115-120 degrees when Vernon made his fastest run. It was the same measurement when Beowulf V, a 32-foot Class D catamaran owned and sailed by Steve Dashew of Cabrillo Beach Yacht Club, set his new world record of 35.59 mph.

After an initial run of 19.25 mph in 16-knot winds, Vernon clicked off his winning run under breezes of 22 knots. The other two runs were 20.52 and 20.19 mph.

While generally impressed with the performance of the boat, Vernon attributed mast rake as one of the key factors for his swift run.

"Mast rake certainly is super critical," Vernon said. "A one-notch change in the shroud adjusters can make a world of





difference. It's hard to believe the change in the performance with such a slight adjustment."

Vernon said that during the speed and efficiency trial runs he had the mast raked perpendicular to the boat. He noted, of course, that this was for the particular wind and sea conditions off Cabrillo Beach and that each owner always should tune the mast according to the conditions in his own area.

As for other adjustments, Vernon said he had the main traveler set 10 inches down from center and the jib traveler in the center. He had the lee daggerboard halfway down, the weather daggerboard up and the weather rudder up.

Vernon said that he was pleased with the consistency of the Sol Cat. Over the past four years, Sol Cat has taken three first places in the Efficiency Trials and one second. Sol Cat's victory in the Speed Trials this year and her outstanding performance in the "Yachting Magazine One-Of-A Kind" Regatta this Spring is a clear indication of her proven ability in open multihull championships.

Sol Cat? 18 Square Meter? What's It all About?

You may hear about a Sol Cat that's winning in a class called the 18 Square Meter and wonder what it's all about. Is it a Sol Cat, a Tornado with a una rig, a Sol Cat with a una rig? And what's a Square Meter anyway?

The 18 Square Meter Class is strictly a development class that originated in California about six months ago. A group of multihull enthusiasts got together and decided that an all-out single handed speed machine would be an exciting boat to design, build and sail. They left plenty of room for development. The only restrictions on the class lie in sail area (18 square meters or about 190 square feet), length (no longer than 18 feet) and crew (one person). The PMA Worlds were set as the first race for the class.

Two days before the event, Terry Dahl, who had been considering several approaches to the problem, put together

his 18 Square Meter. He took a set of stock Sol Cat hulls, widened the beam to 12 feet and put a Tornado mast and mainsail up. The boat went in the water for the first time on the day of the race.

The class was small with only two other boats racing—the Alpha Centauri and another boat developed by Roger Jewett, a West Coast C Class skipper. Terry held second place on the way to the weather mark of the first race, made a few adjustments, and took the lead as he rounded the mark. He did a real horizon job on the other boats, and never left first place in any of the subsequent races. Not bad for a maiden voyage.

He found the experience exhilarating, and now is making plans for further development of the boat based on this starting point. The concept has met with considerable enthusiasm from multihull sailors and designers who feel the potential for the class is unlimited. There is even the possibility of the class gaining international status and trials have been tentatively set for later in the year. The Sol Cat entrance into the class, modified to be sure, was an attempt to see just what was possible working with what was easily available. Future boats will incorporate many of the same basic design concepts as well as the results of thorough research and development of sophisticated rigging ideas in the search for ultimate speed and performance in a singlehander.

Dahl Smokes 'em All In Firecracker Regatta

Triumphing over a 26-boat fleet that included Tornados, C Class Cats, Alphas and Hobies, Terry Dahl and George Wood placed first in the Multihull Racing Association of San Francisco "Firecracker Regatta." The two-day regatta over the fourth of July holiday weekend was raced on San Francisco Bay off Bellena Bay Harbor. It was typical San Francisco weather with the winds never going under 20 knots and choppy seas.

Sol Cat finished first on a boat-for-boat basis in each of the five races and first on corrected time in all the races but one. A mid-course capsize prevented Dahl and Wood from saving their time under the MHRA handicap system, despite a speedy righting of their boat.

Sol Cat raced in the large boat open division. The Hobie fleet started five minutes ahead of the division, but the Sol Cat sailed through the fleet to take top honors in the regatta.

High-Flying Excursions

Mike Scott of Redford Marine in Detroit reports that Saganaugh Lake spawned a water spout in June which took a new owner's boat on a maiden voyage-less crew.

Scott reports the boat had just been completed rigged and the owner was waiting for the wind to come up. Up it did come when a water spout cruised across the lake and promptly lifted the new Cat 50 feet in the air! It was then rather gently deposited 300 yards down the beach — upside down. Resulting damage included only a broken shroud, small "ding" in one hull and a slightly bent mast, which was repairable.

Also in June at Higgins Lake, a sudden rain squall initiated the first sighting of a catamaran landsailer.

The crew had just jumped off in preparation for beaching — still on a broad reach. The cat promptly got away from the abortive crew and jumped two feet in the air as it collided with the grassy turf line above the narrow beach. Now on the rain soaked lawn, it sped towards the nearest house at 10 knots, coming to a halt only inches from certain destruction.



Misleading Calendar

The calendar may be misleading. Sure it's Fall, but the wind and the water are still there. Replace your bathing suit with a wet suit or foul weather jacket and you'll be out there for some super sailing.

Frostbiting is a good way to extend your sailing activities through the year. You don't have to be really hard to do it . . . although we have heard of people out chopping ice off the lake in order to get a final sail in.

It's easy to set up a Fall Racing Series and we'll be glad to help you get it started. There is all sorts of information available from the Sol Cat Class Activities office on setting up and running local regattas. Just ask for it from your dealer or contact us directly in California.

Mug Race

The annual Mug Race sponsored by the Rudder Club of Jacksonville, Florida is billed as the longest river sailing regatta in the world. The event is open to anyone who has the stamina to sail the 50 mile course from the Boathouse Marina in Palatka to the Rudder Club in Jacksonville.

Tom Wickenhauser, sailing his Sol Cat, made the run in seven hours, 50 minutes and 30 seconds to take second behind a Tornado. The winds were generally light until the 161-boat fleet was treated to one of Florida's sudden thunder storms and the wind piped up to better than 40 knots on the river.

Tom reports that his race down the river was further complicated by waiting 15 minutes after the start for a drawbridge to open for him, and taking the

wrong fork in the river (at the suggestion of one of the local residents). But he obviously got things squared away as his final position indicates.

The cat fleet included a few of all the designs. Five Sol Cats completed the race. The second Sol Cat to finish was John Terrell who finished eighth overall.

Twilight Series

Battling the Los Angeles traffic every Wednesday night has proved well worth the effort. The Twilight series at Marina Del Rey, sponsored by Catamaran's West, has had good response with 10 to 12 boats competing in the evening races.

The courses have been set inside the harbor, with one leg outside the breakwater. The winds, though usually in the 8-knot range, have provided good practice for the Sol Cat skippers.

The point standings for the overall trophies are close. Don Pardee, the highest placing Californian in the Nationals, has made good use of his racing experience in the series. He is one of the leading contenders for first place, followed closely by Steve Aranyos, Larry Laux, Pete Levine, and Chris Pisano. The series will wind up at the end of September with the presentation of the trophies.

But it's not the end of series racing at Del Rey. Cat's West reports that they are making arrangements for a weekend series organized much the same way. Weekly trophies will be awarded as well as a series trophy for the best overall skipper. The schedule for the series will be announced to the California fleet in a special mailing.

SOL CAT FLEET SHEET

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PLACE
STAMP
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Sol Cat Tuning Tips -- Sail Shape

Most beginning Sol Cat sailors have the feeling that sail shape is important and that perhaps that guy out front has done something special because his sail sure looks different. But they're not sure why. Once more, they hear conflicting opinions on what is a fast or slow sail and such discussions are often pepped up with such technicalities like camber-cord ratio, bias stretch or maximum draft.

Sol Cat sail shape is simple to understand and easy to perfect. Altering nothing, using un-modified equipment, what can you do?

Use the adjustments that are provided. Begin with the battens in the main. Most people tie their battens in too loosely. Cram them in the sail under tension so that the cloth lifts off the batten. The batten will not lie flat if the sail is on the floor. The proper end tie procedure will really help. With the batten in its pocket, take the tie string through the right hand grommet, then the hole in the batten, then the left-hand grommet. Even up the ties so that the same amount shows on each side. Put these ends back through the batten hole and cross them over each other as in the beginning of a knot. Now pull tight . . . what you have is a 4:1 pulley system that will self lock under pressure. Finish the tie in a square knot with the loose ends outside the batten.

DOWNAHUL—The 3:1 downhaul on the Sol Cat is adequate for downhaul if you sheet the main and then downhaul. Trying to downhaul without mainsheet pressure is only going to result in

insufficient downhaul. Crank down enough so that the mast begins to bend after under the bolt rope tensioning. The general rule is the more wind the more downhaul.

OUTH AUL—Be sure to ease the outhaul for off-the-wind sailing. If you travel out on the mainsheet traveler, then ease the outhaul. Don't forget to tighten it when you go back upwind.

JIB—When it comes to the jib, a lot of batten tie pressure is not desirable. In fact, too much pressure will distort the luff of the jib. It is helpful in tacking if you have cut off the end of the battens so they are flush with the leech of the sail. Tie them in by passing the line through the grommet several times before knotting.

JIB TRAVELER CARS—Use them. A general rule to follow is that if you travel out on the mainsheet traveler, do the same with the jib travelers. The jib cars should be adjusted to the same degree that the mainsheet car is. If you're all the way out on main traveler, you should probably be all the way to the end of the tracks with the jib cars.

BATTENS—If you really want to get down to fine tuning you'll have to work on your battens. Generally you'll have to make them more flexible by sanding or planing them. If you've never sanded fiberglass you're in for a real treat. The dust is highly irritating so take every precaution to keep this dust off of you

and anything that you don't want to throw away.

The basic principle to keep in mind when you shape the mainsail battens is to maintain a uniform curve. You want the tips of the battens at the luff, fairly flexible, so begin shaping there. In order to measure curvature, depress the batten against a scale. Curvature is measured in pounds of deflection and the point of maximum curvature. The bottom battens should bend at 4 to 5 pounds and have their maximum point of curvature at half their length. The top four battens should bend at about 35 to 40 percent of their length with slightly less poundage. The top three battens are very important and should be quite flexible for light air sailing. You might want to have replacement battens for these three—slightly stiffer ones for use in heavier air. Remember to keep the leech ends stiff and straight. Flexibility there will result in leech recurvature which destroys uniform air flow.

The jib battens should be very flexible in order to allow the jib to assume some twist-off for downwind sailing. Caution must be taken, however, not to plane away too much of the batten. A too full jib will decrease upwind pointing ability. Batten shaping is a trial-and-error procedure and it is easier to take off a little at a time than be faced with trying to stiffen up the batten or replace it after you've gone too far.

(Next issue: Use of Tell Tails and Wind Indicators)