



Medicine Man and Alchemy grind to the Newport-Ensenada finish line at about 1 1/2 knots of boat speed



Newport Ocean Sailing Association

## 64th Newport to Ensenada International Yacht Race

125.5 nautical miles Newport Beach, Calif. to Ensenada, Mexico

Started Friday, April 15, 2011

April 16, 2011

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### Just enough wind for DC's Stars & Stripes, Afterburner

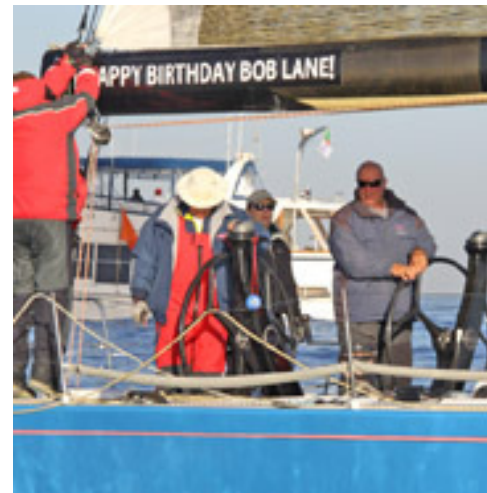
ENSENADA, Mexico

If it isn't the wind dying, it's going the wrong way, or if it isn't kelp caught on the bottom of the boat, it's ... well, there are lots of ways to lose sailboat races, "but that's what sailing's all about," Lorenzo Berho said.

The Mexican sailor's philosophy may be of little comfort to those who suffered such consequences in the 64th Newport to Ensenada International Yacht Race---seaweed spoiled hopes of victory for Berho's Peligroso---but kudos to those who made all the right calls and dodged the pitfalls.

Like Dennis Conner. DC's America's Cup days may be behind him, but at 68 he continues to be a contender in the traditional race past his hometown of San Diego and this time he raised eyebrows around the scoreboard in the courtyard of the race headquarters Bahia Hotel.

Sailing his dark blue Stars & Stripes, a Farr 60, the only boat Conner trailed at the finish was Afterburner, Bill Gibbs's 53-foot catamaran, which is the way it usually is between monohulls and multihulls of similar size. And the margin was a modest 79 1/2 minutes, while the realistic competition was led by Per Peterson's



Not enough breeze to blow out the candles for Bob Lane (r.)



Alchemy was 2nd monohull

larger Dencho 70, Alchemy, 52 minutes back after an agonizing 125.5 nautical miles.

Conner didn't hang around to talk about it, executing an immediate U-turn to home without touching shore, but his rivals had sad tales to tell.

"It was light," Gibbs said, "then there was some wind when we did 22 knots ... then it was a light again."

His only serious rival for first to finish was H.L. Loe's Loe Real, but after leading Afterburner off the start line the 60-foot trimaran's fate was a broken bowsprit about an hour into the race.

Navigator Peter Isler reported, "It was a carbon tube that simply gave up after many years of service ...compression failure. The crew safely got the masthead genoa down on deck, cleaned up the shrapnel on the bow and rehoisted the big genoa back up with the sail tacked (with some McGuyver-like creativity) to the bow.

"But with the new tack position several feet farther aft, the sail was simply too big for the boat and could not be trimmed effectively, severely limiting our performance. So after a few hours of sailing, Enloe made the tough decision to pull out of the race and not risk any more damage to the equipment. We made it back in to the boat's home port of San Diego in time for a late dinner on Harbor Island.

"When we dropped out in the late afternoon it appeared that the boats that were farther offshore had significantly more velocity than the boats that were on an inshore track."

"I won't laugh," Gibbs said, enjoying a warm moment in the sunny courtyard. "I've had DNFs in 30 per cent of my Ensenadas."

Petterson's Alchemy led the big monohulls through some decent nocturnal breeze until approaching Todos Santos Bay, where the race became a parking lot.

"We were pretty strung out until we reached the bay," he said, "then we congregated."

Alchemy managed to hold off Bob Lane's Andrews 63, Medicine Man, by less than four minutes---the latter bearing a birthday greeting for the skipper on its boom: "Happy Birthday Bob Lane!"

Randy Smith, one of the pharmacist's crew members, said, "We had 20 knots of breeze for awhile, and then we were 15 miles from the finish at 10 o'clock [Friday] night, and all the [70-foot] sleds were over the horizon behind us."



Sails sag as Peligroso limps in



It's OK chases Peligroso

[Hi-res downloadable photo gallery](#)

[Entry list](#)

Then, as the breeze gasped its last, Smith said, Stars & Stripes "got a puff" and sailed away.

As for Peligroso, the first monohull to finish a year ago, "We caught some kelp at 11 o'clock last night," Berho said as he followed the others into port. "We saw all the other boats passing us and didn't know what [the problem] was."

They suspected kelp dragging from the keel or rudder, but it was on the sail drive gear near the propeller.

"While I was sleeping around 6 a.m. [Saturday] the watch captain asked somebody from the crew to jump into the water because they couldn't see if there was something dragging us," Berho said, "and that is how the kelp was taken away. So we probably had the kelp for several hours, and as we have two cutters [for the] keel and rudder we never imagined all the kelp that was at the sail drive."

There were some upsides, as well. Andy Rose, one of It's OK's triumvirate of Tres Gordos LLC owners, said, "Dennis got the last of the little breeze, but it was nice to wake up this morning with the other boats all around you and you're the smallest boat."

Seven of the 175 boats that entered did not start Friday, 13 others had dropped out and less than half of the fleet

Farr 40s---Dave Voss's Piranha and Ray Godwin's Tempress---were the 10th and 11th boats to finish, again proving the one-design class's worthiness for ocean racing.

But there was no threat to the two most prestigious records: the monohull elapsed time of 10 hours 37 minutes 50 seconds by Doug Baker's Magnitude 80 in 2009 and the multihull time of 6 hours 46 minutes 40 seconds by the late Steve Fossett on the 60-foot Stars & Stripes catamaran in 1998.

No boats will be scored as finishing after 11 a.m. Sunday. The colorful awards ceremony in the courtyard is scheduled for 2 p.m.

### **First 10 finishers**

1. Afterburner (Tennant Bladerunner 52), Bill Gibbs, Pierpont Bay Yacht Club, elapsed time 17 hours 8 minutes 53 seconds, corrected time 22:33:05.
2. Stars & Stripes (Farr 60), Dennis Conner, San Diego YC, ET 18:28:25, CT 20:40:11.
3. Alchemy (Dencho 70), Per Peterson, Oceanside YC, ET 19:20:23, CT 22:16:05.
4. Medicine Man (Andrews 63), Bob Lane, Long Beach YC, ET 19:24:13, CT 22:51:17.
5. Peligroso (Kernan 70), Lorenzo Berho, Mexico City, ET 19:45:33, CT 24:02:49.



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6. It's OK (Andrews 50), Tres Gordos LLC, ET 19:48:09, CT 21:47:23.
7. Taxi Dancer (Reichel/Pugh 68), Dick Compton/Jim Yabsley/Tom Parker, Santa Barbara YC, ET 20:28:13, CT 23:23:55.
8. Relentless (Santa Cruz 52T), Durant/Shew, Long Beach YC, ET 20:55:19, CT 21:45:31.
9. Stealth Chicken (Perry 56), Tim Beatty, ET 20:58:25, CT 22:07:27.
10. Piranha (Farr 40), David Voss, California YC, ET 21:05:45, CT 21:18:18.

The race is sponsored by the City of Newport Beach, Pirates Lair, the Log, Mount Gay Rum, Vessel Assist, SAILING Spoken Here, West Marine, Marriott Newport Beach Hotel & Spa, Visit Newport Beach, Hornblower Cruises & Events, North Sails and Ruby's Diner.



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Logistical support for the race is provided by the Bahia Corinthian, Balboa and Newport Harbor Yacht Clubs.

Newport Beach, an opulent seaside community located on the Orange County coastline between Los Angeles and San Diego, epitomizes the quintessential Southern California lifestyle. Known for its picturesque views of the Pacific and one of the world's largest small yacht harbors, the city is acclaimed for its beaches, yachting community, sophisticated atmosphere, international film festival, three annual epicurean festivals and the oldest holiday boat parade in the nation. Newport Beach was named "one of the top 10 resort towns in the U.S." by AOL Travel in 2008. For more information, call (800) 94-COAST or [visit online](#)

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