



The World Duckboat Championship, conceived by the junior sailors of the Mantoloking Yacht Club in 1970 and continually hosted for 40 years since, has no doubt become one of the iconic annual events on Barnegat Bay. It is a happening, a celebration of the heritage of Barnegat Bay wooden boat building and the frivolity of our youth. It is one of the few Championship regattas where junior sailors can race and compete directly with some of the best senior sailors on the Bay. Many who have moved on from our waters return each year just for this event.

But it wasn't always this way. While the active World Ducks fleet peaked in the mid-80's at about 50+ boats, the advent of the ubiquitous Opti and other low maintenance youth training boats gradually started to push the fleets out of the Bay clubs' junior sailing programs. The kids that sailed them and helped maintain them, if they didn't always mature, gradually grew up to have kids of their own, and the boats slowly disappeared into various garages and boat sheds around the Bay. By the mid-90's, the World Duckboat Championship regatta fleet had dwindled to less than 15 boats that were capable of making it to MYC and around the race course at the end of August each year.

Then along came Peter Kellogg with his enthusiasm, his love for wooden boats and old Bay traditions, and of course, most definitely his generosity. His challenge offer to make a donation by the Peter and Cynthia Kellogg Foundation to the charity of the sailor's choice in return for restoring a duckboat to Bristol condition and sailing it in the championship has totally restored the fleet. Last year we had over 70 boats register and race. Now all the Bay clubs are represented via their junior sailors. We have competitors ranging in age from 10 to 83. And the girls are some of the best. We have even had a junior sailor take on the seniors and win it all - twice.

Peter's restoration challenge has managed to flush all of the boats out of their sheds and on to the Bay at the end of each August, and has left people looking for more boats. Amazingly, after a 30+ year hiatus, new boats have been built, one even by high school students to the original plans. Some new construction methods have been tried that produced some beautiful results.

But herein lays the problem. The new cold molded plywood construction boats are very different. While easier and less expensive for people to construct a boat, they produce boats that are stiffer and lighter weight than the traditional plank on rib construction, have sealed flotation compartments and no seams to swell or more importantly leak. They raise two sets of concerns for the organizers of the World Duckboat Championship regatta.

First, at its core, the World Duckboat Championship is a sailboat race. The regatta has, for the most part, historically been a test competed in total; five races, in light air and heavy air; calm and chop; north and south running currents. Winning has often been as much about surviving as it has been about sailing fast or smart. Sometimes in-the-hunt competitors have been "taken out" by contact with inexperienced youth or less than competent adults. It has been won in old boats and new, owned and borrowed. Few who have won have not also at one time or another experienced being ignominiously towed to the beach full of water.

The World Duck Boat Championship is mano y mano or mano y chiquita or maybe popi y pepe, given the results of the past few years. Thus it was in the beginning and particularly in the middle when the fleet dwindled to less than 15 boats.....Let's see who can survive getting beaten up in these old wooden boats so he or she can have the chance to hold up the Big Duck before we all have to put our socks back on and go back to school or work.

What World Ducks has not been is a race decided by technology. Over the years arguments have even ensued when some tried to install what was deemed too sophisticated bailing systems. If you wanted fast or you wanted slick, sail in your regular fleet. World Ducks was and is intended to be a different kind of regatta.

Second, the primary purpose of the charity donation incentives was to help restore a heritage Barnegat Bay fleet, to increase the fleet, in both size and range of competition, not to change the nature of the championship. There is a certain pleasure that comes from restoring an old wooden boat and remembering the days when what we did as kids was simply enjoy messing around in boats with friends.

Out of concern that the new construction could become a disincentive to older boat participation and/or that it might start to lead the fleet and regatta down a technology vs talent path, the World Duckboat Championship Regatta Committee has discussed this topic at length during the fall. This committee consisted of three past MYC commodores, three former WD champions comprising almost half of the 40 championships, three boat builders, several long time World Ducks race and regatta committee volunteers, as well as representatives from the Duckboat North Americans regatta committee.

The discussion went to the core meaning of this regatta. Do we really expect to grow the fleet? Would these boats be built if it were not for the new boat contribution incentive? What is the purpose of the donation and the current regatta? What should constitute a World Duckboat Champion?

After much discussion, the committee felt that, rather than grow the fleet in total, a new construction method has the greater potential to diminish it as old boats are rendered non-competitive. This is viewed as potentially bad for the regatta. The issue is not the quality of the workmanship or the use of the boat to help raise funds for a junior sailing program or other worthy charity, but rather weight and fairness of competition if raced by a competitive sailor for the World Duckboat Championship.

The committee also is aware and appreciative that these recent cold molded boats were well and attractively constructed with good intentions in support of a junior sailing program and a historical maritime museum and that those efforts should not be lightly disposed of.

To this end, the World Duckboat Championship Regatta Committee has made the following determinations:

- \* To qualify for the overall World Duckboat Championship, new duckboats must be plank on rib construction per the skantlings of the David Beaton drawings.

- \* Non-conforming boats (cold molded plywood or fiberglass construction boats) already built that have registered to sail in the World Duckboat Championship prior to Aug 28, 2010 will be grandfathered, but are restricted to junior sailors. Junior sailors wishing to compete for the overall World Duckboat Championship must sail a compliant plank on rib boat construction.

- \* The World Duckboat Championship Regatta Committee will endeavor to weigh several competitive boats in good condition boats at random to develop a minimum hull weight.

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