



JYC Summer Race # 6, Tuesday 7/28/2026:

Wind 200° @ 14kts at 1750. Tide: Incoming throughout the race.

Courses (see 2024-2027 South Bay Race Chart):

- Class A – #33, Zp13sOp, 7.4 miles
- Class B – #28, ZpTsOp, 6.5 miles
- Class C – #26, ZpTsQs, 4.5 miles
- Class D – #26, ZpTsQs, 4.5 miles

Prior to race start, RC reviewed the incoming pilot log and saw that a vehicle carrier would come southbound from Davisville/Quonset passing by the Newport Bridge at roughly 1750. We did our normal securite call on VHF 16 and 13 prior to the 1800 start, stating our location, the number of racers and the direction of the first leg of the course. We also notified our racers to stay clear of the channel during the starting sequence while the vehicle carrier passed by. JYC RC monitors VHF 16 and 13 throughout our races. There were 34 starters checked in for that race.

JYC RC had completed all starts at approximately 1825 when we first heard the call of the tug/barge heading north to Providence on VHF 16 that they were headed into Narragansett Bay. We were unable to catch the name but notified our racers at that point and again when the tug/barge announced he was at Castle Hill. JYC RC boat collected the starting pin after the 4 starts and proceeded back to the dock for finishes, landing at approximately 1835. I'm sure the tug/barge passed the Newport Yacht Club fleet first as the Newport fleet was heading south during the tug/barge's transit to Race Mark R (G "11" QG Bell) east of Dumplings. (I received confirmation of this via an email of a text from Kim Hapgood at Sail Newport.)

Just after R, the tug/barge let go a long horn blast followed by 4 more pulses. (It should be noted that some of our fleet only heard one very long horn with a few puffs afterwards.) He then came on VHF16 yelling about the "stupidity and uselessness of the RC to hold a race in the channel" (along with inappropriate swearing). He stated, "if I knew there was a race going on I would have slowed down." We shifted to VHF 13 after USCG requested that the tug/barge move off Channel 16 and asked the tug/barge what boats were in his way and told him they would be protested by the race committee. His response was that it was the whole fleet, so not helpful.

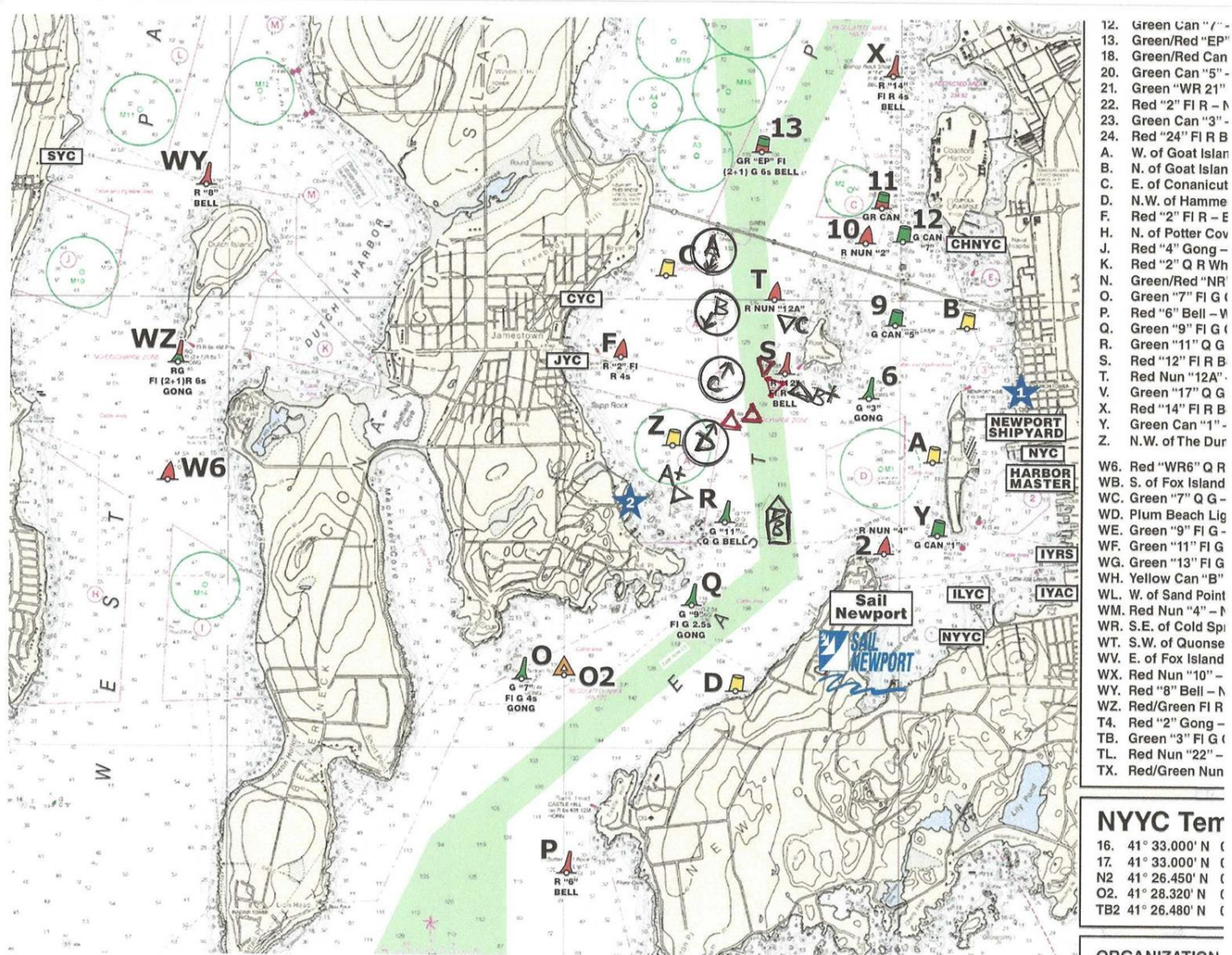
Meanwhile, on VHF 72, I reminded the fleet once again to stay clear of the tug/barge as it came north toward the Newport Bridge. RC continued to monitor VHF 16 and 13 throughout the remainder of the race and contacted the fleet on VHF 72 for 2 more work boats heading north from Beavertail into the Bay and under the Newport Bridge. The first JYC boat finished at 19:04:48 and the last boat finished at 19:47:21.



After the race I started contacting various boats from each class to determine the relative positions of the fleet in regard to the tug/barge at the time he sounded his horn. See attached diagram generated from the South Bay chart.

Since red nun 12A NW of Rose Island (Race Mark T on the South Bay Chart) was a mark of the course that evening we did have a fair number of boats in the vicinity of the channel, but not necessarily in the channel at the time the tug/barge was making his turn left from green bell 11 (Race Mark R on the South Bay Chart) to the Newport Bridge, with the exception of three boats.

Fleet positions when the horn sounded by the tug/barge are summarized from the various responses received and shown in the diagram below:





A class spinnaker boats with exception of Boudicca (RP66) were on upwind leg from 13 (G/R “EP” Fl G) north of the Pell Bridge heading south near Special Race Mark C to stay out of the tide. Boudicca was approaching Race Mark R from the Jamestown southern-most mooring fleet at that time, denoted as A+ on the diagram.

B class spinnaker boats rounded Race Mark T (Red Nun “12A”) northwest of Rose Island and were headed back south as well. Most of the class crossed the channel to the Jamestown side to get out of the current, including Slim Shady, Grimace, Spirit, and Picante. A few boats reported that they stayed along Rose Island shoreline, Five East, Life’s Journey, Mistral and Vento Solare. At Race Mark S (Red “12” Fl R Bell) southwest of Rose Island, Five East and Vento Solare rounded and headed east toward Newport, shown as B+ on the diagram. Life’s Journey and Mistral, however, headed to port back across the channel to the Jamestown side at Race Mark S in front of the tug/barge. Per Life’s Journey, he could see the tug/barge directly in front of him; “Right after we got on port tack, the ship was directly in front of my bow but all the way across the harbor near the Dumplings when he blew his horn.” Mistral’s position is derived from other class members’ responses as he has not responded to the several requests made by RC for information.

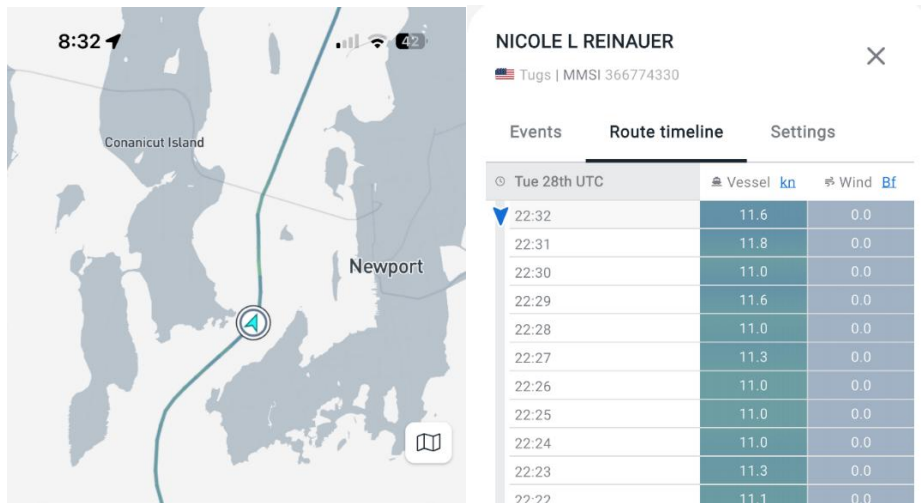
C class spinnaker boats were spread out heading downwind toward Race Mark T from Special Race Mark Z northwest of Dumplings. Several of the C class boats had reached Race Mark T, Epiphany, Wharf Rat, Luna and Barfly, so were out of the channel when the horn sounded. However, a few reported that they were in the channel when the tug/barge sounded his horn. Glory notified RC that they were in the way. “We didn’t see the barge until about 10 to 15 seconds before they sounded their horn. We had already ascertained that we couldn’t continue towards tango without interfering with him and gybed away immediately, doused our chute, and let him pass.” Glory retired after finishing the race. Blues Eracer was also very near the tug/barge when the horn sounded. Per their input: “We were near the tug when we were on the downwind. We changed course and slowed down out of the way on Blues Eracer and waited to return to the racecourse once he had passed through the channel. We gave room and were ready to jibe if need be. We will make sure to give even more room in the future.”

D class non-spinnaker boats, Phoenix, Grace and Presto, had rounded their weather mark and were headed northeast from Special Race Mark Z to Race Mark T but not yet in the channel. Chairman Arafat was still on the first leg of the course from Special Race Mark C to Special Race Mark Z on the Jamestown side.

The Nicole L Reinauer (the tug pushing a coal barge) came into the Bay from R “2” Q R Whistle (Race Mark K) to Dumplings at 11kts (see attached screenshot of his progress with speeds) and traveled approximately 3.5 nm in 10 minutes coming into the lower Bay. Based on his radio call on VHF 16, he suggested that he would have slowed down if he knew about a regatta, implying that he didn’t slow down between Dumplings and Rose Island. This speed would bring Life’s Journey, Mistral, Blues Eracer and



Glory in his path within the 2-3 minutes it took the tug/barge to traverse from Dumpings to Rose Island.



Findings: Via analysis, JYC RC believes Class B boats Sail # 61986, Life's Journey and Sail # USA 71, Mistral, and Class C boats Sail # 366, Blues Eracer and Sail # 158, Glory violated JYC Sailing Instructions para 15.3-5 Safety Regulations and the *Amalgamated International & U.S. Inland Navigation Rules 9(d)* for impeding the passage of the tug/barge which could safely navigate only within that channel or fairway. It should be noted that Sail # 158, Glory retired after finishing due to this incident and has been scored as such. As the tug/barge as the witness was unable to provide RC any sail numbers, we are unable to protest these boats.

There remains an open question as to why our securite and radio contact with the vehicle carrier were not heard by the tug so that he was aware of JYC racing on-going at the time.

Lessons learned:

- JYC RC should have utilized RC boat to physically intervene to move our racers out of the channel and harm's way. This would also have allowed JYC RC to protest specific racers as direct witnesses to the incident. At the time, we believed that the radio warnings were accurate and timely enough to avoid an incident.
- We are also considering abandoning the race for all classes, all JYC racers, when there are any close incidents which develop like this one.
- Continued training with our fleet is needed to improve understanding of the dangers involved and the perspectives of the commercial captains/pilots transiting Narragansett South Bay during our races.
- JYC RC will continue to work with the pilots and tug companies to get information on traffic planned during our Tuesday evening races throughout the spring and summer (17:30-20:30) and Sundays in the fall (1300-1630). We can then postpone starts or plan courses to better keep our racers clear of the channel.