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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The First “Lobster Run” a Success Story

The very first running of The Corinthians Stonington to Boothbay Harbor Race, already affectionately known as “The Lobster Run,” was won by a yacht whose navigation instruments had been knocked out by a lightning strike, and used a hand-held GPS to navigate to first-to-finish and class victories.

Ben Blake’s 53-foot *J/160 Atlantic* also won a trophy for being the boat with the most family members as crew (six out of nine).

The original fleet of 21 registered yachts had been hit hard by attrition, much of it due to damages incurred in the Newport-Bermuda Race. Then, just to prove that no ocean race is a lark, only five hours after the 14 starters were racing they were hit by two squalls as a cold front passed. The damage: Ray Peterson’s Swan 46, *Cygne*, retired with its mainsail blown out in gusts over 45 knots; Peter Ross’s Ohlsen 37, *Tynage*, retired after experiencing 50-knot winds; and Corinthians Master Bob Ebin’s Jon Meri 43, *Noord Hinder*, slowed by a ripped mainsail that had to be double-reefed to the finish. (The weather made sure the racers experienced every condition: two boats, Bob Fleno’s *Thai Hot*, and Tom Lane’s *Rally Point*, were becalmed and forced to turn on their engines just to make the post-race party!)

After a fascinating tactical battle around the two notorious Nantucket Shoals buoys between *Atlantic*, who had chosen to sail south of Block Island, and the two other contenders, who had rounded Block to the north, Jim Feeney’s 72-foot yawl, *Kathleen*, and Walter Kress’ Outbound 46, *Syzygy*, the fleet stretched out on a reach towards Maine. Here’s where *Atlantic* excelled, finishing around 6PM on Tuesday, July 29, taking line honors and winning PHRF Division B. *Kathleen* won ORR Division A. *Syzygy* crossed the finish line third, taking Division C and overall PHRF honors.

The event started in fine style with a Dark ‘n’ Stormy party at the wonderfully-appointed facilities of enthusiastic host club Stonington Harbor YC, provided by beverage sponsor Gosling’s Rums. It ended similarly on the grounds of the Maine host club, the Boothbay Harbor YC, beautifully situated and warmly welcoming. “The support of these two clubs is a large part of the reason for this great beginning,” said Jay Kizkiel, Operations Chair.

The awards ceremony was attended by a large crowd of racers and BHYC supporters, with Ben Blake and his family crew being presented with the first awarding of The Nantucket Lightship Trophy, a beautifully detailed model of an American maritime icon, once anchored at the location of the Shoals rounding marks.

Just to add significance to the event’s nickname, each of the top three skippers was surprised with the gift of a very large, live lobster to go with his award. Co-skippers of *Revelation*, Corinthian ocean-racing veteran Bugs Baer (75) and Eric Camiel (65) won the Ancient Mariners Trophy.

The first awarding of the new joint trophy for best combined times in both this and the 2007 Marion-Bermuda Race went to Jim Feeney’s *Kathleen*.

As The Corinthians sailing association approaches its 75th anniversary, on April 18, 2009, its membership had been seeking a way to celebrate that is in keeping with its great tradition of bringing together offshore sailors and boats in a way that furthers the development of the sport of sailing. This new ocean race is the result.

“The support of our two main sponsors, Gosling’s Rums and *Points East* magazine, has been of inestimable value to our getting this event off the ground successfully,” said Tom Lane, the founder of the race.

A consensus of comments from the racers: “This event had everything any ocean race could offer, but at half the distance [332 nautical miles], and with much greater convenience for crews and boats – and cruising in Maine!”

For full results, please visit the race website – www.stoningtonto Boothbay Harbor.com

Our sponsors:

Gosling’s Rums – www.goslingsrum.com

Points East magazine – www.pointseast.com

Official race photographer Daniel Forster – www.yachtphoto.com

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