



Light air, strong current for sailboat race



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Valkyrie and Misty in front of Fort Clinch during the June 15 sailing race.

Amelia Island Sailing Club, a member of the First Coast Sailing Association of Northeast Florida, held the fifth race of its 2024 season on Saturday, June 15, in Cumberland Sound. The 9.7-nautical mile race would normally have started about 10 a.m., but with a forecast of no wind until mid-day, the race started at 1 p.m. by Russ Ridley and his team on the race committee boat.

The cloudless skies were a beautiful blue, temperature was in the mid-80s, and winds from the east/southeast were light and variable in the range of 8-10 knots. There were strong incoming currents, especially in the St. Marys and Amelia rivers channels for the duration of the race as the ocean waters flooded into the sound for the 4:30 p.m. high tide.

Five boats raced, with a sixth having to return to port after encountering engine issues while on the way to the starting area. The one-nautical mile windward first leg directly into the incoming current proved challenging for the three faster performance class sailboats, as each tack across the

current resulted in slow forward progress towards the first mark.

After eventually rounding the mark east of Fort Clinch, the course turned north across the channel, which should have been a quick 0.2-nautical mile close reach before rounding that second mark onto a comfortable long 1.7-nautical mile run to the third of the nine turning marks in the race.

As the current pushed all the boats below the mark, several tacks into the current were required before finally rounding. The two slower cruising class sailboats suffered greatly from the light winds and strong current, requiring numerous tacks and setbacks by the current before finally rounding the first two marks.

The rest of the race was much better, with some slightly more favorable winds, which helped on the remaining upwind and cross-channel legs.

The race was long with the first boat, Bill Kavanaugh's Beneteau First 36.7 Tiger Tale, across the finish line in two hours and

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SUBMITTED PHOTOS

The Tiger Tale cockpit crew in action during the June 15 sailing race, above. Salty Sally on the first left, below. Valkyrie cockpit crew, bottom.

SAIL From 1B

five minutes, followed closely a little more than four minutes later by the J105 Valkyrie with Rene Brand on the helm.

Misty, Wilby Whitt's Baltic 35 with Fred Eichmann at the helm, finished 14 minutes later after racing for two hours 23 minutes. Negatively impacted on the first two legs as previously described, Gary Sanders sailed his Hunter 336 Salty Sally across the finish line more than an hour later at three hours 32 minutes, followed by Norm Wentworth's Catalina 355 Morning Glory after three hours 50 minutes on the race course.

After applying PHRF racing time handicaps to the elapsed times, the finishing order remained the same. Post-race refreshments were enjoyed by all on their respective boats after tying up back at their docks.

The next two AISC races, the sixth and seventh of the 2024 season, will be on July 13 and Aug. 10. Complete results and more race photos of the June 15 race along with the 2024 AISC racing schedule are available on the AISC website at ameliaislandsailing-club.wildapricot.org. All are welcome to race with AISC requiring just a club membership at \$100 per year. Visit the Club's website to learn more, and anyone with a boating interest is invited to join. Members have sailboats, power boats, pontoon boats, and many have no boats. The Club holds monthly dinner meetings, monthly races, and other social events throughout the year.

