

**“2015 Flight of the Bulls”
or “And Now for Something Completely Different, but Nice”**

A Cloud filled sky and a mild breeze from the west northwest greeted the sailors of the 45th Annual Bob McKibbin Flight of the Bulls. The boat park was VERY busy this year, with two outrigger canoes and a number of kayakers enjoying the waterways of Foster City.

Thirteen sailors came to test their metal in this long distance event. Twelve sailed. (Note to files.... Always consult your checklist before hitting the road... you can't sail if you don't have blades...but we will not name names on this one – it happens.) By popular consensus for the 2nd year in a row we chose to sail a reverse course. That is, we went to the Central Lake mark first then down to Cloud Park then returned through the start/finish area and rounded the eastern mark last. This gets the dash across the lake out of the way early, before wind builds and waves form. It worked GREAT. While the fly weights were popping in and out of their boats, most of the fleet did not need to hike too often this year. The winds were incredibly shifty from the west, but did not build to survival sailing strength as in years past. What was really different this year with the wind from the west was that many of the typically long beats and runs turned into reaches at times. The fleet completed the course in a little over 2.5 hours, a half hour shorter than usual. But don't think the quick race had anything to do with the course. To make sure Vaughn got his money worth of sailing for the day the Cloud Park mark was placed WAY over by the park to make for possibly the LONGEST Flight of the Bulls possible. No mercy by the RC.

After one general recall, the fleet (except for one Clydesdale with some really nice new glasses, but again, we will not name names) got a roaring start. Gordie nailed the start and appeared to be motoring. By the time the fleet got to Central Lake Gordie had what looked like a 25 yard lead on the second place boat. Looked like a horizon job day at that point. But, Art Lange, Paul Zander and Vaughn Seifert gave chase down the run under the bridge and past the restaurants. Meanwhile back in pack Fred, Walt and John P. formed a three pack down the back straight and really messed with each other's air down to Cloud Park and back. Fred dialed up heading past the restaurants and broke free for the duration (argh.) Meanwhile up front, Art was clawing at Gordie's heels through the start/finish line and up the canal to the eastern most mark. Art, displaying incredible tenacity, slipped past Gordie near the eastern mark and held the lead to finish 1st for the day. Close behind Gordie took 2nd for the day. Sailing very consistently and fast, Vaughn held off Fred to finish 3rd. Close behind Vaughn was Fred for 4th. Finishing up with the lead pack was Paul Zander for 5th. John P. (rather exhausted after being challenged by Chris Straub and Walt Andrews for much of the beat up to the eastern mark) crawled over the finish line 6th followed oh so closely by Chris Straub in 7th. Walt Andrews slid in shortly after in 8th. Clydesdale Kurt Lahr finished 9th. Santa Cruz woodie sailor Jim Savatone finished 10th. Clydesdale Dave Groechel finished 11th. And Ed Patterson wrapped things up in 12th.

After the racing and trophy ceremony, the group adjourned to a lovely barbeque at the home of Kurt and Kelly Lahr where stories of the day, other days and future days were told. Thanks Kurt and Kelly that was very nice of you. You are very gracious hosts.

A special thanks to Vickie Gilmour who dragged Beluga all the way down from Lake Merit so that we could race. Thanks a ton Vickie. And, thank you, Diane for starting and finishing the race and helping with a bunch of those RC details.

See you all next year on Saturday May 7th, 2016 (always the Saturday before Mother's Day, for 46th Flight of the Bulls!