

The Caribbean 1500 Rally in 2010

Bigger and Better

Our 20th Caribbean 1500 was great. The turnout was good and the weather cooperated giving most of the boats a very fast reach all the way to Tortola. Our veterans and volunteers helped make it a fun and rewarding experience all.

At the beginning of each year we have the opportunity to make changes to the events. We received a lot of good suggestions and have made some changes that we feel will be improve the events for all of our participants.

We have added the following classes to the Caribbean 1500 to provide more variety in the event.

- * **Double-handed Class** - Cruisers are the original shorthanded sailors and we have always had a number of double-handed entries. We have recognized their achievements with awards for Best Double-handed Performance and starting this year we will have a separate Double-handed Class. I look forward to welcoming our first Class 40 boats as well as others who enjoy a good double-handed race.
- * **Bahamas Class** – as many of you know, we introduced an event last year that started with the Caribbean 1500 in Hampton and ended in Marsh Harbor in the Abacos, Bahamas. In 2010, we will be combining the event with the 1500. We'll separate the Bahamas-bound boats in a Bahamas Class. Those boats will benefit from all of the Hampton activities and start with the 1500 fleet. On the other side of the Gulf Stream, they'll turn toward the Bahamas.

The price structure has been changed to give you more value when you join the Caribbean 1500

- * **Lower Costs** - We are changing how fees are charged in the Caribbean 1500. First by eliminating the fixed crew fee entirely. Instead, reasonably-priced dinner and drink tickets will be sold in both Hampton and Nanny Cay. By purchasing only the dinner and drink tickets actually needed you will help control your costs for the rally.
- * **Veterans** who arrive shortly before the start will no longer be required to pay a \$100 crew fee designed to cover costs of the full social event schedule. The fee schedule has been updated on the web site, so check it out. I think you will find it very attractive.

Here are some improvements that should make the Caribbean 1500 even better, especially for Veterans

- * **Veterans' Inspections** –Beginning this year, we are inviting rally veterans to complete their own inspection along with one or more crew members.

They will sign and submit their inspection form at registration. Veterans may request an inspection if they so choose. The inspectors reserve the right to spot check vessels before or after the rally. This change will allow veterans to complete the inspections process faster and before they arrive in Hampton.

- * **Handicaps** –Skippers will be permitted to enter the Rally Class up to two weeks before the scheduled start. After that time, the Rally Class will be closed. Boats may join the Cruising Class at any time. This will allow time for adequate research and improved handicapping.
- * **Weather** – Now that many boats have email capability on board, we will be able to email the Commanders' Weather forecast each day. This will allow us to provide more detailed information to your boat. Additionally, it will provide more information to boats on different parts of the course and will be particularly useful to boat arriving in the last part of the fleet. We will continue to discuss the weather daily during one of the call in periods on SSB.
- * **Shore Base Coordinator** – We are pleased to announce that, starting with the Atlantic Cup in May, Tim Hasson will join our staff as our Shore Base Manager. In addition to monitoring our SSB reports and adding daily updates to the web site, Tim will send daily information from Commanders' Weather to each of the participants with offshore email capabilities. He will also be available to advice families and friends of ralliers and forward urgent messages in both directions.
- * **Tortola Arrival Coordinator** – A CRA representative will be anchored near the finish line in Tortola. He will monitor the chats on SSB and man his VHF radio. He will help arriving event participants find a mooring in Soper's Hole and direct them to customs. He will also alert Nanny Cay Marina of each boat's likely ETA and give the crew their slip assignment at the marina.
- * **Web Site Services for the Veterans** – When you have a chance, go to the www.carib1500.com web site and click on "Great Stuff!" at the top of the page. Take a look at the new sections: "Special Offers," "Gear for Sale," Rally Boats for Sale." And "Rally Boats in Charter." We hope you find services here that you can take advantage of.

We're hearing great reports of the adventures this year's ralliers are having in the Caribbean this winter. The blogs and Facebook entries are terrific; footage on YouTube is exciting. Having fun and sharing the adventure is what it is all about.