



St. Francis Yacht Club  
**2024 Spring Fest**  
April 06 - 07, 2024

## Knarr IKC 2025 Qualifiers - Spring Fest 2024 Regatta Summary

The Winter and long wait is over, and we are back on the water. More than 60 boats signed up for the combined Spring Fest and ORC Championship and besides Knarr, Folkboat, J/105, and J/109, the larger and faster classes J/88, J/90, and J/120, also participated. We had a promising weather forecast. The PRO, John Siegel, and Event Chair, Jay Dean, and their respective team members did a terrific job.

### Day 1 – Race 1

It was a beautiful start to the season, the weather was great, sunny, with moderate wind 8-12 mph Out of SW, and transitioning tide, increasing ebb.



After a little postponement, we were off to a good start. Most of the fleet favored the shore in the building ebb, but a few boats off the starting line decided to tack early, to the lifted port tack and pressure on the right side of the course. US-39 “Thor” with skipper, Jeff Sporing nailed the start at the boat end.

**“First race of the season for team Thor!” said Owner and Skipper, Jeff Sporing.**

*“New sails, standing rigging, boat looking spiffy, crew in good spirits with Jeff at the helm, Ryan on main, Hamish on jib, and Gustavo in total control of the foredeck.*

*Our timing for the first start was spot on with a clear lane leeward to US-103 “Kulani” on the favored committee boat end (graciously left available by team US-103). Bang! US-103 tacks out with US-140 “Svenkist” close behind while we carry on starboard a bit further. Time to tack on port towards the stronger ebb... US-103 passes clear ahead coming back in... we’re not going to clear US-140... tacking!*

*Having been rolled from below several times last season we waited with angst, but there was a new gear in US-39 this year as the bow of US-140 disappeared from our periphery and they tacked away.*

*On to the windward mark with the lead pack and a solid downwind leg along the shore. Right gate and tack out the to ebb for a while. No flyers yet, time to head back inside, but what’s this? I think we just put US-135 with Jon Perkins in “New Project” in our blanket zone.*

*We managed to keep our cool and had another solid downwind leg with Gustavo gybing repeatedly like a pro as we tried unsuccessfully to reel in US-134. Photo finish with US-115, US-105, US-135, and US-102. We rejoiced at our progress and prepared for the next race hungry for more.*

*The next several races reminded us we have much to learn and that mistakes will be punished, usually with little hope of recovery.”*



It was US-103 "Kulani" leading around the weather mark closely followed by US-105 and US-135.

US-103 stayed on shore downwind, followed closely by US-133 Viva, and with great speed on the next downwind leg, Viva, skippered by Don Jesberg, known for his relentless grind-downs, who in the end won by 3 seconds ahead of US-103 and US-134 in 3<sup>rd</sup> and Ty Ingram US 115 in 4<sup>th</sup>.

### Day 1 – Race 2, 3

At the time of the second start, the ebb tide filled in across the entire course and more of the fleet was determined to go right off the start. The breeze was up slightly and chop, and whitecaps were starting to show. An all-clear start, it was US-105 "Lykken" with new owner skipper, Shaum Sinawi, who laid and rounded the weather mark first. Closely followed by US-128 "Niuhi" with Randy Hecht and Russ Silvestri, and US-103 "Kulani" and US-133 "Viva" in fourth.

The race was tight on shore, where current relief was obvious. US-104 "Flyer", with Skipper, Chris Kelly found some good pressure and positioned well to improve over first race and finish in 6<sup>th</sup>.

US-128 who picked the right gate extended on the upwind leg and held the position on the downwind lake to finish ahead of US-133, and US-103 in third. US-105 scored 5 and 5 in the first two races.

In Race 3 US-133 "Viva" squeezed in a win ahead of US-102 Benino, and Jon Perkins in US-135 "New Project" in third. US-114 "Brothers" Robin Driscoll improved performance throughout the day and ended in 4<sup>th</sup> in the last race of the day.

### Day-2 – Race 4,5,6

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Race:

After the postponement waiting for wind, we got off just after 1 PM. It was US 103 "Kulani" who go the first tack in to seek a stronger ebb tide and better pressure on the right side. Kulani held a commanding lead to finish first ahead of US-134 "Serena" by skipper John Buestad and Tactician, John "Chewie" Steward, and US-133 "Viva" in third, and US 102 "Benino" was not far behind in 4<sup>th</sup>.



#### 5<sup>th</sup> Race:

After general recall, we were off and US 114 "Brothers" won the boat end with a perfectly timed start and tacked away first. It was quite a tight parade sailing downwind, neck to neck, 10 boats on a string. US-114 "Brothers" came out on top, had a clean rounding. US-102 "Benino" went into shore further and found some lift. US-114 "Brothers" held the lead to the last downwind leg when US 102 "Benino" managed to overtake them to win the race, with US-128 "Niuhi" in 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**From the cockpit of US-102 “Benino”, tactician Mike Peterson observed..**

*” Day two was a very good day for Team “Benino” and it shows how well the race committee did. The conditions were challenging, which showed how the fleet is improving overall, especially Robin in US-114, AKA, “Brothers”.*

*“Benino”, US-102 started as the second to most far left the boat at the pin, while US-114 executed a perfect start at the far opposite end at the committee boat. Both boats converged at the same time, with “Benino” tacking to leeward of US-114. This happened about 100 yards from the weather mark!*

*“Brothers” did a great job on a challenging layline call from way out in the bay on starboard and got to the weather mark with us well ahead of the peloton.*

*This is a testament to how hard the race committee worked to make lines that were fair and competitive. The often shifting wind as well as the ebb tide especially, made for lots of work.*

*We had to work real hard just to keep our air clear and stay away from the pack on the downwind. This weekend was as close as I can ever remember the fleet competing on the down line legs. So tight!*

*Robin and his crew did a stellar job working their way through it and stay right with us all the way to the end of that race. It was a wonderful view for us, to see Randy in US-128 “Niuhi” throw in a fast jibe to starboard trying to scare Robin into jibing back to starboard.*

*But he definitely held his own, got across their bow on port by mere feet, and did not slack or slide back into the morass which was the tight fleet behind him bearing down.*

*For us, it was a gratifying finish, but particularly enjoyable to see people who have been so committed to the fleet and their boats do well. We all benefited from a hardworking race committee that made a racecourse so fair that opposite ends of the line came together and finished one-two at the line.”*

**We caught up with Robin Driscoll, Owner and Skipper onboard “Brothers” US-114 who shared his perspective of the same race –**

*“In race 5 we wanted to get to the right side of the course with a clear lane as soon as possible. Given the ebb and our work-in-progress starting experience, our strategy was to start as close to the committee boat with the ability to tack even it meant being a second row boat.*

*We got lucky, the second tier gave us room to start at full speed—on time—and we found a hole that allowed us to tack on to port immediately after the start. We had clear air and the “woody” was sailing fast in the ebb wind/chop condition. We overstood the lay line about a boat length. US-102 “Benino” was to weather and called the line perfectly. She took the lead and rounded about a boat length ahead. We maintained the same distance throughout the downwind leg trying not to tangle with each other and risk giving up the distance to the fleet.*







*The second leg was a repeat of the first. The fleet closed the distance on the last leg but we were able to hold off the lead boats in the fleet, following US-102 “Benino” to the finish for a second place. It was encouraging to see that “Brothers” can be as competitive as any boat in the fleet and a great motivation for us as a crew to up our game in preparation for the IKC.*

*Many thanks to John Buestad and the crew of US-134 “Serena” for working over the winter to make “Brothers” a contender. Also, a BIG shout out to the crew of US-102 “Benino” for its competitive sportsmanship and the Corinthian encouragement given us throughout the race. It made the race most enjoyable—of course, finishing second helped!!”*

**Final race of the weekend**, the distance was reduced to just 1 weather leg and 1 downwind leg to finish. US-134 “Serena” showed superior starting skills with a port tack start at the middle of the line and poked ahead. They lead to the layline, a single tack and nobody ever caught up again. A very crowded rounding and US-128 “Niuhi” had to exonerate herself after a foul. Right behind US-134 staying close to shore was US-133 “Viva” and US-103 “Kulani” who managed to fend off US-102 “Benino” with Mike Peterson on main and tactics.



*“Day 2, just as we start to find our stride again in the second race, we lost our main halyard and the racing weekend ended too early for team Thor on US 39.*

*The chorus line of There's Another Race Tomorrow will be ringing in our heads until May 1st when we all meet again.”* **Said Jeff Spoering when we met him on the dock.**

*“We as a team are truly grateful that Commodore, Chris Perkins willingly missed a weekend of racing his own boat to take his powerboat out and be the race committee for us. This after the Yacht Club lost their own boat to the difficulties of the boatyard delivering on time.*

*We know now that he provided a great amount of expertise supporting the race committee not only with his boat and setting it up, but also with directing traffic, explaining what was happening on the racecourse, and identifying boats and crews as we all finished often overlapping four to six boats deep!" Added US 102 Tactician, Mike Peterson.*

Winner of the series US-133 "Viva" skippered by Don Jesberg, was untouchable with an amazing consistent series of 1,2,1,3,5,2.

US-103 "Kulani" skippered by Eric Kaiser and main trim and tactics, Kurt Hemmingsen.

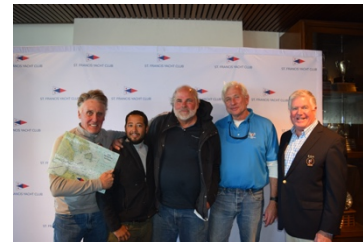
US-134 "Serena" with John Buestad, with Chewie and Ernesto in third.



Winner US-133 "Viva"



2<sup>nd</sup> Finish US-103 "Kulani"



3<sup>rd</sup> Finish US-134 "Serena"

**(Photo Credit: Chris Ray StFYC)**

### **Words from the Knarr Racing Enthusiast:**

A great sign of how our fleet has evolved into an evenly competitive field with opportunities for everyone at all levels of growth and skills is this:

- 5 boats had a 1<sup>st</sup> place finish.
- 2 boats, US-133 "Viva" and US-134 "Serena" had single-digit finishes only.
- Even more telling, 10 out of the 16 boats had at least 1 top 5 finish!
- 7 boats improved their performance on Day 2, based on a combined score.
- 1 boat improved its performance and shaved off 14 points between Day 1 (23 pts) and Day 2

### **TIPS for the Newcomer:**

Many of us noticed the inconsistencies between wind and tide models to predict what showed up on the racecourse for us. We had less wind and generally more favorable, as in enjoyable conditions than the J/105 fleet which is over sailing off of Treasure Island. I tracked two different models that were predicting ebb tides of up to 4.7 knots headed out the gate! That of course never materialized. Our estimation, we never saw more than two and a half knots of that the whole weekend. Also, a number of the models predicted wind shifting from the northwest pretty far over to the west and that never really seemed to materialize either. Really turn it into a thinking game trying to synthesize the inconsistencies of technology models versus what you're looking at on the water. **Word from the Wise, Mike Peterson**

**Ask a fellow skipper about rig tuning if in doubt!**

As a reminder, the next regatta is May 18-19<sup>st</sup> Elite Keel by SFYC in the Circle. [REGISTER HERE.](#)  
In the meantime, we are looking forward to starting up the Wednesday Night Series on May 1<sup>st</sup>

See You Soon, Knarr Sailors! *Kneeeeffft!*

©Editorial by Knarr Race Chair and distinguished members of the fleet April 29, 2024

Photo Credit: Chris Ray StFYC