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In The Wind

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East Coast Championship in New Jersey

Rejuvenates Fleet



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President's Corner

Dear Fellow J/105 Sailors,

Our sailing season is in full force, and the pleasure of owning a J/105 should be about at its apex right now – in spite of a few repairs and replacements needed due to active use. We've had a good season in Corpus Christi, TX with steady, strong breezes for the most part and three to four J/105s on the line in most races. We still race in the PHRF fleet, but it's great to have the head-to-head competition of our one design. Hopefully, all of you are enjoying the season as well.

Our NAs this Fall will be in Seattle hosted by the Corinthian Yacht Club. My original plan simply was to fly up and hang out a little, perhaps pitching in on a mark-set or committee boat, but Chris Holmes egged me on to take my boat up there to compete. My reaction was that if I'm trucking my boat all the way to Seattle, we might as well stop in San Francisco to do the Rolex Big Boat Series!

So we are. I'm now the proud owner of a Triad Trailer. Since my son is now the owner of a J/105 as well, it is a "family investment." I have no desire to own a big truck, so Enterprise will accommodate us at a reasonable rate. We did a dry run bringing the boat back from Houston this Spring on a trailer rather than coming by water, and all systems seemed to work pretty well. After towing boats on trailers since I was 16, I was surprised to see that you have a full range of vision from the inside rearview mirror in the truck – the 6'6" draft puts the boat above the cab, so it's easy to see what the traffic is doing behind you!

Our friends at Fleet 1 in San Francisco are being exceptionally hospitable, as are the group at CYC in Seattle. The logistics of trucking a 34.5-foot boat that is 11 feet wide across the country can be a little challenging, but the host clubs do a great job of accommodating their visitors.

Another great feature in our Class is the concept of Invitational Regattas in which a local Fleet hosts a skipper and two crew to come over and join a host skipper and two crew from the host fleet for a weekend of racing. I believe our friends in Bermuda may have started the concept, but we've done it with Fleet 17 in Houston and Fleet 3 has been doing one in Annapolis. I'm sure others have been doing it as well. It's a great opportunity to experience racing in a different environment and see how other skippers and crew handle the boat. The biggest challenge is what to do with the skipper who is not on the helm – I normally don't want to displace one of our talented crew who know how to make the boat go!

I believe that our best opportunities for improvement come through competing with others, sailing with others and talking about it over a beer or some rum after the competition. In our first one-design regatta at the 2012 Midwinters in Houston, we had the boat less than a year. Although some of my crew claimed a lot of experience, we realized after getting an hourglass in the kite after rounding the windward mark, we did not know how best to get it undone. I'll save the embarrassment of providing all the details, but suffice it to say that the kite wound up going under the keel as well as

President's Corner

the rudder and being torn to shreds. That evening at a party hosted by Houston racer Bill Zartler, I told my crew to fan out to talk to other crews and find out how best to get an hourglass eliminated from the kite. The quest was very successful.

The next off-season, I took that kite to a sailmaker and got it reconstructed. We named it "Frankenkite" due to its interesting scar patterns, but it was great for use on breezy days or with inexperienced crew. It also served as a reminder that we always are learning.

At our Annual Meeting of the Executive Committee on Tuesday, November 3, we will elect officers and consider a few amendments to our Class Rules. Among the current officers, Ryan Simmons of Fleet 1 should move up to President, and current Secretary-Treasurer Mark Smith should move up to Vice President. Our Past President, Sara Billey, is in charge of nominations. Our Class is so successful thanks to the management of Chris and

Julie Howell and the volunteer efforts of those who serve as Fleet Captains and as officers on the Executive Committee. Everyone should consider taking a turn at being a Fleet Captain or serving on our Executive Committee.

Last call for letting me know when you get bent out of shape about something we are doing. My term as President ends on November 3. After that, you will have to hunt down Ryan Simmons in San Francisco.

Enjoy your sailing,

John Bell
#430 Kinderspel²
Class President,
Galveston Bay Fleet #17

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Photo by Will Keyworth

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Photo shows crew of *loulou* and Vice Commodore Jerry Orabona but not owner/skipper Paul Beaudin.

East Coast Championship 2026

By Jay Richardson, Fleet 10 (NJ & NY Harbor) Captain

The J/105 East Coast Championship was held July 11-12 at the Raritan Yacht Club in Perth Amboy, NJ in conjunction with the 80th Annual Red Grant Regatta.

Fourteen J/105s were registered and came from Long Island Sound (NY & CT), New York Harbor and Raritan Bay.

Two races were held on Saturday, with the first race delayed while waiting for the breeze to build. Eventually the race got started, and on the fourth leg, the fleet was hit by a serious rain squall. The competitors finished the race, but the wind had died and the visibility was very low, so there was another delay until the wind came back up (which eventually it did), and the second race got underway.

There was a big party Saturday night with a British Virgin Islands theme, and many 'Painkillers' were consumed, which led to some dancing.

Sunday started out with a decent breeze, and the Race Committee managed to get three good races in.

Paul Beaudin on *loulou* from City Island, NY won the Championship (his third East Coast Championship win), with David Willis on *Solution* from Huntington, NY in second place, and Ann & Gary Myer on *Magic* of Raritan Yacht Club in third.

Results:

<https://yachtscoring.com/emenu/50726>



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Paul Beaudin class specialist (pb@j105sails.com)





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October 15-18

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For more information on the 2026 J/105 North Americans including links to registration, see the website <https://www.2026j105northamericans.com/>.



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Summer 2026 Technical Committee Report

Matt Arno – Class Measurer, Fleet 17, Texas

Doug Bailey – Fleet 1, San Francisco

Doug Stryker – Fleet 3, Chesapeake

Tiller vs Wheel

You often hear arguments about how much weight you can save switching from wheel steering to tiller steering. Here are the numbers:

Pedestal: 38 lb

Quadrant and rudder shaft sleeve: 23.6 lb

Standard wheel: 9.2 lb

Pulley and chains: 10.6 lb

Wheel steering total: 81.4 lb

The tiller, tiller head and tiller straps must weigh at least 10.9 lb by Class Rule so switching from wheel to tiller can save you up to 70.5 lb.

Rule Change Proposals for 2026

In the winter newsletter, we talked about some changes being evaluated. Not all of those were selected to move forward. In particular, no changes are proposed for the mainsail. Consideration was given to removing the requirement to use slugs and to allow different materials of construction. There was not enough interest in either idea to move it forward to a formal vote on a Rule change.

The other potential Rule change which was tabled concerned changing the Rule regarding corrector weight location. The

ExCom decided additional research about the impact of any change was needed first.

That leaves two changes which are being moved forward for a formal vote. Neither is terribly significant and are basically clarifications or updates to match standard practice.

Support and Coach Boats

At a recent event, the Organizing Authority wanted to provide on-the-water coaching courtesy of a local sailmaker to multiple sailboat classes, including the J/105s. Class Rule 7.10 prohibits “Individual” support or coach boats from having contact with a registered racing boat except for certain circumstances.

A question has arisen regarding to whom “individual” applies. Does it apply to “individual registered racing boats” or does it apply to “individual support boats” and “individual coach boats”?

It has been the longstanding practice of the Class and the Technical Committee to apply this prohibition to any form of support or coaching regardless of whether one or more boats are supported or coached or whether one or more support and coach boats are used. To eliminate this potential confusion, the Technical Committee proposes that the word “individual” be removed from the Rule.

The proposed Rule is as follows in redline-strikeout format.

- 7.10 ~~Individuals~~ Support or coach boats shall not have contact of any nature, including (i) communication by radio, telephone, vocal signal, visual signaling of any kind (i.e., tactical placement, use of flags and/or different colors of clothing) or (ii) the transfer of crew, equipment or supplies, with a registered racing boat from the time the boat leaves its dock or mooring each day until the boat has finished racing for the day. Notwithstanding the foregoing, (i) late arriving crew, food and drink may be transferred to a racing boat prior to the first race of the day, and (ii) crew may be transferred in the event of a unforeseen personal emergency. Infringements of this rule will result in a penalty to the boat(s) associated with the support boat. Such penalty may be either penalties or disqualification at the discretion of the protest committee or jury.

Battery placement

A detailed reading of the Class Rules regarding battery placement has brought to the Technical Committee's attention that the allowed battery location can vary based on the cabin interior arrangement (UE vs Euro) although the French interior is not addressed. Class Rule 5.3.20 specifies the allowed battery locations and installation. Those locations are in the starboard lazarette

immediately behind the aft cabin bulkhead, or in the compartment immediately behind the engine. The Technical Committee has traditionally allowed any boat to place their batteries in either location.

Exhibit 7.3C, the equipment required to be on board while racing, requires at least one standard-sized battery in standard location for the interior layout of the boat. Further research has determined that the factory battery location changes depending on the cabin layout (interior layout). In other words, Exhibit 7.3C effectively limits a boat to a single battery location.

It has been the long-standing practice of the Technical Committee to allow any boat to use either location, i.e., behind the engine or in the starboard quarterberth. The Technical Committee believes it is better to allow a boat to choose for themselves which location they prefer.

The proposed Rule is as follows in redline-strikeout format.

Exhibit 7.3C J/105 Required Equipment

The following equipment and other items must be on board at all times while racing

1 standard – sized battery in standard location ~~(for interior layout of the boat)~~....



Charlie Garrard's J/105 *Merlin* charges upwind on the final day of racing at the Helly Hansen Sailing World Regatta Series at Marblehead Race Week. The team's performance earned the team its dominant class win and a berth at the Helly Hansen Sunsail BVI Championship. - *Walter Cooper Photography*

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HELLY HANSEN
SAILING WORLD
REGATTA SERIES
Walter Cooper Photography

Merlin's Marblehead Mastery

By Dave Reed

Its many years as a cohesive crew put Charlie Garrard's J/105 Wizard to the top of the class in Marblehead, and earn them the Caribbean Championship berth.

Merlin's domination of the J/105 fleet at the Helly Hansen Sailing World Regatta Series at Marblehead Race Week didn't just happen on a whim; it was the product of two decades of friendship, finely honed boatspeed and tuning, and a crew culture that balances serious performance with Fig Newtons, Branston Pickles, and every party on the regatta schedule.

At the center of it all is owner Charlie Garrard, steering the J/105 *Merlin*. His son Jack, runs the bow and between the two of them is a

team that can practically finish each other's thoughts: Alec Torrie, Scott Alexander, Gretchen Fisher, and Doug Sabin. The win in Marblehead itself was emphatic: eight bullets in nine races in a competitive local fleet. The foundation of the result is time in the boat—lots of it. Charlie traces the program's roots back two full decades.

"We bought the boat about 20 years ago, and the team we've been sailing with have been sailing together for nearly all those 20 years doing race week up here, Thursday nights, Saturdays, and BVI Spring Regattas. We love it, so we've been together for a long time. We're all good friends and just a great team of people to be with."

Merlin's continuity shows up most in the conditions that defined this particular Marblehead Race Week: two days of tricky

light-air racing followed by a punchier, heavier final day. Merlin's score line, and the way they managed the course, made it clear they had a different gear when the wind went soft.

"We did really well in light airs, and oddly enough, today with the one day of heavy air, we weren't doing that great. Even though we got another two bullets and a second, it was hard to get to those things. We had boats around us that we felt were quicker. We had good pointing on the first two days so we didn't change the gear for today. But the light air days, we were just golden. It helps that we got lucky in a few spots here and there."

The "golden" performance in light air had nothing to do with *Merlin's* magic, however. It was a specific, disciplined setup and a clear philosophy about how to make a J/105 move when the wind is barely filling the sails. Charlie breaks it down in simple, practical terms that any J/105 skipper would recognize.

"Our rig was down at the six to 10 range, so whatever the tuning guide says for that, and super light on the backstay. We have a lot of in-hauler on the jib when we go upwind, and then the main was always flowing off the telltales off the back of the main all the time. So, in the light winds, it's all about just keep the boat going. You know, don't try and point. You just gotta go for speed." That "speed first, point later" mantra carried through the entire event. While others may have chased height and stalled the flow around their sails, *Merlin's* crew was relentlessly focused on target boatspeed:

"The weight on the boat was more important in the first two days," Charlie says. "We were always trying to get to 6 knots, you know, get to 6 knots and go. That was our big thing. So, we were footing, footing, footing until we got to 6 knots, and it was all about whether we could power up the boat enough. It wasn't about point at all in the first two days.

"Central to making that mode work is the partnership between Charlie and Sabin, the team's longtime mainsail trimmer. On *Merlin*, Sabin isn't just trimming; he's co-driving the performance of the boat.

"He's really good," Charlie says. "No, he's awesome, and we have a great thing between us," Charlie says. "He just coaches me around the course. He's an awesome guy to sail with." With only eight boats on the starting line, *Merlin* didn't need elaborate, high-risk start routines. Instead, they leaned into clear communication and low-drama execution.

"Eight boats, so it's not super congested," Charlie says. "It's really between me and Doug is what goes on. We didn't really have to have a lot of time where we had someone on the bow saying go up, go down, and most of the starts, there was enough space to look good, find a gap and go. We decided which end of the line do we want to be on, and end up somewhere in that part of the line and just go for it."

If Garrard and Sabin owned the setup and the modes, young Jack on the pointy end owned the corners—where races are so often won or lost. As bowman, Jack Garrard's brief is simple in theory and brutal in practice: keep the maneuvers clean, fast, and drama-free.

"Keeping it clean is keeping it fast," Jack says. "So, if you can get it up quick and you can get it up without a twist, that's the name of the game. And a lot of getting it up without a twist is keeping it down, or getting it down clean. So, keep the sheets clear, keep the (spinnaker) tapes clean, and you're there."

Charlie doesn't hesitate to underline how critical that is to *Merlin's* consistency. "Jack had the kite up within like a quarter of a boat length of rounding the windward mark. The kite was up and full."

Behind Jack is Fisher, the boat's pit boss and "squirrel" who makes sure the spinnaker is

ready to go again. Their hoist record over nine races is the kind you can win a regatta with. Gretchen, the squirrel..."we only had one small twist. Yeah. Out of every nine hoists, one minor twist. That was it."

The same calm, deliberate approach applied to takedowns. "Takedowns were pretty clean too," says Jack. "We just decide in the last 10 boatlengths what takedown we're doing, and then just nail it. And we had pretty good takedowns." Off the water, the program walks a fine line between discipline and enjoying everything Marblehead Race Week has to offer. They were at "every party," as Charlie freely admits. The music, the food, and the nightly gatherings at this year's host, Corinthian YC, were top-notch.

Merlin's Marblehead win also punched their ticket to the Sunsail BVI Championship, a prize this tight-knit crew has been chasing for years.

"We are so excited to do this," says Charlie. "You don't know how long our team has been waiting to [be] pulled out of a hat to go do this. So, we are on. The whole team is coming down."

Jack, who's been to the BVI once for its storied Spring Regatta says he's been many less times than his father, but Charlie can't wait to swap Marblehead's windward-leewards for island passages: "I just can't wait. I just can't wait to go do it, like with my team of people who do this like once a year for the spring regatta... we're now going to do it against the other, you know, Sailing World Helly Hansen Regatta people. Can't wait."

Note: The Sunsail BVI Championship and Racer Chaser Flotilla is now open for racing sailors and cruisers to join the regatta in early November. [Click here](#) for full details on the Championship and the Flotilla experience.



Marblehead's Caribbean Challengers: Alec Torrie, Gretchen Fisher, Charlie and Jack Garrard, Scott Alexander and Doug Sabin. - *Walter Cooper Photography*

Calendar

2026

September 16 - September 20
Rolex Big Boat Series 2026
St. Francis Yacht Club
San Francisco, CA

October 14 - October 18
2026 J/105 North
American Championship
Corinthian Yacht
Club of Seattle
Seattle, WA

October 24 - October 25
2026 Fall Brawl Invitational
Eastport Yacht Club
Annapolis, MD



2027

January 18 - January 22
Southernmost
Regatta 2027
Key West, FL

February 12 - February 14
2027 Helly Hansen
Sailing World Regatta
St. Petersburg
St. Petersburg Yacht Club
St. Petersburg, FL

April 30 - May 2
2027 Helly Hansen
Sailing World Regatta
Annapolis
Annapolis Yacht Club
Annapolis, MD

May 28 - May 30
2027 Helly Hansen
Sailing World Regatta
Detroit
Bayview Yacht Club
Detroit, MI

Calendar

June 4 - June 6
2027 Helly Hansen
Sailing World Regatta
Chicago
Chicago Yacht Club
Chicago, IL

July 22 - July 25
2027 Helly Hansen
Sailing World Regatta
Marblehead
Boston Yacht Club
Marblehead, MA

September 29 - October 2
2027 J/105 North
American Championship
Lakewood Yacht Club
Seabrook, TX

November 14 - November 20
2027 ORC North American
Offshore Championship
Fort Lauderdale, FL



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