

RECAP OF BENETEAU FIRST 210 RENDEZVOUS REGATTA-LAKE LANIER, GEORGIA, OCTOBER 4-6, 2002

“A Rainy Night In Georgia” greeted seven Beneteau First 21.0 Owners and three invited guests to the 2002 “First 210 Rendezvous Regatta” at Lake Lanier, Georgia. Jay Harrell, 2001 Champion, organized this year’s event, which came off without a hitch. After the Friday evening skippers’ meeting we assigned sailors to our boats as follows:

Sail #14 F21.0	“ELECTRA”	Jay Harrell, Duluth, Georgia, F21.0 owner/skipper David Huggins, Duluth, Georgia, F21.0 owner/crew
Sail #34 F21.0	“THERAPY”	*Ron Stephenson, Decatur, Georgia, F21.0 owner/skipper Ken Poulsen, Boulder, Colorado, F21.0 owner/crew
Sail #38 F21.0	“ZAFU”	Niels Wade, Atlanta, Georgia, F21.0 owner/skipper Chris Russell-Wood, Washington, D.C., F21.0 owner/crew
Sail #58 F21.0C	“LET GO”	Terry Ellis, Buford, Georgia, F21.0 Classic owner/skipper Brandon Smith, West Marine/crew

Last year, we sailed non-spinnaker but this year we flew our chutes. Electra and Zafu flew asymmetrical spinnakers; Therapy flew a star cut symmetrical and Let Go, a symmetrical radial spinnaker. Electra and Zafu flew factory main and jib while Therapy and Let Go flew “racing” main and jib sails. We decided the four boats were “close enough” to race “One Design” and agreed to the first three Class Rules, listed below (I subsequently added the others to be discussed at next year’s Rendezvous Regatta):

1. The “First 21.0 Beneteau”, “First 21.0 Classic” and “First 211 Spirit” are “One Design Racers” for the First 210/211 Rendezvous Regatta
2. The jib sail LP must be within the limits of the aftermost position of the jib fairlead block on a track installed at the original factory location
3. The mainsail must fit the mast and boom attached at the original factory height (gooseneck hinge) above the mast step
4. The spinnaker may not be larger than the “Unadjusted PHRF” formula allows: i.e. luff $\leq I (28.2')$, mid-girth $\leq 185\% J (7.87' * 1.85=14.6')$ and spinnaker pole length $\leq 100\% J (7.87')$
5. Boats must sail with an outboard motor sufficient to propel the boat at “hull speed” (5.5 knots) for at least 60 minutes, but the motor does not have to be mounted on the outboard bracket while racing
6. There is no minimum crew or crew weight, however, boats must race with standard factory standing/running rigging, controls, navigational lights and hardware when the boat was first produced, except:
 - a. The OB Bracket may be modified or replaced

- b. Running rigging may be added or replaced, including items like rigid vang, rope clutches, travelers, head foils, furlers and turning blocks
 - c. The factory forestay chain plate may be replaced or reinforced
 - d. Cockpit hatches may be enclosed and anchor locker installed
 - e. Rudders may be retractable for ease of trailering/mooring
7. At least one official race must be completed to determine the First 210/211 Rendezvous Regatta Champion
 8. The Champion is responsible for organizing the following year's Rendezvous Regatta as well as for ensuring the F210/211 Club non-commercial web site (<http://www.first210.org>) is maintained
 9. The purposes of the First 210/211 One Design Racing Class are to:
 - a. further owners' enjoyment in cruising and racing their boats;
 - b. introduce owners from distant locations;
 - c. share rigging, racing, handling and maintenance tips;
 - d. maintain the value of our boats;
 - e. promote One Design Racing of our boats.

As we motored to the Race Course on Saturday morning, a gentle westerly blew the lingering rain clouds away, ushering in a sunny, gorgeous day. We sailed in conjunction with Barefoot Sailing Club's Annual Open Regatta. We chose to compete on the "Closed Course" along with Elliott 770s, J/24s, Santana 20s and Catalina 22s, sailing in the Dixie Inland Yacht Racing Assn (DIYRA) Keelboat Fleet with Catalina 22s. Thereby, we competed "one design" and contested for the 2002 DIYRA Portsmouth Keelboat Championship. Racing under Portsmouth, time-on-time rules, our D-PN handicap of 97 was virtually equal to the Catalina 22s. The Race Committee set up "Olympic" style courses, with Start/Finish line "off course" to keep the course "open". Wind at 5 knots, clear skies, blue lake, distant mountains and 70-degree air temp, was a beautiful "site to see"! Looking about, I felt our F210s were the prettiest boats on the course.

The first race began at Noon with boats "bunched up" at the start, then splitting onto port and starboard tacks to windward. We sailed the port side of the course and got a nice lift to the Windward Mark. We then led the F210s around the course (W, G, L, W, L-Finish), 1st in F210s and 1st in DIYRA keelboat Class (Niels/Chris 2nd, Jay/David 3rd, Ron/Ken - 4th). After starting Race #2, we again sailed the port side of the course but this time, the starboard side became favored. There, Ron/Ken got lifted 1st around the windward mark and led all the way to a 1st in F210 and 2nd in DIYRA (Neils/Chris 2nd, Terry/Brandon 3rd, Jay/David 4th). On Race #3 we again sailed the port side of the course and got fooled again. Again, Ron/Ken went to starboard and rounded the windward mark first, barely ahead of the rest of us. On the down-wind legs we were able to sneak by all but Neils/Chris and thought we were 2nd. However, we later learned Neils/Chris were "over early", putting us in 1st F210/2nd DIYRA (Ron/Ken- 2nd, Jay/David 3rd and Neils/Chris 4th). The 10 a.m. Sunday Race #4 started with a gentle Easterly breeze and gorgeous weather. We got "our own private" lift to round the windward mark ahead, then fended the rest of the F210s off to finish 1st in F210 /2nd in DIYRA (Jay/David 2nd, Neils/Chris 3rd, Ron/Ken 4th). During Race #5 the wind slowed to a "zephyr" as we inched around the windward mark. On the down wind leg, we sailed

“off the rhumb line” to avoid being blanketed by the trailing boats. Then, we were lucky to round the lee mark just as the wind shifted 180 degrees! We simply gybed, caught the fresh westerly and passed even some J/24s and Santana 20s which started 5 mins ahead! It felt sweet to take “line honors”, 1st in F210 Class and 1st in DIRYA on that final race of the regatta (Ron/Ken 2nd, Neils/Chris 3rd, Jay/David 4th). Here are the official results as posted at <http://www.barefootsailing.com>, Barefoot Sailing Club’s web site.

First 210 ODR Class: 1st – First 21.0 Classic #58 – Terry Ellis/Brandon Smith - 7 pts (1, 3, 1, 1, 1); 2nd First 21.0 #34 – Ron Stephenson/Ken Poulsen 13 pts (4, 1, 2, 4, 2); 3rd First 21.0 #38 – Neils Wade/Chris Russell-Wood 14 pts (2, 2, 4, 3, 3); 4th – First 21.0 #14 - JayHarrell/David Huggins 16 pts (3, 4, 3, 2, 4). DIRYA Portsmouth Keelboat Class: 1st – Win Story - Catalina 22 #328 - 7 pts (2, 1, 1, 1, 2); 2nd – Terry Ellis Beneteau F21.0 Classic #58 - 9 pts (1, 3, 2, 2, 1); 3rd Ron Stephenson – First 21.0 #34 – 19 pts (6, 2, 3, 5, 3).

My “post-regatta” thoughts are: a) all boats were sailed equally, leads changing and “photo finishes”; b) Ron Stephenson never raced before yet sailed to a 2nd in F210 Class and 3rd in DIRYA Championship Class; c) Terry Ellis placed 2nd in DIRYA Championship, only 2 pts behind the winning Catalina 22; d) we sailed our F210s faster as the regatta progressed, getting used to “new crew” and learning sail trim; e) we sailed virtually equal to the race prepared C-22s with the same Portsmouth handicap yet, under PHRF, we must “give” C-22s 60 seconds per mile; f) contrary to previous beliefs, the F210 will sail as close to the wind as most racer/cruisers and is fairly quick, even in light winds; g) to be competitive, we need to fly spinnakers yet, the type of spinnaker doesn’t seem to make much difference; h) the condition/size/shape of the Main and Jib sails as well as crew balance and sail trim make a big difference in boat speed, i) the First 21.0 Classic was the fastest boat yet has a lower aspect/shoal draft bulb keel; j) the roller furler on the F21.0 restricts the size and “deck sweeping” effect of the jib sail; k) smooth/faired bottom, keel and rudder are essential for boat speed; l) the F210 does not need a mainsheet traveler because sheeting the boom too close to the boat’s center line “cups” the leech of the main, slowing the boat down remarkably; m) the topping lift must be firm enough to keep the boom from cupping the main sail leech (a boom kicker would be more convenient yet add weight and obscure vision); n) overall crew weight has little effect on boat speed; o) in light wind it is better to shift crew weight forward/in, reducing stern bustle drag; then shift crew weight aft/out as wind velocity increases to reduce leeway when beating and reduce yawing/induce surfing, when reaching.

Now, after two years, we’ve developed a close-knit “family” of F210 owners. In addition to racing, we enjoy our Saturday night “Rendezvous Steak Out” dinner. As last year, “Chef” Ken Poulsen served up delicious grilled Steaks plus Skewered Jumbo Shrimp, baked potatoes, Ceasar salad, dessert and drinks. Jay Harrell’s wife joined us for dinner. Also, my Laborador Retriever, Sassy joined into the fray! Still, our Rendezvous was pretty much a “guy thing”, my wife choosing to “vacate” for the weekend. After dinner, we watched a movie: “What About Bob?”. In it, Bill Murray plays the part of a schizophrenic/paranoid patient of Richard Dreyfus, who’s supposed to be a famous/egotistical Therapeutic Psychologist. Murray invites himself to Dreyfus’ “lake

home”, joins the “fam” there, learns to sail (“Look...I’m Sailing!!”) and overcomes his fears. In the process he drives Dreyfus “mad”, becomes the head of the “fam”, blows up the lake house, takes the boat, takes over Dreyfus’ practice and even marries Dreyfus’ sister! Ron Stephenson, a Pastoral Counselor, found this movie hilarious...we think? That’s why I call Ron’s boat “Therapy”* (even though Ron has not named it yet). “What About Bob?” also reminded us of the two “F210 Bobs” who didn’t “show up” this year: Bob Fields-Lake Hartwell, SC and Bob Truttman-St. Louis, MO. We also missed Bill Baker-Lake Hartwell, SC who couldn’t make it this year. Y’All Come Back Now in ‘03?

After Sunday racing, we cruised Lake Lanier. Ron/Ken and Jay/David headed up lake while Niels/Chris and Terry/Brandon sailed down lake to their dock. Then we sped back to the Awards Ceremony in a ski boat. By 5 p.m., our “2nd 1st” 210 Rendezvous Regatta was over! Our Sponsors were wonderful: Beneteau USA donated \$150 (thanks to Rachel Sweeney, Marketing), St. Barts Yachts donated \$150 (thanks to Jeff Knoll, Jacksonville, FL), West Marine donated beautiful Tee-Shirts which we silk screened and gave to each skipper/crew, plus a Brass Ship’s Clock/teak mounting board for our Perpetual Trophy (thanks to Brandon Smith, Manager of the Buford, Georgia West Marine Store), Lake Lanier Sailing Club to launch/moor our boats and camp out (thanks to Jay Harrell, club member), Barefoot Sailing Club of Atlanta which welcomed us, ran great races for us, fed us and shared “DIYRA trophies” with us (thanks to Margaret Sherod-Commodore and Tom Graham-RC PRO). We attached engraved brass plates to our Perpetual Trophy to honor these Sponsors.

As this year’s Champion, I will organize/coordinate next year’s Rendezvous Regatta. It will likely be here at Lake Lanier another year. However, I am contemplating other venues...maybe Lake Keowee, SC or even Long Island Sound, NY! Let me know if you have any suggestions. Also, I am going to “insist” on at least one F210/211 owner coming here from Europe. If they “win”, maybe we can all go to Europe to sail in 2004! Now, wouldn’t that be a “shame”? Please let me know if you have any questions, suggestions, corrections or additions.

Thank you all for making this year’s Rendezvous Regatta a fond memory,

Terry Ellis
6000 Chimney Springs Road
Buford, Georgia 30518
770-945-4505

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