# 2002 Winter Circuit

US National Secretary Bill Welch and wife Sherry send daily Circuit reports and photos. Below are excerpts from their daily postings.

## Midwinters, Clearwater, FL

### Sunday, March 10

Wow what a day!!! If you were not on the water in Clearwater, you missed it. Clear blue skies, light green emerald water, 65-75 degrees, with 14-16kts predicted.

They took us 1 1/2 miles off the beach to minimize the current effect coming from the north. But the waves were the story; no one had time to think about the current. The waves were incredible; 13-14kts (felt like 25) with swells of 3 feet and an occasional wave higher than the boat. You could not set off a plane even if you tried. The wind and waves built during the day with occasional puffs over 20kts. Several boats flipped, five went in, but the rest of us stayed out for three long rows.

The real thrill was the ride in. The tide shifted before we came in, the current was going out at about 12kts and the wind was from the Northwest at 11kts, creating a series of 3-6 foot standing waves at the breakwater. That was definitely an Ekati ride. Making things more interesting was the 10,000 spring breakers packed into the beach, about 50 power boats cruising the beach in the inlet, rock bands trying to play reggae, and the para-sailers and fishing fleet all squeezed into the mix.

### Monday, March 11

The wind built until the middle of the second race when the shimmies (weather) began to win out over the preceding weather, so the wind began to weaken for the third race. After all of the great wind yesterday this 6-knots with holes was difficult. At the second leeward mark, the end of the fleet sat in a hole for a few minutes, then set their poles with the new seabreeze (180 degree shift). The remarkable thing was that it took more than 15 min for the seabreeze to actually sweep over entire course, so filled in earlier on the right than on the left. Bill had been leading the whole race and remained in the lead even with the wind shift, as the RC shortened the course at the third windward (now leeward) mark.

### Tue, March 12

No surprise George Szabo and Brian Janney continued their strong performance and won the Midwinters easily. Today the wind went from the South East as predicted and was variable in strength and direction making the races frustrating and more challenging. Frequently all races were at full blast and overpowering, then changing later powering up and sitting in. The waves were small, due to the direction of the wind and the short time that it had been blowing, so surfing was infrequent. Upwind it was playing the shifts, and avoiding the holes. Six races had already been completed, so we only sailed one race today, then reached in to the dock and packed up to move to Miami. Hal Gilbreath picked up his fifth place trophy from last year, and Bibi Jezzi was awarded the Levinson Sportsmanship Award. It is on to Miami; it is still time to make it. Pack up the Snips up, and head south.

## Midwinters Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boat Name</th>
<th>Skipper/Owner</th>
<th>H/C</th>
<th>Entry</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>George Szabo/Brian Janney</td>
<td>USA 29872</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>1-1-2</td>
<td>1-1-2-1 (201)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom/Bridget Hallawell</td>
<td>USA 29842</td>
<td>2:1</td>
<td>1-2-1</td>
<td>1-2-1-2 (202)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hal Gilbreath/Hugh Hallawell</td>
<td>USA 29324</td>
<td>3:1</td>
<td>1-3-1</td>
<td>1-3-1-3 (203)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol Cronin/Andrew Mihm</td>
<td>USA 29996</td>
<td>4:1</td>
<td>1-4-2</td>
<td>1-4-2-4 (204)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birger Olsen/Conlin daFaire</td>
<td>NOR 29940</td>
<td>5:1</td>
<td>1-5-3</td>
<td>1-5-3-5 (205)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter/Shaolin Commette</td>
<td>USA 29114</td>
<td>6:1</td>
<td>1-6-4</td>
<td>1-6-4-6 (206)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John MacRae/Linda Rizzi</td>
<td>USA 29727</td>
<td>7:1</td>
<td>1-7-5</td>
<td>1-7-5-7 (207)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibi Jezzi/Dane Bianchi</td>
<td>BRA 29142</td>
<td>8:1</td>
<td>1-8-6</td>
<td>1-8-6-8 (208)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike/Tea Blackwood</td>
<td>USA 27788</td>
<td>9:1</td>
<td>1-9-7</td>
<td>1-9-7-9 (209)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex Mize/Nancy Gilbreath</td>
<td>USA 29147</td>
<td>10:1</td>
<td>1-10-8</td>
<td>1-10-8-10 (210)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hans Birkhoi/Al Williams</td>
<td>USA 29897</td>
<td>11:1</td>
<td>1-11-9</td>
<td>1-11-9-11 (211)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genezin Dino/Greg Salamon</td>
<td>USA 28811</td>
<td>12:1</td>
<td>1-12-10</td>
<td>1-12-10-12 (212)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherry Welch/Ed Sheeran</td>
<td>USA 29850</td>
<td>13:1</td>
<td>1-13-11</td>
<td>1-13-11-13 (213)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Welch/Doe Schilling</td>
<td>USA 29400</td>
<td>14:1</td>
<td>1-14-12</td>
<td>1-14-12-14 (214)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halvor/Ed Nerlson</td>
<td>NOR 29673</td>
<td>16:1</td>
<td>1-16-14</td>
<td>1-16-14-16 (216)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Gautraud/Jayson Johnson</td>
<td>USA 28880</td>
<td>17:1</td>
<td>1-17-15</td>
<td>(DNS) (DNS) (DNS) (DNS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ray Schmidt/Taryn Pitman</td>
<td>USA 29859</td>
<td>18:1</td>
<td>1-18-16</td>
<td>(DNS) (DNS) (DNS) (DNS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Hill/Bowe</td>
<td>USA 28825</td>
<td>19:1</td>
<td>1-19-17</td>
<td>(DNS) (DNS) (DNS) (DNS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob Foster/Karen Goforth</td>
<td>USA 29397</td>
<td>20:1</td>
<td>1-20-18</td>
<td>(DNS) (DNS) (DNS) (DNS)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Don Q, Miami, FL

Friday, March 15

The weather could not have been more perfect today in Miami: light SE breeze, 10-14 kts, light chop, 75-80 degree sun, water green-gray-blue clear water had a leisurely morning rigging and registering, and still had time to get two long windward-leeward races in.

Andrew Pimental and Carol Cronin were cranked up and going fast; they remarked that they never stayed with their 'game plan' but it worked better than expected. The wind shifted more with velocity that direction, with a few holes mixed in, making the tactics challenging.

Saturday, March 16

The weather forecasters were getting better; it was another spectacular day on Biscayne Bay. The wind was a gentle 8-12 knots out of the east, all day until we came in, and then it picked up a schedule of 10kts giving us an enjoyable plane into the club.

The scheduled start was for noon, and everyone was early enjoying the perfect conditions for sailing. Another windward-leeward course was signaled and the company general recall was completed, then we got down to racing under the Z flag. About five minutes into the race, just enough time to get the fleet spread out widely across the course, a monster 30 degree left shift came in with pressure. The magic was the series leader Szabo/Jeanney way to the right, with Duz/Wirth also on the right side. This shift proved to be a persistent shift, lasting until most of the fleet reached the windward mark. George went back to 11th and Aug 12th from a position of probably 28-30 after the shift. That is a skill that all of us can admire, since most of us find ourselves on the wrong side of the shift frequently and can never get back any boats much less over half the fleet. George explained that one he realized that it was a persistent shift he used every excuse that he could find to move towards the pressure. He tacked on the little shift and made ground on the leaders and the风 at a time. Andrew Pimental cleared the tacks into overly simple terms, as 'two distinct games': when you are in the lead and in front with clean air, you always move towards the middle between the rest of the fleet and the mark. When you are behind with no chance of clean air, the trick is to find a clear lane with pressure moving you towards clean air and the favored side; usually the clean air takes precedence over the favored side.

By the time the second race was started today, the chop was also confused with multiple power boats stopping around, some actually spectatoring, and a few PHEP boats practicing. Everyone was fighting so vigorously to get to the left mark did not realize that the shift had arrived, tacked very late, and ended up reaching for the mark.

When we got in from this unusually long day the Don Q drinks at the dock, the Cuban dinner was served buffet-family style and was wonderful.

Sunday, March 17

The weather was magnificent today for the final race of the Don Q. Early in the AM there was only a whisper on the bay, but we were promised 10-15 kts by the weather service, and they were right. Again the wind was near easterly, but we had a lot more chop today particularly at the windward mark. Just like the last two days, the left shift appeared on Q, and those that took the left early gained. George Szabo and Andrew Pimental arrived next to each other at the windward mark and watched races for several legs until George finally got a few boats between them, winning the race but not giving Andrew enough points to take the regatta.

1. Andrew Pimental/Carol Cronin 15.5
2. George Szabo/Bruce Janney 17.25
3. Augie Diaz/Gus Wirth 8
4. Birger Jansen/Cecilia de Paire 8
5. Peter/Clark Cornwell 11
6. Jim/Cindy Lowe 8.5
7. Jim Richter/Walt Dutton 45
8. Gonzalo Diaz/Michael Abrav 47
9. Bibi Jezz/Dante Banchi 49
10. Greg/Mark Jarchow 51
11. John MacRae/Linda Epstein 62
12. Gonzalo Diaz/Jim Hernandez 66
13. Ernesto Rodriguez/Robert Ramirez 66
14. Eric/Reinke/Kim Ovaranz 70
15. Hal/Keith/Chuck Hall 72
16. Jerry Thompson/Lynn Fitchpatrick 73
17. Michael Kain/Aaron Miller 81
18. Bill/Shevy Welch 82
19. Woody VanNord/Wynn Volunteer 85
20. Hans/Skipper/Jessie Williams 100
21. Robin/Baker/Jeanie Pelt 102
22. Gordon/Flaming/Pat/Mally 105
23. James Jan/Mark/Weiเดวิส 105
24. Ray Schmitt/Ray Pritchard 107
25. Greg/Chuck/Ron Hobbs 130
26. Tod/Tim/John Blackstone 131
27. Hal/Oliver/Paulson 135
28. Jay/Chen/Dave Colburn 145
29. Sharon/Deanna/Don Unsworth 146
30. Ben/Price/Mike/Aguado 150
31. John/Will/Will Hernandez 162
32. Christian Valero/Pablo Valade 164

St. Joe Bulletin 20 Apr 1983
Nassau, Bahamas

Wed, March 20 - Bacardi Cup

It is hard to describe how beautiful this place is to sail. The water is crystal clear, warm, and the wind is always blowing. It was very impressive this morning with 15-20kts from the east with a moderate chop. The committee boat could not hold it's anchor and we waited for about an hour before we got underway. I have to admit it is hard to concentrate on racing when the water is so beautiful. On starboard tack in the morning the sun was at just the right angle so that you could see your entire boat shadow on the bottom, mainhead to daggerboard. WOW! The fleet got off to a clean start, first attempt, without any individual recalls. The fleet tactics were predominantly "FG" (follow George) since he punched out early and fast taking all of us to the right corner for a single tack boat (but still a long 1 1/4 mile windward leg). Then downdraft. The "FG" mode continued as we sailed low and fast, by the lee, extending his lead. Spacy was flying, this was exciting racing. A few shots occurred on both sides, but it appeared the right corner was the ticket. As is the custom around here, we all sailed in to the club for lunch. This gave us a moment to dry out and repair anything lost or broken during the first race. It also requires extreme discipline to put the soggy boots back on and go out and do another race in the afternoon. The wind dramatically changed for this afternoon's race as the sun and clouds whipped to us earlier today, "the wind will die when the tide changes". Only 10-12kts, with a few holes but about the same direction. Once or twice, just to see if we were paying attention, a 40-degree left shift, and a 30-degree right shift came through mixing up the fleet. The "FG" method did not work this race since he was 5 of 6 deep most of the race, and we were faced to chase Robert Dunkley who led at every mark. Great racing.

This evening is the Bacardi Party with terrific rum drinks and Eddie's homemade snacks (the coaches sitters were to die for!). So life is tough on the winter circuit, somehow we will manage to get up tomorrow and do it again.

Thurs, March 21 - Bacardi Cup/ Gambling

This regatta just keeps getting better. With everyone else freezing with this huge cold front pushing down through the country, we are having a great time sailing in 80 degrees with 10kts from the south. The problem is the direction. For all of you who know Nassau harbor, the wind coming from the south comes over the island, and therefore is highly irregular. It was common to have 30-degree shifts and 30 degree headers only moments apart, and velocity changes of 3-6kts without warning. These made out were successfully able to manage the current, sail rapidly through holes, change gears every two minutes, and tack about thirty times each weather leg. The runs were almost as bad with great gains to be had with properly tacked jibs. Birger Jansen hit the first shift and never looked back; however he was pushed by George and Angie. The three of them worked away from the rest of the fleet, finishing in that order to win the Bacardi series. George Saba and Bryan Janney win the Bacardi Cup again.

Friday, March 21 - Gambling Day 2

Just another beautiful day on Montego Bay. The wind switched around to the west today as predicted, and it was warm and beautiful: break out the sun block. No wet suits required.

The RC set a windward leeward course in the morning in 8 10kts. Today the wind was much more steady and even across the course, however the current was much, so tactics were limited to get a good start...then go left. Jerry Thompson had a great start and hit all the minor shifts and got to the windward mark first. George was close behind him but could not pass him until the second windward mark. Angie found himself disco at the first mark. He still managed to pass both on every leg finishing a remarkable 8 after rounding 15 at the first windward mark.

As the sequence began the wind started dying. The current had switched and was now pushing us across the line, and we had our first recall, and then a Z Sig...The fleet went right in tight formation with several tacking away with minor shifts. The squall line behind us dissipated, and the frontal boundary in front was split. The last leg was totally all the wind with us. We drifted towards the windward mark spread out so that each of us had some fresh air, then a giant 40 right shift just before the mark turned the fleet sideways baring Robert Dunkley who was looking great wide to the left. George Saba and Angie Diaz led the fleet around the windward mark and then we crawled to the jibe mark. Woody Norwood felt right at home and loved the drifter, but it was painful for the rest of us. The wind started filling in, so that we were able to hike a little and rejoin all of us at the leeward mark. Then we had two short windward legs to the Northeast to test the fleet on the current's relative importance of current or wind pressure. George and Angie hit the hard right corner and made out the first time up, but on the second and last windward leg, Angie separated from George early in the leg moving to the left. Two-thirds up the wind went left about 15 degrees and that allowed Angie to close the distance; George was sweating. On the cross, George was still ahead. Great racing.

Saturday, March 22 - Gambling Day 3

20kts from the Northeast today. This was flat-out fun sailing, heavy air with only moderate chop. The RC set triangle courses which gave us screaming reaches. It was hard to concentrate since everything was so beautiful.

The first weather leg was tigh...