

The Skipper's Meeting for the Havana Race is getting close – next Friday – thanks!!!!.

Our communications czar reminds you to get your SSB's or SatPhones working and checked out, as well as the tracking devices.

So far, we've established communication with one SSB and a few SatPhones, and have accumulated SPOT and Delorme 'shared page URLs' for only several boats.

The sailing instruction Communication and Tracking Appendix includes the following concerning communications checkouts:

"The check-in with the Race Committee shall be either by SSB or through SAT Phone service. If possible good KATTACK tracking will be verified simultaneously. This communications and tracking checkout shall occur prior to the Skipper's Meeting. Race Committee will be monitoring 8.294 Upper SSB Simplex from 1800-1900 CDT (0100-0200 UTC) on 29 Oct and 1630-1730 CDT (2130-2230 UTC) on 30 Oct for SSB equipped boats, and at the same times on 850-433-2722 for SAT phone equipped boats."

Any communication to competitors initiated by the RC at PYC is expected to be only to report non-functioning of a tracker as determined by loss of track on KATTACK, and should not be likely. SatPhones having a North American 10-digit phone number should not require a calling toll from the calling party, while those with an international phone number (v. a domestic number) may well charge a substantial calling toll to the call initiator. If call initiation is required by PYC to inform the competitor that daily position reports are required, those charges will be passed on to the involved skipper.

So, keep your trackers tracking! Please refer any questions concerning tracking or communications to Murt Guild, Comm/Track Coord natsum@bellsouth.net The RC will do what we can to facilitate these checkouts expeditiously.

Concerning registration, the registration desk will be open from 1500 to 1700 Friday. There are a number of entrants that we have not cleared as a result of crew lists, crew waivers, and communications (generally Sat Phone numbers and operability). These will be the first items of business, prior to entrants receiving their entry packages (party decals, race marker, medallions, etc). So be prepared with these things. Get your communications cleared beforehand (re read the above extract and call in!); have your satphone (and cell phone) number along with your crew list and crew waivers in hand as you approach the registration desk!!

There is always the possibility of weather issues at the start – small craft advisory, 20+K wind from the SE, etc. The Organizing Authority has the discretion to delay the start if appropriate or necessary. Additionally, if a majority of the entrants are concerned with the start weather conditions we can do the same thing; and, this can be a topic for discussion following the weather briefing. Some current long range forecasts (www.windfinder.com) are predicting sustained winds of 24 – 25 gusting to 36 mph from the south early Sunday morning (these will undoubtedly change).

Rick Zern (zernrigging@gmail.com, 850 261-4129) and Tim Burr (TBurr@gallowayjohnson.com, 850 516-7212) will provide race management continuity in Pensacola until the racers finish in Havana and management is transferred to Kriegel and Oerting. They will also be a point of contact for any emergencies that develop during the race.

And lastly, I spoke to the USCG in Key West this morning, and they have asked that all vessels returning to Key West (and probably other US ports) check in with the USCG sector as early as possible prior to arrival (they would like 24 hours!). Contacts: 305 292-8727 or email skw@uscg.mil, or VHF channel 16. Their interest seems to be with passengers for hire, or unauthorized persons on the vessel.

Come on Friday!!

Bob K