



St. Francis YC director of race operations Robbie Dean leads the pre-start skippers' meeting

# NESPRESSO® *International* *18 Skiff Regatta*



St. Francis Yacht Club

San Francisco, Calif. Aug. 27-Sept. 1, 2012

Monday's weather: Wind 16k W; temp. 75F.  
Tuesday's forecast: Wind 18k WNW; temp. 65F.

Aug. 27, 2012

## *Opening day a crazy sweep for the Kiwis*

**SAN FRANCISCO, Calif.**

From first to last to first again ... what sort of Kiwi capers are these bold intruders from New Zealand pulling in the Nespresso International 18 Skiff Regatta, hosted by the St. Francis Yacht Club?

"We're just chipping away," skipper Alex Vallings said after he and his C-Tech crew



New Zealand's C-Tech team of Alex Vallings, Chris Kitchen and Josh Melonick swept the

of Chris Kitchen and Josh Melonick swept the event's opening day races the hard way with a remarkable comeback in the second race Monday.

The top five among 18 boats was filled out by Australia's Jonathan Witty, Grant Rollerson and class icon John Winning and six-time winner Howard Hamlin from Long Beach, Calif. down the coast.

Although there had been some doubt whether there would be any racing at all on the frenzied heels of the AC45s' America's Cup World Series on the weekend, 18 boats hit the race course on an uncommonly warm San Francisco day on the mid-70s, some struggling to stay upright a modest 16 knots of breeze in the late stages of a flood tide by the time the first race got under way at 5:21 p.m. PDT.

C-Tech passed the early leader, Australian veteran Grant Rollerson, halfway down the first downwind leg of the two-lap course and was never challenged, but that wasn't its most impressive performance.

When the second race started C-Tech jumped the gun, had to whip back to re-start and quickly found itself around dead last chasing everyone else to the first windward mark inside the Golden Gate Bridge.

No problem. By day's end, as the sun settled under the bridge and a three-quarter moon rose from behind, the Kiwis were first to cross the finish line and arrive back at the beach fronting Crissy Field.

"We had good downwind legs," Vallings explained, "and we caught all the shifts, got some good puffs at the top mark. Then [on the second lap] we jibed earlier than the other guys who had trouble laying the bottom mark."

#### first two races



The course was littered with flips



C-Tech (r.) passes Australia's Grant Rollerson to seize first place



Australia's Lumix was happy with pair of second-place finishes

[Downloadable high-res photo gallery](#)

#### Past winning teams

2002 General Electric (Howard Hamlin, Mike Martin, Andy Zinn)

2003 RMW Marine (Rob Greenlagh, Dan Johnson, Sam Gardner)

2004 Computer Assoc. (John Winning, Euan McNicol, Anthony Young)

That's a key part of the game sailing here: picking the currents and the shifts, skills which combined with boat speed are tough to beat.

Racing continues with two races Tuesday and Wednesday starting at 1 p.m., followed by a lay day Thursday before two more races late Friday climaxed by the traditional 7 1/2-mile Ronstan Bridge to Bridge Race from the Golden Gate to the Oakland Bay late Friday afternoon. The last two of 10 races will be Saturday.

*Nespresso* began their association with the sport of sailing as co-sponsor of Team Alinghi for the 32nd America's Cup campaign between 2004-2007, as well as being the Official Coffee to the event. In 2010, Nespresso and Wally, the world leader in yachting innovation, launched the Nespresso Cup, an international regatta exclusively for the Wally Class in Portofino, Italy, bringing together some of the world's most respected world-class sailors, to deliver one of the most aesthetically pleasing sailing regattas. America's Cup sailors Loick Peyron, Paul Cayard, Francesco De Angelis, Jochen Schuemann were the Nespresso Cup Ambassadors, adding their own individual style to this unique event. *Nespresso* is now Proud Sponsor of Emirates Team New Zealand, Challenger for the 34<sup>th</sup> America's Cup to be held in San Francisco in 2013. More information on *Nespresso* on [www.nespresso.com](http://www.nespresso.com)

## The leaders

(18 boats; after 2 of 10 races)

1. C-Tech, Alex Vallings/Chris Kitchen/Josh Melonick, New Zealand, 1-1, 2 points.
2. Lumix, Jonathan Witty/James Hozack/ Marcus Ashley-Jones, Australia, 2-2, 4.
3. Black Swan, Grant Rollerson/Justin Healey/Marco Schurman, Australia, 3-4, 7.
4. Yandoo, John Winning/David Gibson/Andrew Hay, Australia, 5-3, 8.
5. CST Composites, Howard Hamlin/Matt Noble/Matt McKinlay, USA, 4-5, 9.

2005 Pegasus (Howard Hamlin, Mike Martin, Trent Barnabas)

2006 Pegasus (Howard Hamlin, Mike Martin, Trent Barnabas)

2007 Pegasus (Howard Hamlin, Mike Martin, Paul Allen)

2008 Gotta Love It (Seve Jarvin, Sam Newton, Tom Clout)

2009 Harken (Howard Hamlin, Matt Noble, Paul Allen)

2010 Thurlow Fisher (Michael Coxon, Aaron Links, Trent Barnabas)

2011 CST Composites (Howard Hamlin, Matt Noble, Paul Allen)

[Complete standings](#)

[2012 high-res photo gallery](#)

[Notice of race \(including daily schedule\)](#)

[St. Francis Yacht Club](#)

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