



Johnny Heineken (r.) leads Joey Pasquali down a brisk Bay in Ronstan Bridge to Bridge Race

## St. Francis Yacht Club

# 18' Skiff International Regatta

San Francisco, California

Aug. 25-30, 2014

### Aug. 28, 2014

Thursday's weather: Wind 20-25k W; sunny, high temp. 66F.  
 Friday's forecast: Wind 10-20k WSW; cloudy, high temp. 70F.

### Heineken beats the Bay but 18s shut out San Francisco, California

Early every day at Crissy Field hundreds of San Francisco's hardiest citizens and their dogs can be found running, biking or walking briskly along the wind-swept Bay, where some may even be sailing later.

So, the brave and upbeat sailors from around the world fit right in for the 13th annual 18' Skiff International Regatta hosted by the St. Francis Yacht Club. They race faster than the wind, not for money but the thrill of it all, with winning almost secondary.

Almost. Survival also comes into play.

"It was a crazy, survival type of day," said Johnny Heineken, a local lad who, at 26, is a world kiteboarding legend and proved it again by sailing his hydrofoil to another victory in the Ronstan Bridge to Bridge Race, after six of the eight



An 18' Skiff needs a little help



The race committee kept the 18s on the beach

skiffs chose not to challenge the rugged combination of clashing wind and tide.

Howie Hamlin, the Long Beach, California veteran who has won 6 of the 13 events, noted, "Over the years we've missed maybe two races, but we've never blown off a Bridge to Bridge."

That was the six boats' call. Earlier, the race committee abandoned any attempt to start the class's own fifth scheduled race, citing incoming winds of 25 to 30 knots with an overpowering outgoing ebb tide.

Heineken said, "That might be the nastiest [Bridge to Bridge] I've ever sailed" - so nasty that he finished the traditional 5.3-nautical mile race from the Golden Gate to the San Francisco Bay Bridge around the corner of the City in 15 minutes - three minutes slower than the record he set last year.

Of the two 18s that started - David Liebenberg's *Only 18* and John Gilmour's *Flytac* - neither reached the corner before breaking down.

"You gotta try," Liebenberg said.

Concerning their own canceled race, ASCC skipper Brett Van Munster of Australia, who has won two of the skiffs' class races, said, "We had to look at what's going to happen the rest of the regatta if we're busy fixing our boats."

Graham Catley of New Zealand noted, "It's a safety issue. We had another drowning last year at Brisbane in similar conditions. A sailor was trapped underneath and couldn't get out."

For the skiffs, the Bridge to Bridge Race will count as a DNF (did not finish) or a DNS (did not start) and their own abandoned race won't count at all. They hope to make it up by finishing the week with three races Friday and two Saturday.

The boats are launching off the beach bordering Crissy Field west of the host St. Francis Yacht Club. Admission is free. The schedule calls for a total of 10 races through Saturday, two per day starting at 1 p.m.

[Ronstan Bridge to Bridge results](#)

[18' Skiff standings](#)

[Event information](#)

[Class information](#)

[St. Francis Yacht Club](#)

Founded in 1927, St. Francis Yacht Club, located on San Francisco Bay near the Golden Gate Bridge, is one of the finest racing destinations in the world. Each year, the City Front and the rest of the Bay challenges competitors of our 40+ hosted regattas with its famously unique conditions.

The Club's experienced Race Committee is a network of over 200 trained and dedicated volunteers. With a rich history of championship racing, StFYC has played host to numerous National and World Championships, along with a myriad of annual local regattas and racing



A couple of the 18s tested the waters

**Hi-res versions of photos attached**

series. The Club plays an influential role in the development of numerous racing handicap systems and is considered the birthplace of kiteboard course racing.

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