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Two 18ft Skiff veterans meet as Grant Rollerson (l.) drives SLAM across John Winning's Yandoo on Day 1 on S.F. Bay

10th annual

18ft Skiff International Regatta



San Francisco, Calif.
Aug. 21-26, 2011

Hosted by St. Francis Yacht Club

Aug. 21, 2011

Sunday's weather: Wind 12-18k WSW; high temp. 66F.
Monday's forecast: Wind 10k WNW; high temp. 67F.

Coxon sidelined, but his old guy rules, too

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif.

Trevor Barnabas tagged along from Australia to watch his son Trent crew for defending champion Michael Coxon in the 10th annual 18ft Skiff International Regatta, hosted by the St. Francis Yacht Club.

Good thing he did.

Coxon, suffering from a severe crick in his neck, handed off the skipper's role to the elder Barnabas on a few hours' notice Sunday morning and watched from the club's upper deck as he drove the Thurlow Fishers Lawyers-sponsored boat to a tentative seventh place in the first race and then a runaway win in the second.

That left them in third place in the 15-boat fleet after two of 10 races behind former winners John Winning of Australia, who scored a 1-2 day, and Howie Hamlin of Long Beach, Calif., who staged two remarkable comebacks for a 2-3 day.

Coxon watched every move from the club's veranda.

"I did something to my neck a couple of weeks ago," he said, "and it's just been getting worse."

It wasn't any better after a practice sail Saturday or



St. Francis YC director of racing Robbie Dean (l.) and principal race officer Peter Siegel conduct the pre-regatta skippers meeting



Walking the boats to the beach of the bay

when he got up Sunday morning and decided to turn the tiller over to Barnabas, an experienced but retired 18ft Skiff competitor.

"I just came along to help out and watch," said Barnabas, who at 58 is in the same age group as Winning and Hamlin, who are still going strong. "The first race we couldn't get out of our own way, but we did a few things to the boat between races and it felt really good in the second race."

The only problem was the bloody bridge of middle crew Aaron Links' nose.

"That was my fault," Barnabas said. "I missed a [control action]."

Coxon was seeking a medical cure for his back but was not optimistic about returning before the end of the regatta Friday, which would leave Barnabas on the boat for the whole run.

"I hope not," Barnabas said. "I don't think the body will hold up."

But Winning and Hamlin just keep on going, no matter what the conditions, which were more civilized than usual Sunday--- a moderate 12 knots of southwest breeze building to 18, with a friendly 2-knot flood tide making for relatively comfortable downwind runs around the 1.1-nautical mile windward leeward course from inside the Golden Gate Bridge to just past Alcatraz Island.

But it was tricky finding the way through the three- and two-lap races.

"The first race we came here and went there," Winning said.

He and Hamlin have new boats this year.

"But we're not fast upwind," said Hamlin, who has Matt Noble and Paul Allen as crew. "It might be because we're really light."

Competition continues through Friday, with Wednesday off. There will be two races a day, including the Bridge to Bridge classic late Thursday afternoon.

Standings

(after 2 of 10 races; 2 discards; skippers listed first)

1. Yandoo, Australia, John Winning/David Gibson/Andrew Hay, 1-2, 3 points.
2. CST Composites, USA, Howie Hamlin/ Matt Noble/Paul



Flying downwind on a flood tide



Love Machine takes a cold dip



Stand-in skipper Trevor Barnabas drives last year's winning boat to a win



A classic schooner meets John Winning's skiff

**Enlarged hi-re versions
of these photos and more
for viewing or downloading**

Allen, 2-3, 5.

3. Thurlow Fisher Lawyers, Trevor Barnabas/Aaron Links/Trent Barnabas, 7-1, 8.

4. SMEG, Australia. Nick Press/Daniel Phillips/Brant Demis, 3-7, 10.

5. Harken, Australia, Glenn Raphael/Ben Lawrie/Matt McKinlay, 8-4, 12.

7. Maersk Line, Australia, Graham Catley/Nick Catley/Riley Dean, 4-9, 13.

8. Yamaha, New Zealand, Dave McDiarmid/Andrew Archibald/Chris Burgess, 5-10, 15.

9. SLAM, Australia, Grant Rollerson/Justin Healey/Marco Schuermann, 11-5, 16.

10. Panasonic Lumix, Australia, Jonathan Whitty/James Hozack/Phillip Beuner, 9-8, 17.

11. White Lightning, Patrick Whitmarsh/Mark Breen/Charlie Smythe, 10-12, 22.

12. Death Dealer, USA, Brian Malouf/John Gilmour/Luke Lawrence, 13-11, 24.

13. O'Canada, USA, John Ladha/Daniel Inkpen/Trevor Bozina, 12-14, 26.

14. USA Black, Skip McCormack/Jody McCormack/Polish Mike, 15-13, 28.

15. Love Machine, Chad Freitas/Katie Love/Daniel Roberts, 14-16/DNF, 30.

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