



Left, the spinnakers of the big boats in the big PHRF 2 Class, which includes the all-women crew aboard the regatta's biggest, the Hanse 455, Bribery, punctuate cupcake-pretty Penn Cove like cherries on the top. Sailing a surprisingly tight race for such a diverse group, their fleet includes current leader, David and Vernice Cohen's Idaho-based J/90, Eye Eye. The Cohens, by the way, have never missed a Whidbey Island Race Week.

Far right, Kent Picknell's crew aboard his Vancouver, WA Melges 24, Apex, checks the bottom for seaweed.

Right center, the J/105 Lift Off tempts fate. Friday's races will see if their brazen behavior pays off.



Photo: Liza Tewell



Right and center, yes, that's a Mariachi band. And yes, their Mexican-style reveille raised the sleeping sailors on the docks and in tent city from their Wednesday night slumber.



Photo: Liza Tewell

Below, representing Oregon's Triton Yacht Club, the Olson 25, Ohana, bids aloha to the bluffs above Penn Cove's North Beach.



Photo: Della Hoag



Photo: Chris Phoenix



Left, Jaded's skipper Chris Phoenix practices his pugilistic prowess as he helps his crew punch their way to second place in the scrappy J/105 class for a second day in a row.

Right, fellow sailors and spectators in Coupeville were treated to the Schwenk's Santa Cruz 27 Wild Spinnaker Extravaganza, the likes of which haven't been seen since the 1980s. Thanks for bringing the colors, Stephanie!





Left, no strangers to race week, John Aitchison and his tight crew aboard the J/105, Moose Unknown, took home first place honors for Thursday's three races with two bullets and a second. With just 5 points going into Friday's racing they are poised to take home the overall trophy. It's just the halfway point of the regatta, however, and the fleet is one of the most hotly sailed one-design classes on the Salish Sea, so they'll have to fight hard to keep their lead.



Right, at Whidbey Island Race Week, all are welcome, including land and sea dogs.



WHIDBEY ISLAND Race Week

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Photo: Liza Tewell

Above, warm temps brought out 1980's-inspired reggae regalia and dancing with abandon to the infectious groove of Lion of Judah.



Above right, Jeff Whitney's Bothell-based crew on the sleek C&C 115, Elusive, rocked the 80's look both on and off the water.

Right, Ben Braden's class-leading (and hockey loving) Moore 24, More Uff Da, glides past the Coupeville dock.



Psst, remember to tip your bartender!



Left, Mike Kalar's Port Angeles-based Litonya darted around the course on Thursday to earn another bullet in the wily J/80 class.



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What better way to stave off Saturday's inevitable tears with a fun-filled blast from the past. Thursday's 1980's Reggae theme brought out a colorful cacophony of garb, from retro polos to tie-dye tees, plus boom boxes and wigs galore, including mullets, fros and dreadlocks. Even the weather seemed to join in and add to the light-hearted mood of the day. Under intensely blue and cloudless skies, the cool morning soon grew into a warm afternoon. And right on schedule, Penn Cove's forecasted westerly filled in by the noon o'clock first gun. With a waning flood, most of the day's first of three starts had at least one OE, but that minor inconvenience didn't seem to deter some of those who were a bit too hasty to take a bite out of the on-course side. Stuart Burnell's J/109 Tantivy, for example, turned their OCS, and a subsequent foul plus 360, into a tactical advantage and maneuvered to a third place finish, showing that a solid background of hard-earned experience can turn a negative into a positive. Others weren't as fortunate, however, such as Buckey's J/105, Insubordination, who managed to make contact with the committee boat's fenders at the start. After that, and a series of other unfortunate events, they retired from the day's third and final race, skulking back to the Oak Harbor marina with their tail between their legs and a whopping 12 points added to their score card. Regardless, if Charley and his committee can pull out more multiple-race days like Thursday's, Insubordination may be able to throw out that last-place finish. It's not inconceivable that they'll make a comeback, as they have several race week veterans, and winners, aboard, including Pat Denny, owner, and Gary Harr, skipper, of that infamous black boat, the J/29 Here & Now.

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