

JESSICA CUP —

Skipper Bill Belmont was naturally pleased to win the Farrallon Clipper class in last month's Jessica Cup (October 13), but to him the race will be especially memorable because he got to sail his 1952 woodie *Credit* alongside the classic beauty *Dorade*, which now graces San Francisco Bay once again.

"It was exciting to see her out racing as she's one of America's most famous sailboats," Belmont commented. "And, of course, (the 1935 56-ft S&S schooner) *Santana* was out — another of America's most famous sailboats — as well as (the 1937 8-Meter) *Yucca*, which is a West Coast favorite, and probably the winning-est boat on the Bay. It was just spectacular."

Built in 1929, the 52-ft yawl *Dorade*



was one of the first designs to come out of the then-fledgling design firm Sparkman and Stephens, and is considered by many experts to be the most influential sailing yacht ever built. San Franciscans Matt Brooks and Pam Levy purchased her in August 2010 and immediately put her into a full refit in Newport, RI, with the intention of preparing her for ocean racing again. Their goal was to repeat all of her early ocean races: Newport-Bermuda (done this June), Transpacific 2013, Newport-Bermuda 2014 (again), Transatlantic 2015, Fastnet, and Cowes. During her heyday, decades ago, *Dorade* won all of these races, a record that stands unbeaten today says Levy.

She's the first classic yacht the couple has owned. Two and a half years ago



Spread: Having returned to the Bay after a very long hiatus, 'Dorade' (foreground) was looking sweet as she chased 'Yucca' around the course. **Inset left:** Jennifer Hinkel helms her beautiful Farrallon Clipper 'Ouessant'. **Inset right:** A wave from happy rail-riders aboard the L-36 'Leda'.

ALL PHOTOS LATITUDE / ANDY

BEAUTIES ON THE BAY



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they were looking for a boat to daysail together on the Bay and, as Levy describes it, "ended up with a historic boat that needed a full refit 3,000 miles away, and that takes 8+ people to race."

After spending a year and a half going back and forth to Newport overseeing the refit while working full time in San Francisco, they finally got to spend the winter racing her in the Caribbean, winning her class in every regatta she entered, as well as the Concours d'Elegance in the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta.

"We both work in fields completely

unrelated to sailing, and we're both middle-aged with grown children," explained Levy, "so this has been quite an unexpected adventure."

Dorade and crew were late sign-ups for the Jessica Cup, but no less enthusiastic. Local crew members included Danielle Dignan who helmed, Melinda Erkelens, Bob Hanelt (owner of the classic yacht *Skylark*, another S&S design),

and Mark Adams. *Dorade* took second in the Marconi 1 class, losing to Hank Easom's *Yucca* (which won the Jessica Cup). *Dorade's* new owners put in a fine effort considering it's been years — perhaps 30 — since Brooks and Levy have raced on the Bay. Paul and Chrissy Kaplan's *Santana* took third in class.

"What's interesting for us is that the general feel here is a little more infor-

Clockwise from upper left: 'Leda' shows her winning form; Belmont's 'Credit' was sailing sweetly; The FC 'VIP' works toward Blackaller; 'Sequestor' holds off 'Brigadoon' in light air; the splendid 'Dorade' works up the Cityfront with Danielle Dignan at the helm.



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mal," Levy commented. "In Newport, even the older classics are driven with great resolve to win, and it's more competitive, I think, especially in the classics. One of our interests in refitting and bringing her to the West Coast is that we think these boats can be raced hard. When we race, no matter what kind of race it is, we race to win! I think that's still our mission," Levy laughed. "Hopefully that will inspire other people to do the same, right?"

One owner/skipper who needs little inspiration to race hard is Easom, who in his usual low-key style took home yet another win in class. He's won every time he's sailed the Jessica Cup, which he *thinks* is eight times.

Easom described his race, "After a delayed start, a beautiful westerly came in. We didn't know how the heck we'd do with *Dorade*. We had a good start. She tried a port-tack start, which I thought might work, but actually it didn't. We were overlapped with *Santana* at the start, but sailed out underneath her, tacked, then led at every mark... I guess we were faster, which is a nice thing to

have happen!"

Paul Kaplan can appreciate what it means to have *Dorade* on the Bay, "It really is a special sight to have both *Santana* and *Dorade* sailing together. The

"We had 'em the whole damn race until that last leg."

boats are similar designs from the same designer, just a few years different in age, and the hull shapes and aesthetics of the boats are not too different from each other. Matt and Pam have done a spectacular job with the boat. Matt has been very methodical in following the original design as much as he could during the refit — the mast is a brand-new wooden spar with internal halyards no less — a beautiful job."

There was no breeze to speak of at the scheduled noon gun. But about an

hour and a half later the breeze built up enough to allow one of the two anticipated races to be run.

In the Marconi 2 division, David James' lovely Lapworth 36 took top honors, followed by Bill Clausson's *Bird Curlew* and Allen Edwards' L-36 *Papoose*.

Among the gaffers, Ken Inouye's 34-ft gaff ketch *Makhani Kai* took first, followed by Hans List's Tahiti ketch *Sequestor* and Terry Klaus' gaff schooner *Brigadoon*. List was disappointed with second place after sailing a great race until the last leg, where he and his crew suffered two spinnaker-related foul-ups.

"I really did want to beat *Makhani Kai*, not only because Ken Inouye is a good friend, but also because my mother-in-law (Suzanne Statler) was on that boat!" List laughed. "We had 'em the whole damn race until that last leg."

Well, Hans, there's always next year. Perhaps then you may want to think about having Suzanne race on *your* boat! (See www.mastermariners.org for complete results.)

— michelle slade

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