



PORSCHEFEST 2007

DE Season Wrap-Up

Fall Vineyard and Winery Tour

2007 Annual Dinner Gala

THE NOR'EASTER

2007 OCTOBER 2007 OCTOBER 2007 OCTOBER 2007 OCTOBER 2007 OCTOBER 2007 OCTOBER 2007 OCTOBER 2007

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After The Zone... In Newport

Copy By Howie Finn

The last time the Zone 1 came to Newport, RI, I was introduced to the Pocono Region's annual Octoberfest, to which I have made a regular pilgrimage since. This summer, with the Zone Concours and Rally returning to Newport, I decided to combine both material loves of my life (I should define that!), Porsches and sailing, into one great weekend. As so often happens, events didn't work out as planned, but I think that, in the final analysis, things turned out better than I could have expected.

When I first read about the annual Zone 1 event coming to Fort Adams in Newport in the *Nor'easter*, I promptly filled out the registration for the concours and rally and popped it in the mailbox. It occurred to me however, that our family summer house, over the Newport bridge in Jamestown, was going through major renovations and without modern conveniences (plumbing); I wouldn't have a place to stay that was only 20 minutes away from the festivities.

Coincidentally, however, I've been a lifelong sailor, having been raised on the shores of Narragansett Bay. Looking forward to retirement (still too many years away), I've been researching and dreaming of sailboats capable of taking me to far away places in my golden years.

Having narrowed down my criteria for what I'd want in a boat, I began looking for an opportunity to charter something similar to my needs. Not wanting to fly to the Caribbean or some such exotic location, I narrowed my search to New England and came up with Bareboat Charters, owned and operated by Brian Blanks (a former Porsche owner) out of Newport. His yachts, conveniently, are moored right at Fort Adams where the Zone 1 activities were taking place.

Seeing an opportunity to double the fun factor for the weekend of the Zone's festivities, I contacted Brian through his website, Bareboatsailing.com, to inquire as to the availability of one of his boats during that weekend. The web site was full of information. From a complete inventory of the yachts to things to do in Newport, as well as suggested trips and timeframes from Newport to the various islands off the coast. Unfortunately, all the boats had been reserved for an annual race that was taking place on that date, but I was able to book one the following weekend, for 3 days. The web site advertises that all you need is food, drink, clothes, paper goods and top covers. Well, they weren't kidding!

I arrived with my First Mate in my 'Porsche tow vehicle' at the Fort Adams parking lot Friday afternoon, way over packed. Most of my inventory never left the truck. One of Brian's captains met us at the dock and took us out to the boat in the inflatable dingy (which came with a small outboard motor). An overview of what was on the boat, a 42-foot Beneteau, and how everything worked only took about 30 minutes. I gave "Captain Bill" a ride back to shore and with a handshake and well wishes for a good voyage we were left to spend Friday evening getting acquainted with our new home on the water.

The accommodations alone were more spacious than a room at the Goat Island Sheraton, with three private double berths, (bedrooms), two full baths ("heads" in nautical terms), a full galley with large fridge/freezer and ALL the accessories right down to a coffee pot, dish soap and sponges. There was documentation for all the electronics and everything was labeled or color-coded for future reference. I stayed up late playing with the dual GPS/radar system, plotting out a course for the next day.

Saturday morning we were up early after a great sleep on clean sheets. After breakfast, we cast off from our mooring and motored out for a slow cruise around Newport harbor then out to the middle of Narragansett Bay where we raised the main sail and jib, turned up the music and set sail for open waters and Cutty Hunk Island (off the tip of Cape Cod) on a beautiful sunny, breezy spring day.

We made it to Cutty Hunk late in the afternoon. The wind had picked up quite a bit so we rolled up the sails and fired up the engine to pull in to the harbor. The entrance to the cove is long and very narrow, leaving little room to deviate from the center of the channel without touching the bottom. Being that it was still early in the season the harbormaster had not yet put out the moorings. Wanting to tie up to something substantial, I pulled up the dinghy that we had been towing behind us, and grabbing a bow line I climbed in and attempted, unsuccessfully, to pull up one of the markers that are used to identify where the mooring chains are located during the winter months. After about 15 minutes of splashing about and getting thoroughly soaked, I gave up on that tactic and climbed back on board the *Ocean Breeze*. We proceeded to plan "B" whereby I motored out to the middle of the harbor where we dropped the anchor and let the wind push us back to set it nice and snug. With a storm picking up, we retired below decks to our warm, dry sanctuary to prepare dinner and kick back while the wind whistled in the rigging.

The morning arrived gray and wet. The storm had really brewed up overnight. I threw on my jacket and climbed up into the cockpit to see what things looked like. We had two neighbors pull in after we had arrived the previous day. One was a classic Hereschoff design cat boat and the other a sloop, slightly smaller than our 42-footer. The couple in the sloop were out on deck in their foul weather gear, looking down at the water. On closer inspection, I noticed that their boat was listing to starboard. It seems that during the night the wind had dragged their boat and anchor backwards, on to the sand near the rear of the cove. (They hadn't let out enough "rode" (anchor line) to lever the anchor into the bottom of the cove.).

The rain had let up but the wind was still howling. Our neighbors were not about to get their boat off the sand until either the tide turned or help arrived. So I headed back inside for some hot coffee to take the chill off. While eating breakfast we noticed out the porthole, that the Sea Tow rescue service

had arrived and pulled the sloop off the sand bar and was towing them over to the town docks, no doubt to write up a hefty bill for their assistance.

After the dishes were cleaned and stowed away we fired up the engine, hoisted the anchor and headed off up the channel and out into the bay. The waves were really pushing our boat around so we pulled the main sail out about half way (that's technically called "reefing" the sail, but as this sail rolls up inside the mast like a window shade I'll call it "pulling").

With the sail up, we killed the engine, rounded the tip of Cutty Hunk and set sail for Newport, about five hours away. Once in open waters the size of the waves increased to about 5-6 feet but they were following waves (coming toward us from behind), and the wind was rounding them off as they broke, making for an exciting roller coaster ride back to port.

As I negotiated our way along the coast, it seemed to me that my first mate was looking a bit grim. At the time I attributed her silence to the fact that I hadn't given her a chance to take the wheel and have some fun sliding up and down the wave faces, when in fact it was a bit of sea sickness setting in due to

huddling under the dodger to keep dry and out of the wind, but not being able to look out to the horizon, as you are constantly doing when you are at the tiller.

In any event, the wind brought us back into Newport harbor about an hour sooner than we estimated when we left Cutty Hunk. We dropped sails and motored in to the calm waters of the cove at Fort Adams by mid-afternoon. Finding our mooring by the long yellow floats attached to the pickups, we tied up and set about fixing a hot meal and picking up the few odds 'n' ends we had neglected to snug down before leaving that morning. We turned in early that night being nicely pooped out from the wind, salt air and challenge of the day's sail.

Monday morning we packed up the truck and called Brian to let him know we had returned his yacht and it was in 'ship shape' condition. We locked up the hatch, dropped off the key and set off for home in Massachusetts, swaying gently to the imaginary swells on route 95 as we headed north, into the wind.