

Knickerbocker Cup

August 26-30, 2009

The History of the Knickerbocker Cup

In 1977, Edward du Moulin was with his long time friend, the late Arthur Knapp, watching the Congressional Cup in Long Beach. At that time the annual Congressional Cup event was the only match racing event in the US. Ed noted to Arthur that every year the event organizers asked Arthur to find candidates from the East Coast to compete.

“Why not create an East Coast Match Race Series?” asked Ed. “The winner could be given an invitation to the Congressional Cup every year.” Arthur thought this was a great idea and so the concept of the “Cup” was born. It took five more years before it got off the ground, and in 1982, due to the combined efforts of Ed du Moulin, Herbert Greenberg and Marty Haiken, all past Commodores of Knickerbocker YC, the first Knickerbocker Cup Match Race Series took place outside Manhasset Bay on Long Island Sound. The teams competed in J36s.

The format was to gather four or five of the best known East Coast skippers, add some up-and-coming stars to open up the field, and to invite the best of the women skippers. The Knickerbocker Cup was a success from the beginning. Over the years a variety of racing yachts were used including the J36, NY36, Soverel 33, CS36, J35, Melges 24, J105 and now the Colgate 26.

In 1944, it became part of the Omega Grand Prix of Match Racing, an international match racing series. In 1995, the Knickerbocker Cup became affiliated with the Brut by Faberge Sailing Series, which was held in 5 countries around the world. In 1997, the Knickerbocker Cup became affiliated with the Cigna New York Harbor Series. In 1997 and 1998, the Knickerbocker Cup was sailed in New York Harbor. Also added was the Continental Airline Corporate Regatta sailed in New York Harbor, just prior to the Knickerbocker Cup.

In 1999, the Knickerbocker Cup was returned to Manhasset Bay, where it remains today. The World Match Racing Tour in 2008, accepted the Knickerbocker Cup as a World Tour Qualifier, inviting the winner to compete in the King Edward VII Gold Cup in Bermuda. In 2009, with the closing of The Knickerbocker Yacht Club, the event was moved next door to The Manhasset Bay Yacht Club which has been involved with the Cup for several years. MBYC is proud to be the new host club. Also in 2009, the Knickerbocker Cup allied with two other sailing centers to offer a three match series in three weeks. Along with the Chicago Match Race Center and Bayview Yacht Club, competitors have the opportunity to compete in three grade 2 events in a row in the United States.

Edward du Moulin passed away March 29, 2006. His support for the Cup was unwavering and he remained a vital and important force in planning and managing the event. He was very proud that the Knickerbocker Cup had gained status as part of the World Match Racing Association, of which Ted Weisberg, his nephew, is a past president and current director. Ed and Arthur’s dream of an East Coast Match Racing Event has become much more than they expected, with many top ranked ISAF sailors coming to Manhasset Bay to compete in world class match racing.