



# ANNAPOLIS YACHT CLUB

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **AYC Doublehanded Distance Race Set for Saturday, October 2**

*Annapolis, MD (September 3, 2021)* — Greg Cutter does considerable doublehanded racing. The Hampton resident has been competing in the annual Down the Bay Race for years with just one other crew member and enjoyed success.

During the pandemic, Cutter and wife Carie have exclusively raced doublehanded and recently captured class honors in CRCA Spinnaker class for the Cape Charles Cup.

Cutter, a chemical oceanographer on faculty at Old Dominion University, is looking forward to a new challenge to add to his shorthanded sailing resume. The Hampton Yacht Club member has entered the third annual Annapolis Yacht Club Doublehanded Distance Race.

“I was immediately intrigued when I heard about the event and wanted to do the inaugural race, but the logistics were a bit much,” Cutter said. “It worked out this year that I could get someone to cover my classes and we’ve got the logistics all figured out.”

Greg and Carie Cutter will be aboard the smallest boat currently entered under the ORC handicap rule – an Andrews 28 named Diablo. They have set up the boat specifically for short-handed sailing and make great use of an autopilot they have nicknamed Charon after the ferryman from Greek mythology who carried the souls of the recently deceased.

Cutter conceded that Charon will be doing much of the driving during the AYC Doublehanded Race, which is designed to last 24 hours. That prospect does not cause the veteran skipper to blink – it took 32 hours to finish this year’s Down the Bay Race due to light air that shut off.

“I don’t sleep much, and Carie is a pretty good napper, so I think we’ll be OK,” he said.

The 2021 edition of the AYC Doublehanded Race starts at noon on Saturday, October 2. Principal Race Officer Dick Neville will announce the course the morning of the race based on latest wind and weather predictions but is hopeful of setting a course of approximately 100 nautical miles. Neville may send the fleet north toward the Bay Bridge and south as far as Solomons.

“Unlike Down the Bay, which is one direction, this race will be different points of sail with plenty of marks to round. There will be navigational challenges, which will make it fun,” Cutter said. “You don’t know the course until almost until the start, leaving little time to plan strategy. If it’s light air, we can do well. If it’s heavy air, we may have to hang on for dear life.”

Last year, a whopping 37 teams participated in the AYC Doublehanded Distance Race, which was run under COVID protocols. Kathy Parks, event chair for the AYC Doublehanded

Distance Race, is hopeful of attracting similar numbers this year since AYC is able to hold shoreside activities before and after the race.

Organizers recently announced the addition of a “Mixed Doubles” sub-class within ORC. That was exciting news for Cutter since he is racing Diablo with his wife. There will also be an ORC Open Class, while the J/105 one-design fleet must feature teams consisting of a man and woman. Annapolis Yacht Club extends special appreciation for the local owners who donate their J/105 sloops for the event.

All boats will be equipped with a YB tracker, enabling racing enthusiasts around the world to follow the fleet on their electronic devices. Last year, the AYC Doublehanded Race received more than 2,200 views from folks located in 22 different countries. Organizers are excited to announce the YB trackers will now update every 15 minutes instead of every half hour.

Here in Annapolis, the race start attracts a large spectator fleet and AYC will have VIP boats hosting sponsors and their families out on the Chesapeake Bay.

The Friday night Competitors Meeting will be held at the beautiful AYC Sailing Center and provides an opportunity for teams to introduce themselves, enjoy snacks and beverages while also hearing from Neville, the PRO.

Saturday morning’s online Weather Briefing will be delivered by Chelsea Carlson of Sea-Tactics and provide valuable insight into the weather forecast since it is tailored for the course being used for the Doublehanded Distance Race.

Sunday evening’s Awards Party will be held at Annapolis Yacht Club’s main clubhouse and competitors can view on-water photos taken by official event photographer Will Keyworth. National Sailing Hall of Famer Gary Jobson, a renowned lecturer and author, will serve as master of ceremonies for the prizegiving and will interview the winners.

“Three years in, we feel we’re getting better and better at running the AYC Doublehanded Distance Race,” Parks said. “Competitors have given us really good feedback following each of the two installments held to date and we have implemented some of their suggestions.”

Paul Parks recently acquired a J/88 and is going to give the AYC Doublehanded Distance Race a try along with longtime sailing pal George Saunders. Those two men logged miles aboard Parks’ highly successful trimaran named Sundog over the years.

Parks and Saunders used the AYC Two Bridges Fiasco for preparation and had no trouble sailing the boat with just four hands. As always, conditions will dictate how the latest Sundog fares in a 24-hour point-to-point race.

“I don’t know how we compare with the rest of the ORC fleet, so we’ll see,” Parks said. “This boat seems to go very well under spinnaker, so if we could get some running and reaching conditions it would help. It’s sticky in light air because it doesn’t have an overlapping jib.”

Parks believes doublehanded racing is growing in popularity in the United States because American sailors want to test themselves in a different way. Shorthanded racing, either solo or doublehanded, has long been popular in Europe, especially France.

“Double-handed racing seems to have caught on to a degree in this country,” Parks said. “Clearly, it’s more challenging. You’re less likely to make sail changes. You want to be certain that whatever changes you make are going to pay off.”

The popularity of this event continues to draw support from industry and lifestyle sponsors with all who jumped on board in years one and two, returning once again.

David Walters Yachts & Italia Yachts are supporting the Awards Party and Trophy Presentation when the event wraps up on Sunday. “David Walters Yachts & Italia Yachts are proud to once again sponsor the AYC 24 Hour Double Handed Distance Race. We are proponents of the sport of sailing and the thrill of the double handed challenge. Our Italia Yachts have taken part in the event since its inception including taking 1st place in ORC for the past two years. We look forward to continuing our sponsorship of this event and collaboration with AYC. Be sure to look out for Italia Yachts on the starting line again this year”! Erik Haaland and Josh McLean.

Kirsten Rowan of The Mary Lynn White Team of Compass Realty is hosting the Competitors Meeting on Friday evening before the race. Debbie Hart and Dovie Metzger of State Farm are returning as supporters of the event by presenting the very important morning weather briefing by Chelsea Carlson of Sea-Tactics.

Entries are still being accepted for the AYC Doublehanded Distance Race. [Click here](#) to register.

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