



THE VIEW FROM HERE



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY SWIFTSURE

British Columbia has many great sailboat races but none quite so magical and popular as the Swiftsure International Yacht Race. This race has the perfect blend of a challenging and familiar course, a large fleet, high quality competition and, yes, a pre-race buzz in Victoria's Inner Harbour, which has captured the imaginations of sailors for generations. This West Coast classic will celebrate its 75th anniversary on May 24.

Pacific Yachting's relationship with Swiftsure goes back 50 years, to our very first issue in July of 1968. The cover features Paul Cote's *Jeunesse*, sailing in the Swiftsure Lightship Classic for the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club. The race roundup starts on page 7 and features pictures of 16 of the most notable boats, a full-page write up and a complete listing of the results, including both finish time and corrected finish time for all competitors.

This race was clearly a big deal back then and while we don't have the magazine real estate to cover it in the same way these days (the internet has become a much better tool to share race results with our readers, for a variety of reasons), it remains just as

important to the racing community in BC and the Pacific Northwest.

Scanning the race results from 1968 you'll see familiar last names like McKee, Buchan, Cote, Killam, Ruskin, Fryer and Vogel—several of these names you'll find on the entry list for the 2018 edition, though most now in their second or third (and maybe even fourth) generation. By participating in Swift-



sure you're adding your own name to the history books, and it's this connection with the race's long history that keeps sailors coming back, year after year, chasing that illusive class or overall victory.

The racecourse hasn't changed much in 75 years, and neither have the challenges. The course may seem simple on a chart, but once you mix currents and tide changes and sometimes-fickle, sometimes-extreme winds, even the most-experienced crews have to get everything

exactly right to even have a chance at winning.

Everyone knows what decisions to expect, but somehow that doesn't make it any easier. How close do you get to Victoria on your way to Race Rocks after the start; do you go inside or outside of Race Rocks (usually inside); how long do you stay on the Canadian side before crossing over to the US (not before Pillar Point); will you be able to round before dark, and when do you eat dinner; do you try to take advantage of the katabatic winds coming from the Olympic Mountains on your way home, or tough it out on the rhumb line.

But of course the trickiest and most frustrating challenge is left for last—making your way through the wind-hole golf course from Race Passage to the finish line at Ogden Point. Many a boat has seen its lead evaporate within sight of Victoria.

Win or lose, whether it's your first or your 50th, racing in Swiftsure is always an experience to remember. And that's what it's all about. The history, the challenge, the atmosphere and sometimes even the glory are all essential parts of this wild West Coast adventure. Here's to 75 more years of fun.

—Dale Miller



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