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**HavanaJournal.com: Cuba Travel**

## **Key West to Havana sailboat race Cuba Run 2010 update**

Posted December 17, 2009 by Publisher in Cuba Travel.

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John A. Webster | Founder and Commodore of [Cuba Run 2010](#)

A few years ago, two cat sailors - one British and One Australian, were being pounded by waves during a leg of the Great Texas 300 race. On that day, in between grunts and over the roar of the wind, an idea took hold: Why not race beach cats to Havana? The Cuba Run was born that day.

We put the basic concept on paper late last year, and work began in earnest to see what could be done to develop this event within a reasonable time frame. After one year, it looks as if all our work is paying off. The Cuba Run 2010 complete Cultural Exchange Event which combines two 96-mile open ocean races for beach cats with one full day devoted to cultural exchange and individual interaction with Cuban youth sailors. Already we have 33 teams signed up, and we expect to reach our registration limit of 75 boats long before the event begins.

We've got our basic website up and running, and you can find preliminary race rules, and most of the details about the 4-day program right there. We've built an extremely competent event management team that includes a well-respected Principal Race Officer, an event communications expert, a safety officer, and other management personnel.

The importance of this event is evident in the interest it has generated, not only from the local Texas

catamaran sailing community but also from many other like-minded sailors all over the USA and Canada. We've seen widespread media coverage already, here on Sailing Anarchy as well as many other sites and even a few stories in the Havana Journal! Sponsors are stepping up to offer assistance, one of which, Sullivan Perkins of Dallas, TX, developed our race logo and the graphic to the right, which will be emblazoned on flags hanging up and down the streets of Key West before the event. Another local company, Sail with Scott, will be supplying one of the chase boats, a Hobie 33 mono hull.

The four-day event has been broken down into individual activities with the first stage beginning on November 12th. That morning, up to 75 beach cats will start from just off the White Street pier in Key West and race 96 NM to Havana's Hemingway Marina. This open-ocean race isn't any longer than most of the GT-300 or Tybee 500 legs, though the Gulf Stream and high seas venue will likely provide significantly different challenges from the others.

The following day starts early, with some of the world's top cat sailors providing classroom presentations and instruction to a select group of Cuban youth sailors, exposing them to all aspects of catamaran sailing techniques. Immediately afterwards, our new students will get to jump on board the cats with team skippers to experience first hand the excitement and thrills of sailing in open ocean conditions on these extremely fast sailboats.

Once concluded, Saturday afternoon trophies and certificates will be awarded to the participating students and racing teams prior to a "pachanga" or a party being held at the Marina which will include Cuban food and live Cuban musicians to celebrate the event.

The sailors will grab a taxi in the morning on Sunday 14th Nov. and set off into Havana for a fabulous breakfast on the Malecon, and then they'll get ready to explore this wonderful and charming old New World city. Our tour will include the 4-mile Malecon, the Castillo de los Tres Reyes Magos del Morro, a picturesque fortress guarding the entrance to Havana bay, the Castle of the Royal Force. and a visit to the signature Capitolio Nacional Cuba (Cuba Capitol Building). Other attractions will include the old 50's era cars that are everywhere in the streets filling Havana with lots of picturesque photo opportunities.

The return race to Key West begins early on Monday the 15th November.

This event involves a potentially grueling and dangerous race lacking the "safety valve" that the other beach cat races all include - namely, the beach. Why would anyone want to get involved? Lee Wicklund, one of the GT300 sailors looking forward to this event said that experience and adventure are the most compelling reasons for him to sail to Cuba. "When it's over, we'll all have our stories to tell about it - those are our trophies. The adventure is the prize and the person who steps up and challenges himself to face adversity is the winner."

The Cuban kids will be winners too, and we think the sailing community will benefit as well. We look forward to providing more information to the Sailing Anarchy community as the event unfolds.

## Member Comments

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On February 05, 2010, Publisher wrote:

Update

The race will have 75 slots for boats. All entrants must fill out the registration form which will be available next week.

The race organizers have not yet received the proper authorization to visit Cuba then return to the US from the Treasury Department.

The visa approval process can take some time so entrants should apply for their visa as early as possible in order to be prepared.

Contact Terri Reuwsaat for more information

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