

**2006 Champions Regatta Report**  
*by Francis Angel*

There's a new knight at the Round Table. Jarl Wathne takes his place along side past winners, Danny Thomas and Reichard Kahle. Jarl will now have his name enshrined on the Sir Francis of Graham Trophy.

This was the fourth running of the Champions Regatta and by far it was the most competitive. Jarl Wathne survived the challenges of the other 15 captains, the famous Charleston winds and the voracious biting insects to finish atop the scoreboard.

For those of you who don't know, this is the only event on the calendar that the captains must qualify to attend. The field is made up of the top five skippers from each of three general geographical areas (Florida, North and South Carolina with Georgia and the Northeast). Last year's winner automatically qualifies to participate.

The event is held each year in mid March at the James Island County Park in Charleston, SC. Reichard Kahle and the merry men of the Charleston Model Yacht Club provide all the local support. This year David Brawner and Mark Rinehart flew in to act as Regatta Directors. Joe Walter, Chairman of the Florida EC 12 Association, arranged for each participant to receive a commemorative T-shirt decorated with the event logo.

Saturday morning things got off to a slow start since the forecasted 15 mph wind had not made it's appearance. A long 675-yard windward/leeward course had been set so three shorter heats were run while waiting for the wind to pick up. Chris Kakavas took the first heat, Al Sellers captured the second and Rick Gerry took top honors in the third.

After a short break the wind picked up and we switched to the full 2½-lap course. Joe Walter scored his only bullet in the fourth heat. Heat five went to Gerry Cobley. Rick Gerry claimed his second bullet in the sixth. A break was taken after every third heat to let batteries cool down and the feet rest. It was obvious that no one was going to be the dominant skipper at this event. One more heat was run before lunch and Jarl Wathne posted his first of two first places.

At the end of the morning heats the top five were: Jarl Wathne (22), Joe Walter (28), Gerry Cobley (28), Danny Thomas (32) and Bob Dudinsky (33).

After lunch the wind increased to a blustery 18 mph and 5 more heats were run. Kakavas posted his second win. In heat 9, Wathne scored his second and last bullet. Danny Thomas picked up his first win in heat 10. Not to be out done, Reichard Kahle took top honors in heat 11. Heat 12 was the final contest of the day and Danny Thomas bagged the last top spot.

Everyone except Wathne seemed to have flashes of excellence in one heat and in the next they would be mired deep in the pack. Jarl finished in the top third of the fleet in almost every heat. There was going to be one throw out at the end of the event so these scores reflect the throw out. Wathne had maintained his 8-point lead with a score of (39); Thomas slipped past Walter and Cobley with (47) points. Cobley held on to his third place standing with (59) points, Walter and Kahle were locked in a duel with (63) points each. John Bottensek was nipping at their heels with (64).

Reichard Kahle, acting as the local liaison, had arranged our dinner at "California Dreaming" which is undoubtedly the most popular restaurant in Charleston. When we arrived at 6:30 there was at least 100 people waiting. Thanks to Reichard's efforts we were immediately seated and treated to an excellent dinner. When we left around 8:30 there were still over 100 people waiting on line. Upon our return home, Linda took the van to the car wash and the guy wiping down the van asked where all the bugs come from, when she told him Charleston SC, he asked, "Did you ever eat at "California Dreaming?" It's indeed a small world.

Sunday morning the wind was up before we were and racing got underway after a short meeting and photo session. The direction had not changed, so we were able to use the same course. The original course had one innovation; there were 2 marks about 10 feet apart at the pin end of the starting line to simulate a committee boat. This proved to be very effective in preventing hooking in at the start.

After a good night's rest Kahle took the first heat of the day. In heat 14 Bottensek scored his only win. Rick Gerry woke up and posted back-to-back wins in 15 & 16. Kakavas listed his 3<sup>rd</sup> and final bullet in heat 17. Thomas mounted a late charge with a win in 18 and Gerry countered with another pair of wins in the final two heats.

It should be noted that just qualifying for this event is a testament to the skill of the competitors and in truth all are winners. Our thanks to David Brawner and Mark Rinehart who gave up their weekend to officiate this extremely well run event. I'd also like to mention that even with the high wind, no boats suffered major damage.

Rick West, our Class Secretary and Webmaster of Record for the Champions Regatta Series, has taken time out from building his new boat to post some photos of the event on the CRS page. [http://www.ec12.info/CR\\_2006.htm](http://www.ec12.info/CR_2006.htm) You might notice that the trophies the winners are holding are hard to see. They're curved glass with an etched line drawing of an EC 12 and the finishing position which proved to be well received but impossible to photograph.

When you look over the chart below you'll notice that every one had at least one bad race. Consistency was the key to Wathne's win. Jarl booked: 2 [1<sup>st</sup>], 4 [2<sup>nd</sup>], 4 [3<sup>rd</sup>], 2 [4<sup>th</sup>], 2 [5<sup>th</sup>], 1 each [6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>], 1 [12<sup>th</sup>] and 1 [16<sup>th</sup>].

| 2006 Champions Regatta |      |      |           |           |             |        |
|------------------------|------|------|-----------|-----------|-------------|--------|
| Captain                | YRN  | Wins | Raw Score | Throw Out | Final Score | Finish |
| Jarl Wathne            | 1588 | 2    | 98        | 16        | 82          | 1      |
| Danny Thomas           | 1405 | 3    | 108       | 15        | 93          | 2      |
| Reichard Kahle         | 1767 | 2    | 117       | 15        | 102         | 3      |
| Rick Gerry             | 1818 | 6    | 122       | 16        | 106         | 4      |
| John Bottensek         | 1911 | 1    | 120       | 14        | 106 *       | 5      |
| Gerry Cobley           | 1625 | 1    | 134       | 15        | 119         | 6      |
| Joe Walter             | 1624 | 1    | 136       | 12        | 124         | 7      |
| Chris Kakavas          | 236  | 3    | 152       | 16        | 136         | 8      |
| Bob Dudinsky           | 2095 |      | 163       | 14        | 149         | 9      |
| Al Sellers             | 2260 | 1    | 195       | 16        | 179         | 10     |
| Baron Bremer           | 2281 |      | 196       | 15        | 181         | 11     |
| Harry Mote             | 1756 |      | 207       | 16        | 191         | 12     |
| Robert Greer           | 1467 |      | 207       | 15        | 192         | 13     |
| Rick Hawley            | 1820 |      | 238       | 16        | 222         | 14     |
| Hal Slentz-Whalen      | 303  |      | 244       | 16        | 228         | 15     |
| Scott Todd             | 1578 |      | 282       | 16        | 266         | 16     |
| * Tie Breaker          |      |      |           |           |             |        |