A Wild and Wooly Start for the IOD Worlds

WRITTEN BY JEFF WALLS
WEDNESDAY, JULY 28, 2010 AT 12:13 PM

MOUNT DESERT — The International One Design (IOD) World Championships hosted by the Northeast Harbor Fleet began with a bang — but not from the starting gun.

With winds of 20 knots gusting to 25 knots out of the west-northwest for the first race of the championships, conditions were world class as the combination of 2-foot chop plus the constant wind tested the sailors’ mettle.

Before the practice race even started, the mast on Dram, skippered by Elliot Wislar from Long Island Sound #2 (LIS#2) snapped due to a backstay letting go. The mast came down in two pieces but all of the crewmembers on board evaded injury. It was a sign of things to come for day one of the championships. “It was like a tree falling in the forest.” Mr. Wislar said. It went crack and splinters went everywhere.”

“It was like a whole summer’s worth of wind, today,” said Cuyler Morris, a crewmember for Mr. Wislar.

Before long Firefly, with San Francisco #1 skipper Jim Hennefer, snapped a boom as a gust grabbed it on a gybe. And the real racing had yet to begin.

The course began just east of the Gilley Thorofare between Sutton and Great Cranberry Island with a windward start. The windward mark was an offset rounding the marks to port. The leeward mark was a gate giving competitors a choice of rounding the side closer to Great Cranberry or toward Sutton Island.

For more maritime news, pick up a copy of the Mount Desert Islander.
That Eliot could always handle his stick...almost as well as the man in the suitcase. This looks like he is skippering the Eleanor Roosevelt.