

SMALL BOAT ISSUE

July 2011

Sailing

The Beauty of Sail

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New Jeanneau
Hard chine,
easy to sail

The
Enduring
One-designs
that never die **Ones**



Everything's bigger in Texas

It might come as some surprise to sailors in other parts of the country, but there are big boats on the inland Lake Texoma. Big Texas-sized boats. Thirty to 40-footers. And lots of them.

Lake Texoma, which straddles the Texas-Oklahoma border, is the twelfth largest inland lake in the country at about 90,000 acres, with 580 miles of shoreline and distances greater than 25 miles between points of interest. With an average depth over 30 feet and some spots up to 100 feet, it is home to the kinds of boats that you would normally see on coastal waters. And it's big enough that Valiant Yachts, well-known for their bluewater-capable cruising boats, was based at Lake Texoma until the company stopped production earlier this year.

The Texoma Sailing Club held its Lakefest Regatta in April, with more than 50 boats competing in one-design and PHRF division. The club has been taking steps to bring more people to sailing, and boost participation. Club leaders, including Dave Long and Gary Witt, who remember when it was typical to have more than 100 boats participating at the Lakefest Regatta, added new programs including the new "leisure" class for people who own cruising boats with roller furling mainsails and who don't have large, well-trained crews. The Lakefest Flotilla was also added, with a more laid-back set of distance races taking place over two days. According to Witt, who served as



The fleet heads off racing at the Texoma Sailing Club Lakefest Regatta, above left, the annual charity regatta at Denison, Texas. The crew on the rail on Juan Mauri's Farr 39 *Enigma* hike hard, above right. *Fluffy Flanks*, a Beneteau First Class 8, bashes through the waves, top. Ken Hurst photos



race officer for the flotilla race, these nine boats probably would not have been involved at all if the buoy races had been their only choice. With a pursuit start based on each boat's handicap, the flotilla boats sailed a seven-mile course.

"These folks had a blast, and it's assured that the flotilla will be a fixture in future Lakefests," Witt said.

To boost involvement of young sailors, the Collegiate Challenge program was started by Dave Long, which puts students from regional Texas and Oklahoma college and university sailing teams on Texoma Sailing Club member "host" boats as crew for the races. Almost 40 students were placed on various boats, including a Farr 39, J/Boats, Beneteaus and a Viper 640.

"For many of the students this was their first time on a keelboat," Long said. "The

students were not just rail meat, but on the foredeck, grinders, trimmers, tacticians and even on the helm in a few races."

Celebrating its 25th anniversary, the Lakefest regatta continues its legacy as the first charity regatta in the United States by raising a total of more than \$2 million for children's charities in the North Texas area since its beginning. In 2009 the Texoma Lakefest Foundation selected the Make-A-Wish Foundation, whose purpose is to grant the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions, as the new beneficiary. Planning for the 2012 Lakefest began within a month after this year's event and the dates for the Lakefest Regatta and Flotilla have been set for April 13 to 15, 2012. Visit www.texomasailing.org for more information. --Ken Hurst