

HOOK Race 2024, the 41st Consecutive Running of the Death's Door Challenge

Saturday, July 20, 2024

The HOOK Race is a 189 nautical mile race on Lake Michigan held each year in July. This challenging event starts outside the harbor in Racine, Wisconsin, “hooking” through Death’s Door (Porte Des Morts passage), a narrow and often treacherous passageway between Washington Island and Wisconsin’s Door County Peninsula, continuing across Green Bay, and ending in Menominee, Michigan.

The HOOK’s new companion race, the Super HOOK, is offered during odd numbered years when the Bayview Mac race occurs *before* the Chicago Mac. (The idea is that Super HOOK racers, finishing in Racine, have the option to continue on to Chicago for the Chicago Mac, the following weekend). Thus, the Super HOOK is **NOT** offered in 2024, but will return in 2025, 2027, and so on. The Super HOOK is the HOOK times two, making it the longest race solely on Lake Michigan and, possibly, the third longest freshwater sailboat race in the world (after the Super Mac and Super Mac and Back).

The first HOOK sailed in 1984 with 12 boats. It was originally run on the same weekend as the Chicago Mac and envisioned as a shorter and less expensive alternative to the Mac. In 2020, when Covid cancelled the Mac, the HOOK substituted for the Mac and over 100 boats registered for the HOOK. That year, *Thunderstruck*, a Farr 60 owned by Rick Hennig, set a new course record of 21 hours, 9 minutes, 3 seconds of elapsed (uncorrected) time. The next year, 2021, *Thunderstruck* broke its own record with an uncorrected finish time of 20 hours, 20 minutes, 46 seconds. (This record still stands). In 2020, there were five PHRF divisions, five One Design divisions (J 109, J 111, Beneteau 36.7, T 10, S2 9.1), a Double-Handed division, and the unique Cruising (motoring allowed, with restrictions) division. In some years the HOOK also features a Single-Handed division and a Multi-Hulled division.

The Overall Winner of the 2023 HOOK Race was *Marica*, a J 110 owed by Shawn Casey with an elapsed time of one day, 12 hours, 23 minutes, 13 seconds and a corrected time of one day, 7 hours, 39 minutes, 43 seconds. Rick Hennig’s *Medicine Man*, an Andrews 63, won Line Honors for the HOOK and Super HOOK.

Medicine Man also took Overall Winner in the 2023 Super HOOK with an elapsed (uncorrected) time of 2 days, 2 hours, 16 minutes, 32 seconds.

Official HOOK events start Friday night, July 19, before the race at the Racine Yacht Club. Many boats arrive early and dock at the Racine Yacht Club or Reefpoint Marina on Thursday. Starting Friday, there is an outdoor rum party, dinner, live entertainment, a weather briefing, a skippers meeting, and free shuttle service between Reefpoint Marina and RYC. On race day, Saturday, July 20, the Cruising division's first warning is at 0830 hours, followed by the racing fleet's first warning at 0840. The HOOK time limit is 54 hours of elapsed (not corrected) time after the PHRF 1 start. The finish line is between the Race Committee trailer on the north end of the pier at Menominee Marina and a large lighted inflatable buoy. On Monday, July 22, post-race events include a rum party, entertainment and an awards ceremony.

All divisions, including Cruising division competitors, One Design division, and Multi-Hull division require a PHRF certificate. The Cruising division is designed to give first time HOOK racers a taste of the competition and racecourse. Cruisers may use their motor only as far as Chambers Island in Green Bay and must record their motoring time (which, of course, counts against them). Single-Handed division sailors must show evidence of a prior 24-hour solo passage, completion of a LMSS (Lake Michigan Singlehanded Society) solo challenge, or GLSS (Great Lakes Singlehanded Society) membership.

Come join us in 2024 and test your skills on the HOOK Race's Death Door Challenge!

Registration opens January of 2024.

Monte Pyburn and Fred Stritt

2024 HOOK Chairmen

hookchair@racineyachtclub.org