



Newport Bermuda Race 2016



Participant and Spectator Survey

Conducted By:
Bonnier Custom Insights
August/September 2016

Newport Bermuda Race 2016

Participant and Spectator Survey

1. Goals
2. Methodology
3. Data From All Race Registrants
4. Data From Race Participants
5. Data From Registrants Who Did Not Start
6. Data From Spectators
7. Key Findings



Survey Goals

1. Obtain Feedback From Race Registrants and Participants on Race Management and Race Logistics, Including Planning, Preparations, Safety Requirements and Communications
2. Obtain Feedback From Registrants Who Did Not Start
3. Obtain Feedback From Race Participants on the Race Experience and Return Deliveries
4. Obtain Feedback From Spectators on the Spectator Experience



Methodology

- An Online Survey of 2016 Newport Bermuda Race Registrants, Participants and Spectators was Conducted by Bonnier Custom Insights in August/September 2016
- Survey Response Was Solicited Via Email and Notices on BermudaRace.com and the Newport Bermuda Race Facebook Feed
- A Total of 833 Usable Surveys Were Returned - 456 From Race Registrants/Participants, 377 From Spectators
- 109 Respondents Identified Themselves As Captain/Skipper, Representing 59% of the Registered 185 Entries



2016 Newport Bermuda Survey Results From All Sailors Who Registered to Race

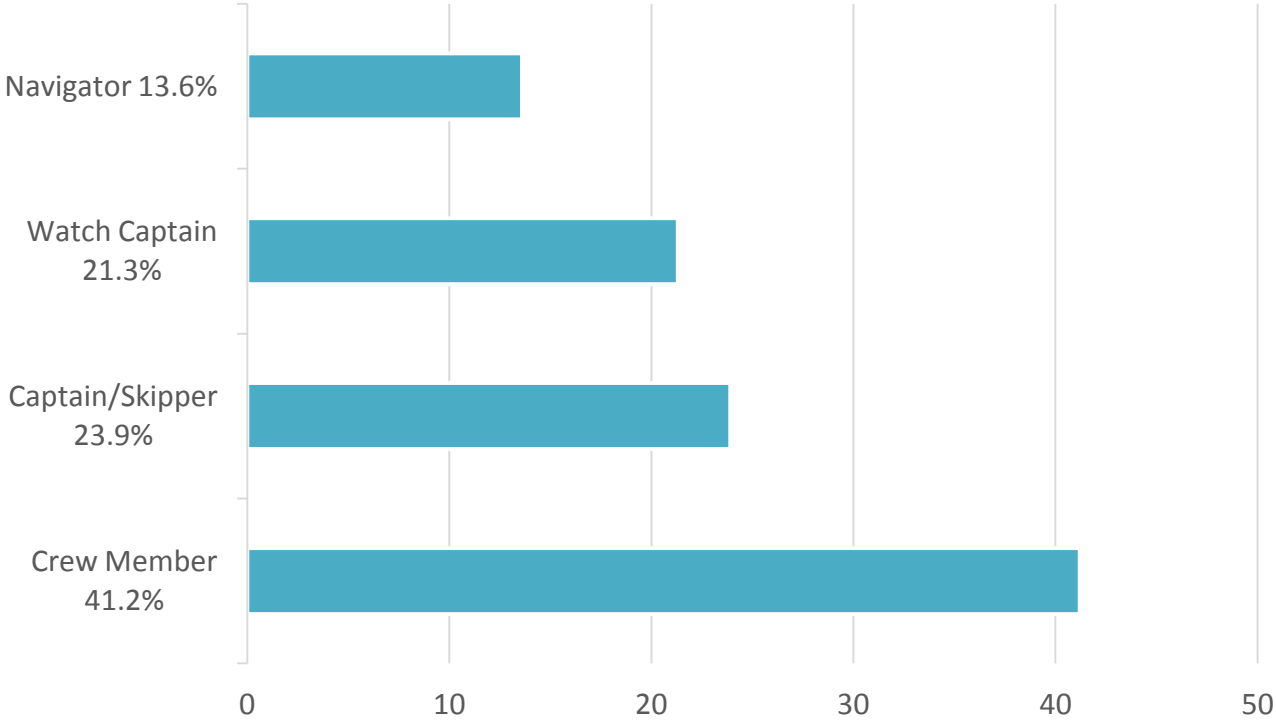


2016 Newport Bermuda Race Sailors Were Overwhelming Corinthian -- And It Was The First Time To The Onion Patch for More Than One Third

- 93% Were World Sailing (ISAF) Classification 1 – Amateur
- 37.5% Were Registered To Race Newport Bermuda for the First Time



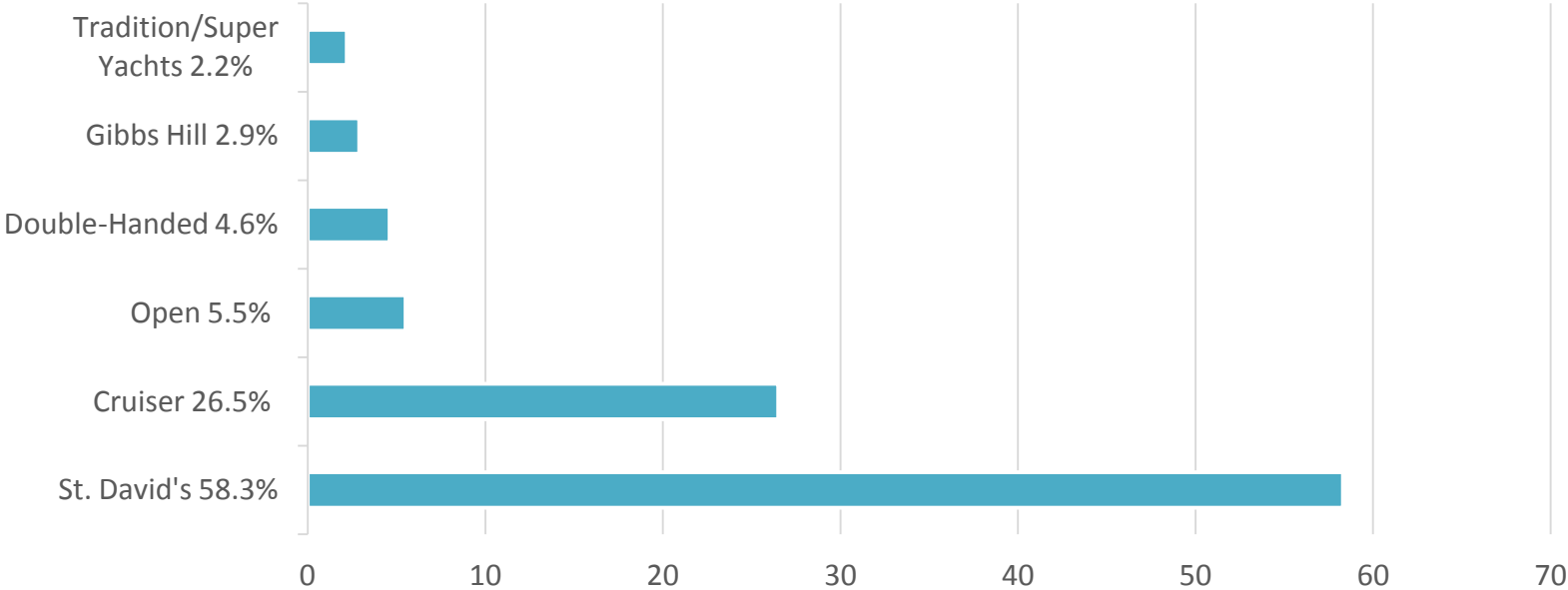
2016 Survey Respondents By Crew Position



Base: Survey Respondents Registered for 2016 Newport Bermuda Race



2016 Survey Respondents By Division



Base: Survey Respondents Registered for 2016 Newport Bermuda Race



2016 Newport Bermuda Race - Lead Time

When asked how far in advance they decided to enter the 2016 Newport Bermuda Race, the majority of amateur captains/skippers had made the decision a year in advance:

- 36.3% decided in 2014 or earlier
- 41.1% decided in 2015
- 22.6% decided in 2016

The majority of professional (World Sailing Classification 3) captains had decided in the same year as the event:

- 28.6% decided in 2014
- 14.3% decided in 2015
- 57.1% decided in 2016



2016 Newport Bermuda Race - Ambassador Program

Only 12.9% of survey respondents made use of an Ambassador in their planning and preparations for the Race.

When asked for suggestions on improving the Ambassador program, almost all users cited great satisfaction with the program.

One suggestion was to create an event specifically for sailors to meet with Ambassadors prior to the Race start.

Base: Survey Respondents Registered for 2016 Newport Bermuda Race



2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Information Sources

When asked which sources were most useful for information prior to the race, the website was cited as the most useful by respondents of all types, from all divisions:

- Race Website (BermudaRace.com) 82%
- Race Bulletins (email updates) 53.9%
- Safety at Sea Seminars 33.8%
- Inspectors 18.4%
- Correspondence with the Committee 18.2%



2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Challenges in Race Preparation

When asked to rank challenges in terms of difficulty in preparing for the race, registrants identified boat prep as the biggest hurdle at number 1. This is how they ranked all the challenges from 1 to 9, with 1 being the most challenging:

1. Boat Preparation
2. Logistics (dockage, travel, hotels, etc.)
3. Expenses
4. Crew Preparation
5. Inspection
6. Online Entry Process
7. Return Voyage/Delivery
8. Getting the Entire Crew to Obtain World Sailing Classifications
9. Getting My Own World Sailing Classification



2016 Newport Bermuda Race - Race Preparation (Captains Only)

When asked which three things they wished they had done more of in preparation for Newport Bermuda 2016, registered captains put these three at the top of the list:

1. Study Offshore Weather Forecasting
2. Study Ocean & Gulf Stream Currents
3. Practice Offshore with The Race Crew



2016 Newport Bermuda – Future Race Prep

When asked which areas they would consider more intensely and carefully when preparing for future offshore races as a result of the 2016 NBR, those who started the race this year ranked the priorities differently than the 2016 registrants that withdrew:

Rank	Starters	Registrants That Withdrew
1	Own Weather Forecast	Weather Forecast Services
2	Race Strategy in Navigation	Own Weather Forecast
3	Weather Forecast Services	Ocean/Gulf Stream
4	Ocean/Gulf Stream	Crew Selection
5	Practice with Crew	Practice with Crew
6	Navigation Software	Race Strategy in Navigation
7	Crew Selection	Navigation Software

Base: Survey Respondents Registered for 2016 Newport Bermuda Race



2016 Newport Bermuda Race – SailGate Entry System

When asked how they found the new SailGate online entry system, registrants who had been in previous Newport Bermuda Races said:

- 49.8% - SailGate Was About the Same as Previous Entry Systems
- 26.7% - SailGate Was Better Than Previous Entry Systems
- 24.6% - SailGate Was Worse Than Previous Entry Systems

Those who recommended changes to SailGate suggested a more intuitive interface and frequent status updates with specifics on what still remained to be completed.

2016 Newport Bermuda Race – AIS Rules

When asked how they felt about AIS transmitting, respondents generally felt that the rules regarding AIS transmitting were about right.

- 47.1% Felt That The Rules on AIS Transmitting Were Just Right
- 32.5% Felt The Rules Were Very Light, and that AIS Transmitting Should Be Required All The Time
- 9% Felt That The Rules Were Too Light, and AIS Transmitting Was Too Infrequent
- 5.9% Felt That The Rules Were Very Strict, and That No AIS Transmitting Should Be Required at All
- 5.5% Felt That The Rules Were Too Strict, and Required AIS Transmitting Too Frequently

2016 Newport Bermuda Race – YB Tracking Delay

When asked whether the four hour delay of YB Tracking until 50 nautical miles of the finish should be maintained for future Newport Bermuda Races, respondents were divided:

- 46.1% Said The Delay Should Be Kept
- 32.7% Said There Should Be No Delay
- 14.6% Said There Should Be a Delay for the First 24-48 Hours Only
- 4.2% Said That The Delay Should Be Increased
- 2.4% Said There Should Be No Tracking At All



2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Moveable Ballast

When asked whether boats without moveable ballast should be permitted to race against boats with moveable ballast (assuming that moveable ballast was factored into ratings), competitors tended to lean negative:

- 54.5% Said No
- 28.1% Said Yes, It Would Be OK
- 17.3% Said They Didn't Know

Sailors classified as professionals by World Sailing split from the majority on this question, with 53.3% of them thinking that this should be allowed.



2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Stored Power

When asked whether boats with stored power (e.g., electric or hydraulic winches for sail handling, autopilots) should be permitted to race against boats without such systems assuming that this equipment does NOT factor into ratings, respondents were quite mixed:

- 22.6% Said It Would Be OK, But Only For Sail Handling
- 13.6% Said It Would Be OK, Even When Power Is For Autopilots
- 29.8% Said It Would Not be OK, and They Would Be Less Likely To Race If Boats With and Without Raced In Combined Divisions
- 21.5% Said It Would Not Be OK But They Would Still Race
- 12.5% Said They Didn't Know



2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Safety Equipment Rules For The Future

When asked about race rules relating to safety equipment in the future, the majority of respondents said they should be about the same as this year:

- 82.2% Said They Should Be About The Same as in 2016
- 15.6% Said The Rules Should Be Less Strict
- 2.2% Said They Should Be More Strict Than in 2016

2016 Newport Bermuda Race – BROCC Communications

When asked about the information, instructions and advisories they received from the BROCC prior to the start, registered respondents felt that it was just the right amount of information from a race committee:

- 68.2% Said It Was Just The Right Amount
- 18.4% Said It Was More Than They Expected
- 13.4% Said It Was Less Than They Expected

And the vast majority -- 92.1% -- felt that the BROCC's communications were stated clearly.

2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Multihulls

When asked whether the Newport Bermuda Race should include multihulls, the majority said yes:

- 56.5% Said Yes, The Race Should Include Multihulls
- 17.2% Said No
- 26.3% Were Not Sure or Said They Had No Opinion

This question inspired 475 written comments, more than any other question in the survey. Respondents felt very strongly, both pro and con.

It is worth noting that a large majority of those who think multihulls should be included in the race think that they should be scored separately and compete for separate trophies.



2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Overall Trophy

When asked whether there should be an overall trophy for the race in addition to the division trophies, respondents had mixed feelings:

- 33.8% Said Yes, There Should Also Be An Overall Trophy
- 46.2% Said No, There Should Not Be An Overall Trophy
- 20% Said They Didn't Know One Way or the Other

Of those that answered “No,” slightly more than half of them said that they would still race if the divisions were combined and there was an additional overall trophy.

2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Sources of Weather Information

When asked which sources of weather information they primarily relied upon in deciding whether to start the 2016 Newport Bermuda Race, registrants cited these:

1. Commanders Weather, 37.1%
2. “Other,” 21.9% (more detail on next slide)
3. National Weather Service at Captains Meeting, 12.3%
4. Weatherflow websites, 8.1%
5. PredictWind, 7.2%
6. Dane Clark, 5.3%



2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Sources of Weather Information, “Other”

When asked which sources of weather information they primarily relied upon in deciding whether to start the 2016 Newport Bermuda Race, registrants cited these “other” sources in addition to those listed by the survey (shown in random order):

GRIB files

Locus Weather

Chris Parker

Combination of sources

Collective crew experience

”Instinct”

“Friends”

Multiple online sources

2016 Newport Bermuda Survey Results From Sailors Who Started The Race



Among the 456 Sailors in Total Who Responded to the Survey, 78.9% Started The Race

Among Amateur Sailors, 80.4% Started The Race

Among Professional Sailors, 56.7% Started The Race



2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Medical Issues

Few crews experienced medical issues during the 2016 race:

- 87.2% Had No Medical Issues
- 12.8% Had Medical Issues Arise

Among those that did experience medical issues, 15.2% contacted race officials or the race medical consultant Dr. Masser.

The most common medical issues mentioned were:

- Seasickness
- Injured Fingers

2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Damage During The Race

The majority of boats sustained no damage during the race:

- 83.6% Had No Damage
- 16.4% Had Some Damage

The most common damages were to sails, spars (booms and spinnaker poles), deck hardware and rudders.

2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Communications During The Race

Email was by far the most common method used to obtain the race committee's twice daily announcements during the race:

- 64.2% Used Email
- 15.0% Checked The Website
- 9.4% Used Voicemail

9.4% chose NOT to obtain the announcements.

12.2% stated they were unable to obtain the announcements, with sat phone problems cited as the primary difficulty.

2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Sources of Weather Info Used During The Race

The racing fleet tapped into a broad variety of resources for weather and Gulf Stream information during the race. The top choices included:

1. GFS/American models, 55.0%
2. National Weather Service text/charts, 30.6%
3. Jenifer Clark's forecasts from the Race Committee, 30.3%
4. European models, 27.8%
5. PredictWind, 18.9%
6. Oceans, 13.6%
7. Sirius XM Weather, 12.8%

2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Most Challenging Wind Conditions

When asked what were the most challenging wind conditions they experienced during the race, the fleet reported a broad range:

- 28.1% reported calms being the most challenging conditions
- 24.2% reported winds in the 26-30 knot range
- 16.4% reported winds in the 20-25 knot range
- 15.8% reported winds in the 31-35 knot range
- 8.9% reported winds in the 36-40 knot range
- 6.7% reported winds over 40 knots as the most challenging conditions they experienced

2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Sea Conditions Experienced

When asked what wave heights they observed during the race, the fleet reported a broad range:

- 45.9% reported waves less than 10 feet
- 38.9% reported waves 10-14 feet
- 15.3% reported waves 14 feet or higher

Just over a quarter of the fleet reported breaking waves (27%).

2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Weather Compared to Other Offshore Races

When asked to compare the weather experienced in the 2016 NBR to past Bermuda Races and other offshore races like the Halifax, Fastnet, Transatlantic etc., racers reported that conditions were about average:

- 56.1% stated that the 2016 NBR was about average
- 32.5% stated it was calmer than average
- 11.4% stated it was rougher than average

2016 Newport Bermuda Race - Return Voyage Experience

When asked about their return voyage from Bermuda, 94% reported smooth sailing – with no injuries, illnesses or equipment failures.

An average of 52% of return crew members had attended a Safety at Sea seminar in the past five years.

Only a third of returning sailors attended one or more of the three weather briefings offered at the RBYC for the return delivery.

2016 Newport Bermuda Survey Results From Sailors Who Did Not Start The Race



Among the 456 Sailors in Total Who Responded to the Survey, 21.1% Did Not Start The Race

Among Amateur Sailors, 19.6% Did Not Start

Among Professional Sailors, 43.3% Did Not Start

2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Factors In Decisions Not To Start

The following were all cited as factors in decisions not to start the race (shown in random order):

- Boat's preparedness for the conditions forecasted
- Crew's lack of training/offshore experience
- Crew's size or limitations (age/health considerations)
- Comfort (where otherwise the boat and crew were well prepared)
- Schedule following the race
- Logistics (for example, return delivery plans)
- Advisories by other competitors on their own boat
- Advisories from competitors on other boats



2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Primary Reason Not To Start

These factors were specified as the primary reason in decisions made not to start the race:

- 67.7% - “other” – *see the next slide for details*
- 14.6% - advisories from competitors on other boats
- 13.5% - comfort (where otherwise the boat and crew were well prepared)
- 12.5% - advisories from competitors on their own boat
- 7.3% - crew’s size or limitations (age/health considerations)
- 6.3% - crew’s lack of training/offshore experience
- 5.2% - boat’s preparedness for the conditions forecasted

2016 Newport Bermuda Race – “Other” Factors In Decisions Not To Start

The following concerns were cited as playing a role in decisions not to start the race by those respondents who checked “other reasons” (shown in random order):

- Weather forecasts (in general)
- Weather forecast at the captains’ meeting
- Potential of a named storm
- Safety
- Crew safety
- Crew illness/injury
- Racing under expected conditions would not be “fun”
- Equipment issues/breakdowns before the race

2016 Newport Bermuda Race – What Weather Was Expected?

Respondents who decided not to start because of weather forecasts were asked to describe what conditions they expected to experience. These were the answers:

“Multiple forecasts of high wind and wave conditions in the upwind quadrants.”

“40 knot winds, 15 foot breaking seas, square waves.”

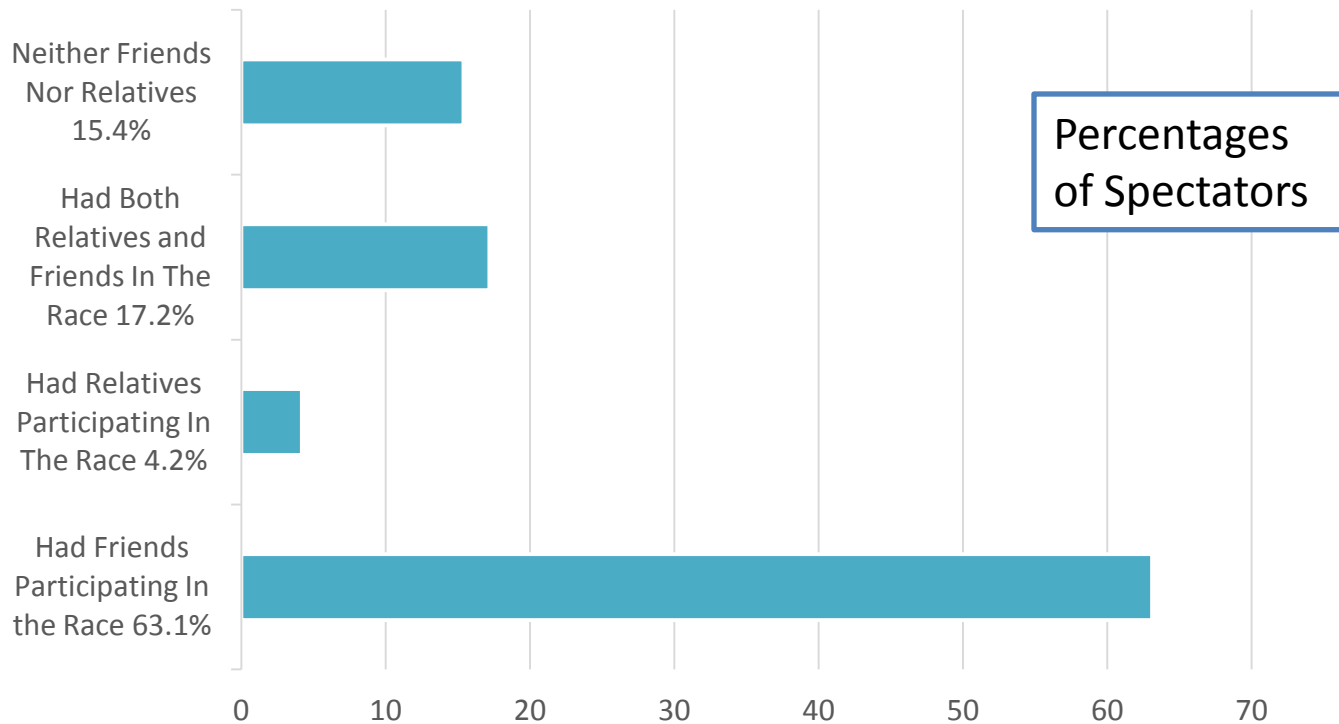
“Wave height and period was the concern.”

“Washing machine plus big breeze.”

2016 Newport Bermuda Spectator Survey



2016 Newport Bermuda Race Spectators



Base: Survey Respondents Not Registered for the 2016 Newport Bermuda Race



2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Spectators On Site

More than half of the spectators who participated in the survey were physically present in Newport, Bermuda, or both locations:

- 31.3% Were in Newport
- 13% Were in Bermuda
- 9.3% Were in Both Newport and Bermuda



2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Spectators As Past or Future Participants

Spectators have close connections to the race. When asked if they had ever sailed in a previous race or would like to sail someday in a future Newport Bermuda Race, spectators revealed that:

- 55.7% Had Sailed in Previous Bermuda Races
- 41.9% Would Like To Sail in a Future Bermuda Race
- 28.4% Are Happy Just Being Spectators



2016 Newport Bermuda Race – Spectator Media Sources

Spectators used multiple media sources to follow the race. These were cited as the top five:

- 70% Used YB Tracking
- 69.8% Used The Race Website, BermudaRace.com
- 28.6% Followed on Facebook
- 20.7% Followed on Livestream Video
- 15.1% Followed On Other Websites



2016 Newport Bermuda Race – The Spectator Experience

The majority of spectators had a positive experience. Only 24% experienced any difficulty or frustration in spectating. These were the most common issues mentioned:

- YB Tracking Interface Not Easy To Navigate
- 4 Hour Delay in Tracking Seen As Frustrating
- Livestreaming of the Start Kept Crashing
- Lack of Commentary/Communication During The Start

Summary



2016 Newport Bermuda Race Participant and Spectator Survey Key Findings

1. The majority of participants were World Sailing Classification 1, or amateurs.
2. 2016 was the first Newport Bermuda Race for over one third of the respondents.
3. The race website is the most important communications tool for all stakeholders.
4. In general, sailors believe that the safety rules, race committee support and communications, and frequency of AIS transmitting are all just right.



2016 Newport Bermuda Race Participant and Spectator Survey Key Findings

5. Boat preparation, logistics, expense and crew preparation are considered the most challenging aspects of preparation for the race.
6. The majority of participants reported that the wind and sea conditions experienced in the 2016 Newport Bermuda Race were comparable to or calmer than previous Bermuda Races and other offshore races such as the Halifax Race, the Fastnet, the Transatlantic, etc.



2016 Newport Bermuda Race Participant and Spectator Survey Key Findings

7. Sailors report some frustration with the SailGate entry system.
8. Spectators reported frustration with the YB tracking system (both the delays and the user interface), and with the Livestreaming at the start of the race.
9. There is broad support for adding multihulls to the Newport Bermuda Race.



2016 Newport Bermuda Race Participant and Spectator Survey Key Findings

10. Weather forecasting is of paramount importance before, during and after the race.
11. Race registrants, participants and spectators are highly engaged and committed to the race. Nearly 400 took the time to provide general feedback and suggestions to the BROCC.
12. 77% of the captains and skippers registered for the 2016 race state that they are likely to enter the 2018 Newport Bermuda Race.

