

Block Island Race Week Planning

These are some of our lessons learned on preparing for BIRW. It is never too early to plan. Houses and ferry reservations will go quickly whether its an on-year (odd-year hosted by Storm Trysail) or an off-year (even-year hosted by local yacht clubs).

Housing:

Realtors start taking reservations in early January.

Returning customers have first priority. If someone in your crew has rented a house on BI before, you might want to get them to converse with the realtor.

New customers must wait two weeks (varies with realtors) to make reservations.

Website link to Block Island Realtors (www.blockisland.com/directory#realestats)

My Realtor is Offshore Property Ltd. Offshore is a small firm but are very friendly to work with (in my opinion).

Tips:

E-mail the realtors early and let them know: who you are, # in your party, type of house (# of bedrooms) desired, time period requested, etc. I started in early November.

Be as friendly and as courteous as possible. This enabled me to reserve a house early.

Don't emphasize that you are there to race. Emphasize family.

In May call your realtor to find out what miscellaneous things are provided (paper products, cleaning supplies, etc.). Since its early in the rental season, most houses will have a good supply.

Transportation:

Ferry Reservations:

Pt. Judith accepts car reservations on 3 Jan 05 at 0700 (phone). Start calling at 0700. It took Scott two hours, but we got good ferry times getting on (2 @ 1:30 PM) and off (1@ 7:30 AM and 1@ 11:30 AM) the Island. People do not need reservations.

(www.blockislandferry.com)

Cars:

Bring two cars unless you've got a big SUV. It makes it easier to get around (before, during, and after BIRW) and bring stuff onto the Island (food, beverages, etc)

Bicycles:

You can rent bikes on the island for cheap. Several of the crew used them to go between the house and boat. Scenery was great and they liked the exercise.

Flights:

Flying into BI is very expensive and infrequent. Providence's airport is only 30 minutes from Pt. Judith (Southwest flights for under \$79)

If the crew flies into Providence, the second car is a huge bonus.

Food:

Plan your meals before you go and buy provisions before you get on the Island. BI's only grocery store is very small and expensive. I did my shopping in Newport.

There are a lot of places to dine out that are reasonably priced. Expect big crowds in the on-years for BIRW. Off-years are not that crowded.

Boat:

Sailed:

To Newport: It's about a 48 hour delivery with decent winds. Traveling in a group would be nice. If you go up early I recommend getting the boat hauled since slips and moorings are very expensive. We will keep our boat at New England Boatworks (NEB)(www.neboatworks.com) which is about five mile past the Newport Bridge in Middletown, RI. Last year they charged \$420 for a round trip haul and storage is free. NEB is a huge facility and is used to handling big boats.

Newport to BI: It's about a four hour sail to BI.

Dockage at BI: Moorings are available but most of the J105s stay at the Block Island Boat Basin. This is the same location of the party tent and the Oar restaurant (home of the famous Mud Slide). I made my reservation in February and got a decent slip. Those that waited got a mooring.

Delivery to Annapolis: Plan on departing early Saturday morning for Annapolis. That should put you in the New York shipping channels during daylight on Sunday.

Trucked:

Scott and I are buying a trailer and dual-wheeled truck to haul Tenacious to away regattas (Block Island, Key West, St. Pete, NAC, etc). If you are interested in having your boat "trailerred" to Newport, please let us know.

Miscellaneous:

Storm Trysail (on-year) web site (www.blockislandraceweek.com).

Local Yacht Clubs (off-year) website is www.blockislandraceweek.org.

These and the J105 National Website also have good planning tips for BIRW.

Carl Gitchell
Tenacious
USA 501