

HISTORY OF THE "DARLING MARK"

I know the Darling Mark will be on this January's LRIBYC meeting agenda. I witnessed firsthand the event and subsequent reason for its inception.

In February and March of 1963, we had 4 fabulous weekends of salt water ice on Manhasset Bay in Port Washington, NY. The Westchester Ice Sailing Club (WISC) had club races on a ¾ mile east-west course. At that time not too many DN's were in our club. The club mixed DN's and Skeeters one day in the same race.

A crash occurred at the leeward mark between a DN and small Skeeter. Since both boats were going downwind, they had already yielded to any boats going to windward. Unfortunately, on the final lap the Skeeter on a downwind starboard tack had the right of way finishing against a downwind port tack DN. C R A S H!!! Fortunately no one was killed, but the DN skipper had multiple leg and hip fractures. After the hospital stay the DN skipper stayed at our house for a few days.

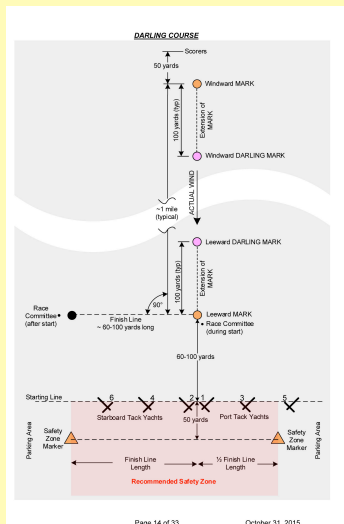
The first factor of mixed size boats with their different speeds and maneuverability immediately changed our policy to not mix them again. Speed and space were the more important factors. On the first and second laps of a three lap race, very few if any skippers would come to the leeward mark on the starboard tack because of the immediate need to round the mark and head back upwind. The lack of boat control with runner side slip and loss of boat inertia is something I have never liked, especially in a skeeter.

Jay (John) Darling a great iceboater and past Commodore of the WISC was our race committee chairman. He designed and presented the Darling Mark concept to our WISC club. The Darling Mark created a safe zone just windward to the leeward mark that requires boat to come about and finish on a port tack. The WISC tested it and used it successfully for years. It was adopted by some other clubs and associations.

The Darling Mark has a green mark set 100 yards windward of the leeward mark and 100 feet left of an imaginary line between the windward leeward marks.

At LRIBYC we have some small lakes and can use the Darling Mark but we can shorten the 100 yard windward dimension to 100 feet.

Also on another note, I have always preferred the third finishing lap to round up, as if to start a fourth lap, then peel off loosing speed and go to the race staging area. Especially with Skeeters, on small lakes like Ronkonkoma and Mecox, a few years ago, finishing downwind and blowing straight through at high speed, did not give me much space to safely slow down and turn around in the staging area. I would suggest on final lap a round up procedure.



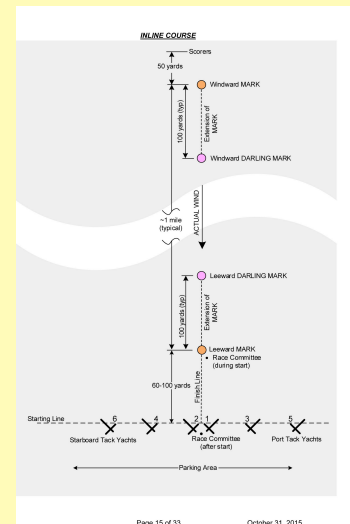
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More Information Here

<http://iceboat.org/animation.html>



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