



Multi-hulls, Multi-Excitement: When a Wirth Munroe “David” Takes on the Goliaths, Adrenalin Flows



Tom Reese likes to sail fast – faster, in fact, than boats much bigger than his own. It’s an aspiration few sailors can achieve unless their boats have what Tom’s has – multiple hulls. His performance-modified Corsair Cruze 970 trimaran is aptly named FLIGHT SIMULATOR, and those who have seen her in action would swear she could almost fly. Tom, a Wirth M. Munroe Ocean Race veteran who hails from the Youngstown (N.Y.) Yacht Club on Lake Ontario and spends his winters in the Florida Keys, is looking forward to this year’s race. FLIGHT SIMULATOR is one of two multihulls already entered in the race, with others indicating interest

in signing up. The Sailfish Club of Florida asked Tom for his unique perspective as a multi-hull sailor who relishes the Wirth Munroe challenge.

Sailfish Club of Florida: *What is the appeal of the Wirth Munroe Race for you? As a veteran participant, what keeps you coming back each year?*

Tom Reese: The challenge and excitement of keeping pace with larger, very fast boats gets our adrenaline going. We get to race against accomplished sailors on thoroughbred boats.

Sailfish Club: *This year, we have introduced a two-course format -- the 40-mile "Sprint" course from Fort Lauderdale to Palm Beach, which complements the 60-mile "Classic" course from Miami to Palm Beach. The goal is to give sailors a choice -- to generate more participation among smaller racer-cruisers and cruisers who may favor a shorter course, while giving bigger boats a longer challenge. So far, early entries indicate interest in both courses. What are your impressions of this new format?*



Reese: I like the option of a longer race and Miami is closer to our home in the Florida Keys. Keeping the short course for smaller boats gives them the opportunity to finish with everyone else.

Sailfish Club: *Without giving away any competitive secrets, can you give us some strategic insight into tackling a coastal race like the Wirth Munroe – taking into account factors like the Gulf Stream, the December weather in South Florida etc. As a multihull skipper, are there special considerations about the course based on the performance characteristics of your boat that are different from those of monohulls? It's not always as easy as some people suggest, right?*

Reese: The current can change our apparent wind angles, gybing angles and sail selection. It makes it interesting.

Sailfish Club: *Early entries indicate this will be a very competitive year on both courses. There are already two multihulls entered, and more have indicated interest. As a veteran of the race, how excited are you about the growing fleet of entries, especially the activity among multihull sailors?*

Reese: It is great to see more multihull participation at regattas, especially since there has been an overall decline. It's an exciting time to race multihulls.

Sailfish Club: *Tell us about FLIGHT SIMULATOR, your Corsair Cruze 970.*

Reese: Corsair Marine, Calvert Sails, Southern Spars, Keys Rigging and Sailing Services Miami worked together to create this performance version of the Corsair Cruze 970 just last year. Our boat has more horsepower, but still retains the cockpit "park benches!"

Sailfish Club: *What is the make-up of the FLIGHT SIMULATOR? How many will you sail with in this year's race? Is your crew family, friends, a mix? How long have you been sailing together?*

Reese: We race with four total crew, all friends -- this year from New York, Texas and Florida. We rotate through about a dozen people who have been sailing together and against each other for many years.

Sailfish Club: *Do you have a favorite story or experience from FLIGHT SIMULATOR's participation in past Wirth Munroe races? Many people remember your performance a few years ago, when there was no wind until noon, and then the wind came up and your 27' Corsair -- with only three in the crew -- came roaring past the entire fleet to the finish.*

Reese: That race was fun, but we hope that we don't have to come from behind this year with the new faster boat. However, the MOD 70 will be setting a much quicker pace.

Sailfish Club: *No conversation about the Wirth Munroe Race would be complete without a question about the Sailfish Club of Florida's legendary hospitality – the rum punch reception and buffet dinner. Some say it is one of the best regatta parties around. Thoughts?*

Reese: The buffet is incredible, so is the Sailfish Club hospitality. Be sure to try a Bossa Nova, the club's signature cocktail.

Sailfish Club: *As you know, the Storm Trysail Club has become a pivotal partner to the organizing authority of the Wirth Munroe Race. Can you give some insight into how important it is to have an organization like the STC supporting local clubs like the Sailfish Club of Florida, Biscayne Bay Yacht Club and the SORC in building the profile of such races?*

Reese: The Sailfish Club has done a great job securing the premiere partner organizations that are vital to building a premiere event.

Sailfish Club: *As a veteran of the Wirth Munroe, what would you tell boat owners -- and multihull skippers specifically - who may not have considered participating in the race to encourage them to sign up?*

Reese: Once you give it a try, you will want to come back!

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