



Catch nears the finish line in “gear-buster” conditions. Catch had shredded her main sheet early-on, then ripped the port jib track out of the deck, but soldiered on to finish third!

Wharf Rat Wins Series By Tie-Breaker When Machbuster Finishes Second in Final Race! Don't Tell Mom Wins Gear Buster Race With Star-Studded Crew

August 25, 2019 Don't Tell Mom, driven today by Cory Sertl with son Nick and Meg Myles crewing, took a wire-to-wire win in a big north breeze that built as the race went on. Wisely, Race Committee Emily Boenning cancelled the second race since it was blowing twenty with gusts nearing thirty as the boats staggered to the finish line of the first race. In an act of selfless devotion to his office of US J22 Class President, Matt Dunbar had sailed his Wharf Rat in the Bristol J 22 Regatta this weekend, opening the door for Machbuster to steal the Fleet 12 series title on the last day of the season. But Neptune can be a vengeful god, and he blew up a gale just in time to thwart Machbuster's plan that only required another second place had the scheduled second race been sailed. However, with no second race, the series ended in a tie, with the more deserving Wharf Rat winning the tie-breaker by having six race wins to Machbuster's only three. Part of the charm of Fleet 12 is the mystery of who will show up to race on any given Sunday. Today the Sertl family, who campaigned a New York Yacht Club IC37 this summer, showed up in force with new US Sailing President Cory Sertl driving Don't Tell Mom, with son Nick, a former top Harvard sailor as crew, while Cory's husband Mark was on the bow of Machbuster. The Sertls, in addition to far greater sailing glory, own three Fleet 12 titles on their J22 Lucy, and Mark once won a record eight Fleet 12 races in a row!



Moments before the start. Don't Tell Mom (2), QUINN (top of main), Machbuster (1535), and Catch (244). Don't Tell Mom won the start and rounded the windward mark three lengths ahead of Machbuster, extended on the run.

Today's course was 13p (mid-channel bell north of the bridge), Zp, finish. The tide was flooding, but the wind was the dominant factor, as even the most experienced crews were at their limit. Don't Tell Mom and Machbuster both flew their chutes, but only risked one gybe each. Don't Tell Mom closely covered Machbuster on the final beat and was never threatened, with the graybeards on the blue boat now in survival mode as the wind and waves kept building. Catch had suffered multiple breakdowns starting with a failing mainsheet at the start, but gamely finished third. QUINN, sailed again today by Cal Sailing's Josie Ruggieri, with dad Tom and last-minute volunteer, Kevin Murray as crew, withdrew during the final beat as conditions worsened.



QUINN before the start. Josie Ruggieri, who recently returned from a regatta in China that was interrupted by a monsoon, finds gear buster conditions back home in Narragansett Bay too.



Even pre-race maneuvers were sporting, and it only got worse.



Note missing jib track on port cabin top (where faint line remains). Brookie Moody can be seen conferring with dad Clarke. Rod Wright and skipper Peter Parsons fill out the Catch crew.



Even with Mark Sertl onboard, Machbuster was no match for the three elite sailors on Don't Tell Mom (in background) today.

And so another successful Fleet 12 season comes to a close. Five of the seven boats that sailed this year won at least one of the thirteen races, and eight of sixteen different skippers had at least one win, both of which are new records in our twenty-four-year history! CYC Sailing Director Meg Myles and CYC Fleet Captain Bill Fortenberry each crewed and coached on multiple boats this year, ensuring that as many boats and sailors as possible made it to the starting line. Emily Boenning and assistant Karen Murray did a superb job on race committee, not to mention that we had another year without a protest, a reflection of the Corinthian spirit that still lives on at Fleet 12. Current or recent sailors from at least five different college teams sailed in this year's races, at least twice (Cal and URI), made up the whole crew for a day, and three collegiate skippers had a win.

At press time, there was still an expectation of a J22 start in the Around-the-Island race on Sunday.



Catch and Don't Tell Mom pre-race. Catch's apparent ballast advantage was lost when the main sheet began to fail