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LIFEGUARD RACES / 37 CREWS ENTER 19TH ISLAND ROW

August 18, 1993 Publication: Press of Atlantic City, The (NJ) Page: D6 Word Count: 512

The North Wildwood Beach Patrol's Around The Island Row, the 18th race around Wildwood for two-man boats, will be held today starting at 7:30 a.m. at 15th Street beach in North Wildwood. The early start was deemed necessary to assure a favorable tide. A total of 37 crews from 15 beach patrols will get a floating start at 15th Street and head north in the counter-clockwise race. The crews will proceed to the Hereford Inlet, then go under the Stone Harbor and Grassy Sound Bridges.

In the back bay, the boats will head south to the Rio Grande Bridge and the Cape May Bridge. The crews will row through Cold Spring Inlet at the bottom of Wildwood and turn back into the ocean. Finally, the boats will race to the finish line along the beachfront back to 15th Street.

"To win this race, you have to be more than just a good rower," race director Lou Cirelli said. "A lot of the guys who do well in this race are older because they've rowed it before, they train for it and they know the course. It takes rowing skill, endurance, and the ability to pace yourself. I know a lot of excellent rowers who don't want to have anything to do with this race, just like a sprinter wouldn't enter a marathon."

No competitor knows the race like veteran Max Bilkins of Wildwood Crest, a four-time winner.

Bilkins was in the first Island Row in 1976 and most of the races since then. The 41-year old Bilkins and partner Bick Murphy won the race last year in 3 hours, 10 minutes, 15 seconds.

Meet record-holders Dennis Funk and George Miller are also back again. The Ventnor alumni crew won in 2:56.06 in 1987 and the two have stayed competitive. Funk and Miller, a builder and lawyer respectively, were South Jersey doubles champions from 1973 to 1975.

Craig Whitehead and Mike Cras of Avalon are the '90s version of Funk and Miller. Whitehead and Cras won their third straight South Jersey doubles row title on Monday, and with about 37 hours of rest, they'll also go today. Carl and Greg Smallwood of Margate, second in Monday's race, will be there too.

Ocean City's Chuck Dunn, a two-time winner, will team with Cape May County singles champion Sonny Rutkowski.

Today's lineup

Brigantine - Bill Baldwin-Rob Canavan; Atlantic City - Charles Joseph-Dan Daley; Ventnor - Mike Guerrieri-Matt Guerrieri; Scott Jones-Jim Mason; Dennis Funk-George Miller (alumni); Margate - Carl Smallwood-Greg Smallwood; Longport - Mike McGrath-Matt Kelm; Jason Ianotti-Ray Magel; Carmen Casciato-Paul Kosner; Ocean City - Bob Garbutt-Scott Heery; Marty Gaal-John Davenport; Sonny Rutkowski-Chuck Dunn; Upper Township - Bob Schwartz-John Story; Sea Isle City - Jim Gallagher-Chip Radomicki; Avalon - Craig Whitehead-Mike Cras; Jim Cras-Ed Monahan; Chris Davis-John Slaughter; David Bosacco-Rob Duzak; North Wildwood - Romolo Forcino-Vince Fitzpatrick; Sean Blesi-Tim Zwall; Wildwood - Jim Gibbons-Tom McCann; Steve McGuinn-Dan McGuinn; Pat Sherbin-Tom Killian; Ed Schnider-Jim Savage; Wildwood Crest - Max Bilkins-Bick Murphy; Tom Frederick-Rick Greco; Sean Clark-Brian Perkins; Ron Peters-Bill Zamulinsky; Glenn Donahue-Matt Donahue; Linda Kelly-John Lincke; Cape May - Steve Mogek-Marty Franco; Kevin Murphy-Eric Mogek; Jim Wadlow-Rick Demers; Patrice Draminski-Catherine Treffeisen; Cape May Point - Bob Cwik-Keith Jackson; Pete Pietras-Mike Mader.

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WILDWOOD CREST TANDEM WINS ISLAND ROW

August 19, 1993 Publication: Press of Atlantic City, The (NJ) Page: D1 Word Count: 896

*Lifeguards: Max Bilkins and Bick Murphy earn their third title in the 21-mile row. Max Bilkins and Bick Murphy know every inch of the 21-mile North Wildwood Beach Patrol Around The Island Row, which may be why they won the race again on Wednesday.

The Wildwood Crest Beach Patrol veterans became the first crew to win the 18-year-old event three times. Bilkins, whose first name is pronounced Mox, and Murphy also were victorious last year and in 1985.

Bilkins and Murphy overtook Ocean City's Bob Garbutt and Scott Heery early in the final ocean part of the race with about five miles to go. The Wildwood Crest boat finished in 3 hours, 4 minutes, 50 seconds. Garbutt and Heery crossed the line eight boat-lengths behind in 3:05.36.

The Ventnor alumni crew of Scott Jones and Jim Mason finished 10 boats behind Ocean City in 3:06.31.

The 41-year old Bilkins also became the first five-time winner. The 22-year lifeguard also won in 1978 with John Greenwood and in 1979 with Dave Koper.

"It feels great to win it five times but I didn't do it alone," Bilkins said. "I've been fortunate to have

great rowing partners. Bick and I have been able to succeed the last three times. He's the pacesetter and I'm left to navigate. We have kind of a home-court advantage in this race. We know the course so we can row straight and save time."

Most of the race was a four-way battle between Garbutt and Heery, Jones and Mason, Bill Baldwin and Rob Canavan of Brigantine, and Bilkins and Murphy.

"Last year we were 13th early in the race and this year we wanted to keep it close and not let the leader get way out," Bilkins said. "We kept checking them and eventually we started to gain without trying to. In the ocean, we didn't anticipate the swells being that strong. It was tough to get a good stroke going."

The Crest boat pulled even with Garbutt and Heery in the ocean off Wildwood Crest, and then came the crucial moment.

"They (Ocean City) held us off and I told Max that the next time we get a chance, to go right past them," Murphy, 34, said. "They took a break (to drink water) and we opened up about a 10-boat lead."

The 25-year Garbutt, a Princeton University graduate who was on his first circuit of the island, said he and Heery could do better the next time.

"We got a pretty good lead on Ventnor (in the back bay) but then Ventnor and Wildwood Crest battled so hard with each other that they came up on us," Garbutt said. "I know that strategy is a big part of the race. I was just thinking that I didn't want to make a mistake. In the ocean, I kept wondering how much of the race was left."

Thirty crews got a floating start in the ocean at 15th Avenue beach in North Wildwood at 7:58 a.m. and went counter-clockwise around the island back to 15th Avenue. Everyone finished the race.

Jones and Mason were fourth last year, and their third-place finish Wednesday was their best ever. Heery was 12th last year with Ocean City's Joe Sheffer and his time this year was 16 minutes better. Baldwin has raced around the island five times, and Wednesday's fourth place finish was his best by far.

"We took the lead briefly right before the Rio Grande Bridge (in the bay) but then they (Ocean City) took it back," Mason, 45, said. "After they turned the jetty (at the bottom of Wildwood) they pulled away. In the ocean, it was like rowing in a washing machine.

The strong Cape May-bound ocean current and wind ensured that Dennis Funk and George Miller's 1987 meet record of 2:56.06 would be safe for another year. Funk and Miller, now both in their early 40s, were fifth in 3:11.39.

Four Avalon crews, including three-time defending South Jersey champions Craig Whitehead and Mike Cras, were late for the pre-race meeting and unable to race.

Results

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2. Bob Garbutt-Scott Heery, Ocean City, 3:05.36
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7. Steve McGuinn-Dan McGuinn, Wildwood, 3:15.25
8. Steve Mogck-Marty Franco, Cape May-Cape May alumni, 3:15.59
9. Sonny Rutkowski-Chuck Dunn, Ocean City, 3:16.06
10. Judge Casciato-Paul Kosner, Longport, 3:17.00
11. Jim Wadlow-Rich Demers, Cape May, 3:17.59

12. Tom Frederick-Rick Greco, Wildwood Crest, 3:19.12
13. Pat Sherbin-Tom Killian, Wildwood, 3:19.20
14. Ron Peters-Bill Zasmulinsky, Wildwood Crest, 3:20.44
15. Butch Joseph-Dan Daley, Atlantic City, 3:21.25
16. Mike McGrath-Jim Grimley, Longport, 3:23.10
17. Matt Donahue-Glenn Donahue, Wildwood Crest, 3:25.08
18. Ed Schnider-Jim Savage, Wildwood, 3:27.48
19. Jim Gibbons-Tom McCann, Wildwood, 3:31.48
20. John Davenport-Marty Gaal, Ocean City, 3:32.05
21. Jason Ianotti-Ray Magel, Longport, 3:33.06
22. Sean Blesi-Tim Zwall, North Wildwood, 3:33.17
23. Mike Guerrieri-Matt Guerrieri, Ventnor, 3:35.30
24. John Lincke-Linda Kelly, Wildwood Crest, 3:36.24
25. Brian Perkins-Sean Clark, Wildwood Crest, 3:42.56
26. Keith Jackson-Bob Cwik, Cape May Point, 3:43.42
27. Jim Gallagher-Chip Radomicki, Sea Isle City, 3:44.36
28. Vince Fitzpatrick-Romolo Forcino, North Wildwood, 3:45.01
29. Pete Pietras-Mike Mader, Cape May Point, 3:47.25

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Staff photos by Tom Kinnemund

Wildwood Crest's Bick Murphy (left) and Max Bilkins repeat as champions in the North Wildwood Beach Patrol Row.

Wildwood Crest tandem wins Island Row

■ **Lifeguards:** Max Bilkins and Bick Murphy earn their third title in the 21-mile row.

By GUY GARGAN
For The Press

NORTH WILDWOOD — Max Bilkins and Bick Murphy know every inch of the 21-mile North Wildwood Beach Patrol Around The Island Row, which may be why they won the race again on Wednesday.

The Wildwood Crest Beach



MURPHY



BILKINS

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□ See Row, Page D6

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A.C. Press
8/19/93

Row:

Crest duo repeats as champion

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Bilkins,

8-23-93

Murphy

win Row

By ROB SEITZINGER

Sports Editor

NORTH WILDWOOD -- They've entered the Around The Island Row three times and have won it three times. No one else in the race's 18-year history is close to matching that.

When all other tandems in the race are becoming floating buoys in the race's final leg -- through the ocean from south to north -- they are keeping the same pace they had through the first 19 miles of the 21-mile race.

And when others struggle to cross the finish line, they charge across it.

They are Wildwood Crest Beach Patrol's dynamic duo -- Max Bilkins and Bick Murphy.

Bilkins, who has won the race an amazing five times, and Murphy entered and won The Row in 1985, 1992 and 1993, completing the trifecta last Wednesday when they circled the Wildwoods in 3 hours, 4 minutes and 50 seconds, just 8 minutes and 44 second off the 1987 record time of 2 hours, 56 minutes and 6 seconds set by Ventnor's Dennis Funk and George Miller.

"Us and Ocean City (Scott Henry and Bob Garbutt finished second, 46 seconds later) thought we were on record pace," said Murphy.

"But once we hit the ocean," Bilkins said, "it felt like we were rowing in the surf the entire way."

Which made their finish even more spectacular because the Crest boat turned the rock pile in fourth place, trailing Ocean City, Ventnor (Jim Mason and Scott Jones) and Brigantine (Bill Baldwin and Rob Canavan). Ventnor's Funk and Miller were looming close behind. Spectators and race officials said once they hit the ocean Bilkins and Murphy "exploded" to the lead but, that was delusional.

What actually happened, according to the winners, was that the rest of the field came back to them.

"We rely on pace and our level of fitness," Murphy said. "Effort wise, we wanted to pick it up at the rocks but I think (getting to the lead) was more them coming back to us."

Bilkins said, "It's just a matter of pac-

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"Island Row"

Crest tandem wins ● Island Row -- again

"Island Row"
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ing. We're keeping our pace while others lose their pace and use up a lot of energy. The efficiency of their stroke is gone."

After taking second place, the Crest boat began to move on Ocean City between Rumson Avenue and the fishing pier. Heery and Garbutt gamely fought off the first surge and Murphy said to Bilkins, "The next time we get up to them we have to pass them."

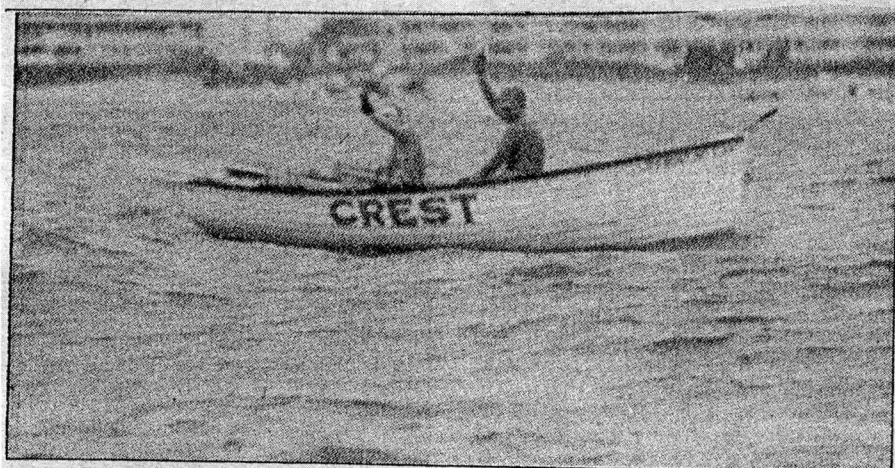
And sure enough, when the Crest boat made its second surge, the Ocean City boat was broken. As Heery and Garbutt stopped for a water break, Bilkins and Murphy surged past them and stroked to victory.

Cape May's Eric Mogck and Kevin Murphy were the next local boat to finish as they took sixth in 3 hours, 12 minutes and 11 seconds. Wildwood's McGuinn brothers -- Steve and Dan -- took seventh in 3 hours, 15 minutes and 25 seconds. North Wildwood's Sean Blesi and Tim Zwall, one of two North Wildwood entries, finished 22nd. Cape May Point's top finisher, Bob Cwik and Keith Jackson, finished 26th in 3 hours, 43 minutes and 42 seconds. Sea Isle City's lone entry of Jim Gallagher and Chip Radomicki finished 27th in 3 hours, 44 minutes and 36 seconds.

NOTES: Avalon's entries were late for the pre-race meeting and did not compete. The race, scheduled to start at 7:30 a.m. in order to catch the appropriate tides to accommodate the competitors, didn't begin

until nearly 8 a.m. There were 30 entries, down from 36 a year ago.

RESULTS: 1. Max Bilkins-Bick Murphy (WC) 3:04:50; 2. Scott Heery-Bob Garbutt (OC) 3:05:36; 3. Jim Mason-Scott Jones (V) 3:06:31; 4. Bill Baldwin-Rob Canavan (B) 3:10:10; 5. Dennis Funk-George Miller (V) 3:11:31; 6. Eric Mogck-Kevin Murphy (CM) 3:12:11; 7. Steve McQuinn-Dan McQuinn (W) 3:15:25; 8. Steve Mogck-Marty Franco (CM) 3:15:59; 9. Chuck Dunn-Sonny Rutkowski (OC) 3:16:06; 10. Carmen Casiato-Paul Kosner (L) 3:17:00; 11. Rich Demers-Jim Wadlow (CM) 3:17:59; 12. Tom Fredericks-Rich Greco (CM) 3:19:12; 13. Pat Sherbin-Tom Killian (W) 3:19:20; 14. Ron Peters-Bill Zamulinsky (WC) 3:20:44; 15. Butch Josephs-Dan Daley (AC) 3:21:25; 16. Jim Grimley-Mike McGrath (L) 3:23:10; 17. Matt Donahue-Glen Donahue (WC) 3:25:08; 18. Ed Schneider-Jim Savage (W) 3:27:48; 19. Tom McCann-Jim Gibbons (W) 3:31:48; 20. John Davenport-Marty Gaal (OC) 3:32:05; 21. Jason Ianotti-Ray Magel (L) 3:33:06; 22. Sean Blesi-Tim Zwall (NW) 3:33:17; 23. Matt Guerrieri-Mike Guerrieri (V) 3:35:30; 24. Linda Kelly-John Lincke (WC) 3:36:24; 25. Brian Perkins-Sean Clark (WC) 3:42:56; 26. Keith Jackson-Bob Cwik (CMP) 3:43:42; 27. Jim Gallagher-Chip Radomicki (SIC) 3:44:36; 28. Vince Fitzpatrick-Rom Forcino (NW) 3:45:01; 29. Mike Mader-Pete Pietras (CMP) 3:47:25; 30. Patrice Draminski-Catherine Treffisen (CM) 4:26:49.



BICK MURPHY AND MAX BILKINS wave after winning the Around The Island Row last Wednesday. It was the third time the Crest tandem has won the race and the fifth time in which Bilkins has been on the winning team, easily a race record.

Standing ovation was warranted for Bilkins and Murphy

8-25-93



By ROB SEITZINGER
Sports Editor

NORTH WILDWOOD -- As the final words of the introduction left the mouth of North Wildwood Beach Patrol Senior Lieutenant Lou Cirelli, something very moving and spontaneous happened.

Cirelli, standing in the North Wildwood 15th Avenue Fire House, had just said a few words about the amazing accomplishments of Wildwood Crest lifeguards Bick Murphy and Max Bilkins, who had just won the grueling 21-mile Around The Island Row for the second consecutive year.

Murphy, who is 34 years old, and Bilkins, at 41, have entered the marathon three times together.

And they've won it each time.

Bilkins, who has raced in every one of the 18 rows, has won the race a record five times. He's won it in three different decades with wins in 1978, 1979, 1985, 1992 and 1993. And he's won it with three different partners (John Greenwood in 1978, Dave Koper in 1979).

As Cirelli spewed the statistics and said Bilkins has set a record he doesn't believe will ever be matched and finally called the two remarkable athletes to the awards table, several of the guards and fans stood while applauding.

And then it spread, as if the rest of the people in the room started to realize, "Heck yeah, this is something worth a standing ovation."

Quickly, the room was in full roar as Bilkins and Murphy received their trophies and plaques.

It was the highest of praise because it came from their peers.

While the cheering was for both guards, you couldn't help but think it was especially for Bilkins because of his five wins. Murphy now has three, tying Avalon's Dan O'Malley. No one has four.

"I think (the ovation) is something he's earned," Cirelli said. "I don't think that's something you'll see many more times. There aren't many guys who are going to be able to break that record. Rowers know what it's all about and they know it takes a super effort (to win). I mean, we've had 18 races and he's won five of them. That alone says a lot."

Indeed, it does. It is statement to proper training and a work ethic unsurpassed by anyone else in the race.

"It should be an example to the younger -- even the older -- rowers," Cirelli said, "that you can't just jump in this race and expect to win. He works hard at it; they both do."

Bilkins was quick to share the praise, saying Murphy's ironman training pushes him to keep up.

"Everyone says it's my pace but I've been fortunate to race with Bick for three years and my other partners too," Bilkins said. "This is a team thing; one man doesn't do it. We're equal partners. He set the pace and I was the navigator."

Asked how the standing ovation affected him, he said, "It feels real good when you're peers recognize your accomplishments."

After what both rowers said was a "disappointing" season for them, winning The Row was a great way to finish the '93 campaign.

"We train for the end of the summer," Murphy said, "now, I don't want to see another boat until next summer."

Murphy, who left for Georgia last week, said he will return next summer. Bilkins, who lives in the Crest, said, "As long as I have the opportunity, I'll try it again. If I have a willing partner who will get in the boat with me, I'll try it."

Somehow, however, you just know they'll do more than just "try it."