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ISLAND ROW SPORTS FIELD OF 35 BOATS

August 14, 1996 Publication: Press of Atlantic City, The (NJ) Page: D1 Word Count: 458

The 21st North Wildwood Beach Patrol Around The Island Row will begin at 7:45 a.m. Thursday at 15th Avenue beach in North Wildwood. This year it looks like a wide-open race. Unlike some previous years, there are many outstanding South Jersey mile doubles row crews in the lineup. But don't count out the veterans who have rowed the marathon for years.

The 21-mile counterclockwise race around Wildwood island will start about 12 hours after the South Jersey championships. Some of the veterans and alumni crews will be more rested.

"I'm sure it will be a factor that it's so close to the South Jersey championships," race director Charlie Iepson said. "We're holding the race now to get the good tide.

If we waited a couple more days, we'd lose the tide and we wouldn't be able to hold it again till the 29th or 30th. By then it would be too late because a lot the rowers will have gone back to their colleges."

The 35 two-man boats will get a floating start at 15th Avenue and head north to the Hereford Inlet. The crews continue on to the Stone Harbor Bridge, and then to the Grassy Sound Bridge.

The race continues in the backbay, where spectator checkpoints include the West Wildwood Train

Trestle, the Rio Grande Bridge and the Cape May Bridge.

The oarsmen then proceed to the Cold Spring Inlet at the bottom of Wildwood, then turn north and row in the ocean back to the finish line at 15th Avenue.

Veteran Max Bilkins of Wildwood Crest has rowed the race 15 times, winning it on six occasions. Four of those wins have been with partner Bick Murphy, including last year.

The two would be favored again, but Murphy has a pulled muscle under his ribcage. "I'm sure Bick will give it all he can do, because that's the type of competitor he is," Iepson said. "We have a lot of good crews. It's probably one of the better fields. I think that's probably because we're holding it a little earlier this year (the race was held Aug. 24 in 1995)."

Cape May's Jim Wadlow finished second with Ocean City's Bob Garbutt Jr. last year. Wadlow teams with regular partner Kevin Murphy Thursday, and Garbutt will be with brother Matt.

Ventnor alumni standouts Scott Jones and Jim Mason were third last year, and should certainly be a factor. Dennis Funk and George Miller, also Ventnor alumni, have usually been in contention since setting the event record of two hours, 56.06 minutes in 1987. Funk and Miller were fifth last year.

Wildwood's Dan McGuinn and Steve McGuinn were second in 1994, and other contenders include North Wildwood's Romolo Forcino and Joe Taylor, Matt and Mike Guerrieri of Ventnor, and Wildwood's Joe Slater and Tom Kilian.

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WILDWOOD CREST DUO WINS ISLAND ROW (21ST NORTH WILDWOOD AROUND THE ISLAND ROW)

August 16, 1996 Publication: Press of Atlantic City, The (NJ) Page: C1 Word Count: 571

Veteran Wildwood Crest Beach Patrol oarsmen Max Bilkins and Bick Murphy took the lead midway through the race Thursday and won the 21st North Wildwood Around The Island Row. The Crest boat was clocked in three hours, four minutes, 28 seconds.

Brothers Matt and Mike Guerrieri of Ventnor came in second in 3:05.10, their best finish ever, and the Ventnor alumni crew of Dennis Funk and George Miller placed third in 3:05.31.

Bilkins and Murphy have won the 21-mile row around Wildood five times, and four of the last five years. Bilkins, a 44-year-old, 25-year lifeguard, also won the row two other times with different partners.

"I think this is definitely one of our goals (every year), to be frontrunners in this event," Bilkins said. "It's definitely to our advantage to know the course. It makes us feel comfortable and confident."

With the usual course, a time under three hours is considered fast. The meet record is 2:56.06 by Funk and Miller in 1987.

The winning time didn't seem too impressive but there was a big reason for that.

One of the Hereford Inlet's famed sandbars (at the top of Wildwood) has grown since last year, and the contestants were ordered to go around it. "It's definitely another half-mile, about 10 minutes more of rowing," Bilkins said. "I think it was a good move to put a flag there to go around it. It's such a long race that it won't matter if it's a little longer."

The Crest tandem was one of nine crews at the island row that had competed in the South Jersey Championships in Margate just 13 hours before. Bilkins and Murphy didn't place in the top five in the South Jerseys but it was still important to them.

"Going into last night (the South Jerseys) I hadn't rowed in 10 days," the 37-year-old Murphy said. "I've had a contusion and tendinitis under my rib cage, and last night told me I could row today. I was wary that things might go bad today, it was on my mind, but it never caused any type of pain. Rowing around the island gets easier (after years of doing it). This is the best I've ever felt

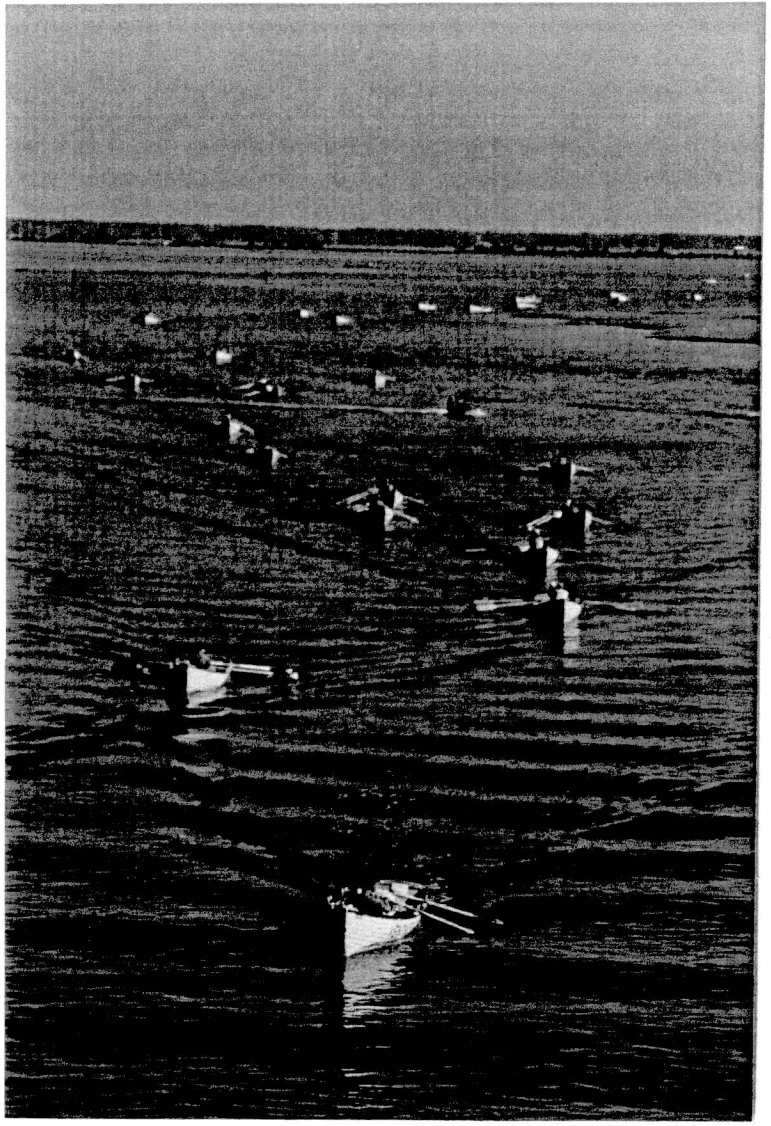
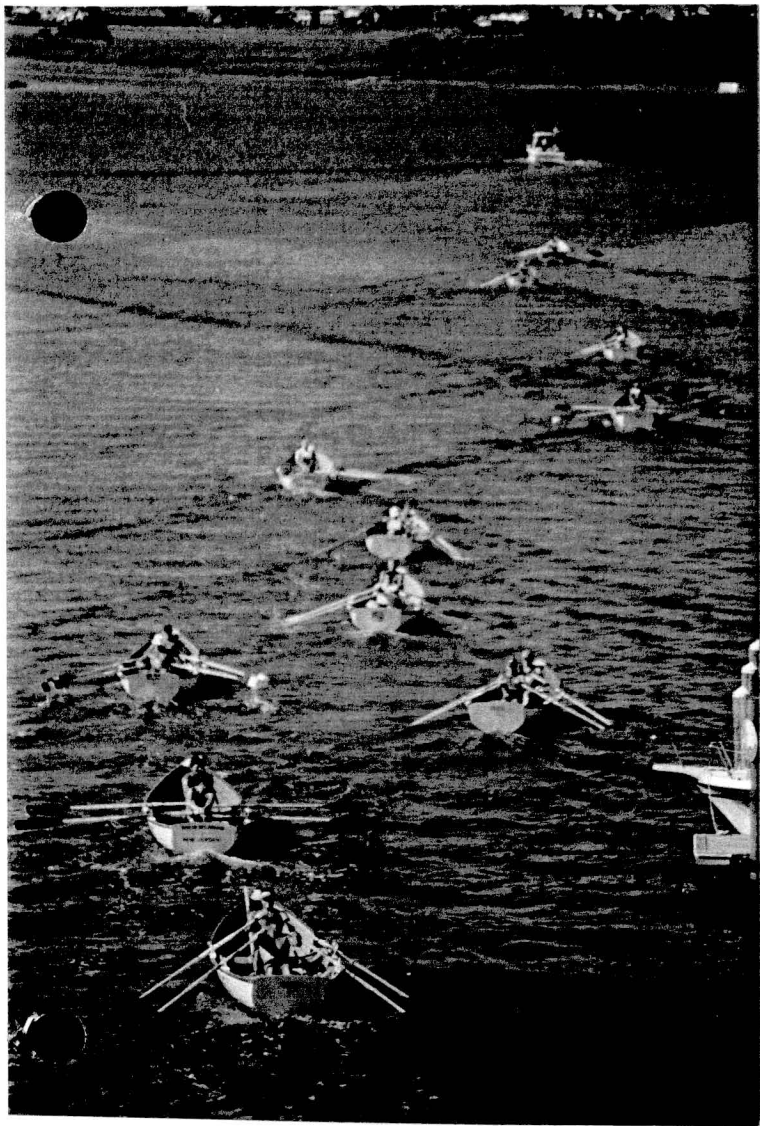
after the race."

South Jersey winners Kevin Murphy and Jim Wadlow of Cape May led around the island for half the race, but faded to 27th. "Coming out of the (Cold Spring) inlet (at the bottom of Wildwood) I started to cramp up," Wadlow said. "I couldn't bend my legs. I had to row with my legs straight."

"Wildwood Crest was about 200 meters ahead of us, and we didn't think we could catch them, and we were challenged by the pack," sternman Mike Guerrieri said. "Funk and Miller battled us all the way."

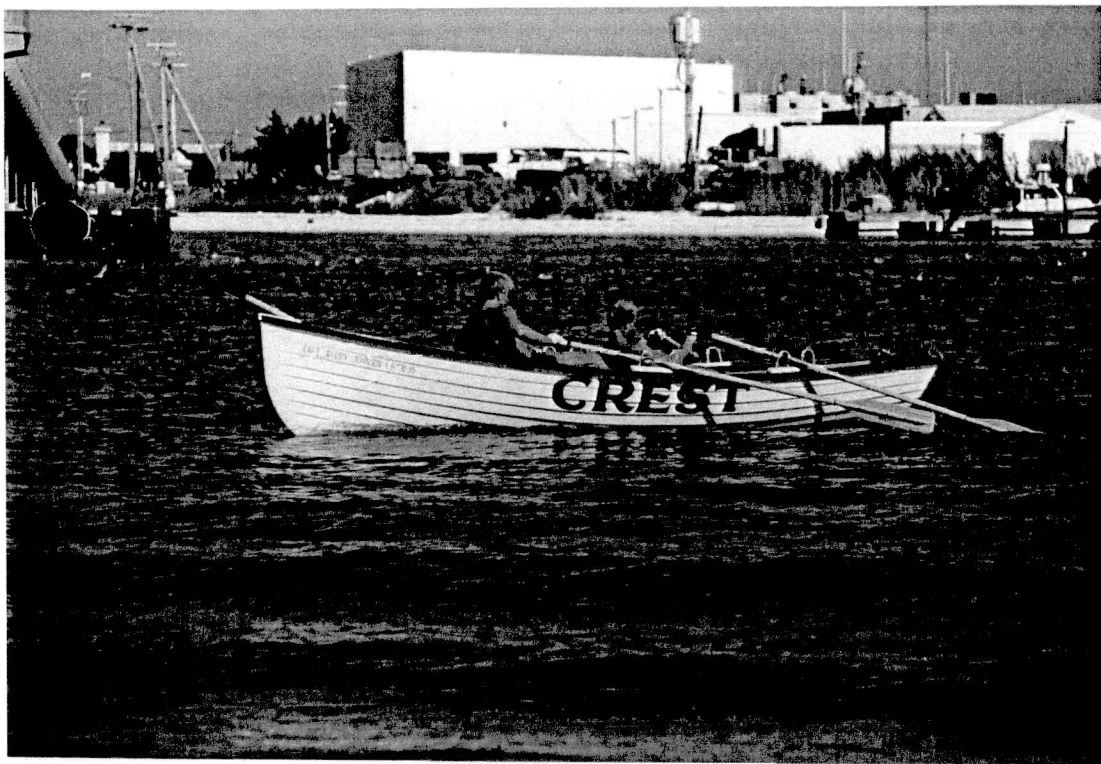
It was a special day for the 44-year-old Funk because his sons Andrew and David, who watched him row around the island for years, this time were rowing too. The younger Funks were 13th.

"I watched them the whole race," Dennis Funk said. "They were about 200 or 300 yards behind us. It was pretty exciting to have my sons in the race. In a couple years, they'll be in the hunt."

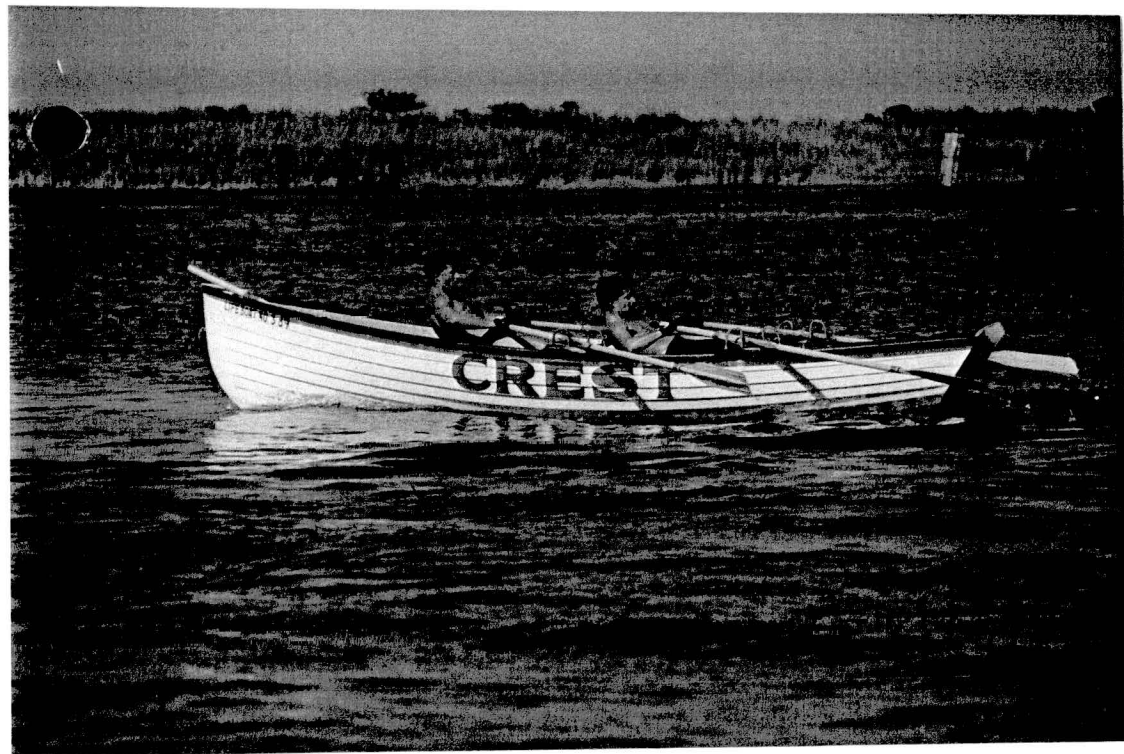


1996

M. McGrath 1/2



Bilkus - Murphy



T. Frederick - S. Feraco

1996

Cape May County Gazette Leader

SPORTS

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21, 1996

Bilkins and Murphy Do It Again

Max Bilkins (left) and
Bick Murphy have won
the Around the Island
Row five times
together.



Win Fifth Around The Island Row Title

By BRIAN CUNNIFF
Sports Editor

NORTH WILDWOOD — Max Bilkins and Bick Murphy have never jumped out to a lead at the start of the Around the Island Row. But for the fifth time overall and the fourth time in the last five years, Bilkins and Murphy were ahead when it counted most — at the finish.

The venerable Wildwood Crest doubles crew of Bilkins and Murphy put on yet another incredible display of stamina and strength as they won the 21st annual Around the Island Row in 3:04.28, 42 seconds ahead of second-place finishers Matt and Mike Guerrieri of Ventnor on Thursday, Aug. 15. Bilkins and Murphy emerged from a pack of about 10 boats early in the race to trail Cape May's Kevin Murphy and Jim Wadlow, who led for more than half the race by anywhere from seven to 13 seconds at various checkpoints, before making a strong move about a quarter-mile before the Cape May Bridge to surge into the lead.

By the time the competitors turned the rockpile at the edge of Cold Spring Inlet for the row for home along the beachfront,

Bilkins and Murphy opened up a 14-second lead and cruised to their unprecedented fifth Around the Island Row crown.

"I just think a race like this takes a lot of the variables out that can happen in a race," said the 44-year-old Bilkins, who along with his 37-year-old partner seem to actually get better and stronger every time they step into a boat. "In a long race such as this, if you make a mistake you have time to recoup. There's also a lot of strategy involved and a lot of training involved. You can't jump right into a boat and expect to do well. It's like anything else. The more training and work you do the better your chances are of doing well. And I have the best partner with which to do it. We do a lot of distance training throughout the summer and this is a nice way to cap things off."

Never wavering from a pre-race strategy that has been formulated through years of success in the Around the Island Row, a race that is anywhere from 19 to 22 miles depending upon whose calculations you believe and one that actually gets longer in distance every year because of the conditions in and around Hereford Inlet, Bilkins and Murphy continue to set the standard of how to go about winning the grueling event.

Sticking to that strategy, Bilkins and Murphy passed Kevin Murphy and Wadlow at about the same point in the race they passed

Wadlow and Ocean City's Bob Garbutt Jr. in the 1995 race, after about two hours had passed.

"It seems like over the years we've never had the lead from start to finish," Bilkins said. "We tend to lay back and then pick off people one by one, but it always seems to be that same general area before the Cape May Bridge when we're close to two hours or so into the race. I knew we were in good shape at that point as long as we were able to stay close with (Kevin Murphy and Wadlow). It's a confidence booster when you're out there looking at their stroke rate and knowing what they're doing and knowing what you're capable of doing in order to get past them."

Said Bick Murphy, "The longer the race the more control you have over it. In this race it really doesn't matter how many mistakes you make because you have a lot of time to overcome them. This race is a true test of endurance and rowing ability and a lot of people use it as a good test of what they can do physically."

"For us, winning this race has to do with, No. 1, other crews' training tendencies, and No. 2, the way we row the entire race and if and when we can get to the front, which always seems to be right around 1:45 or two hours into the race. In the regular doubles crew races, a lot of times it's like rolling dice on a roulette table because there's a lot more luck involved. But I think for a lot of crews a long (training) row for them is about two, two and half hours so obviously that's where (passing them) is going to take place."

While winning the race with relative ease,

Bilkins and Murphy were certainly challenged early by the Cape May crew.

"I really thought Wadlow and (Kevin) Murphy were going to be our biggest challenges in this race," Bilkins said. "They went out hard and they pushed us to be strong early in the race until we got to the point where we passed them."

"I've talked to some people about going out real hard in the beginning," said Bick Murphy. "But others seem to think it's better if you don't use it all in the beginning of the race. Joe (Taylor) and Rom (Forcino), for instance, they said they didn't go out as hard as they've done in the past and at the end they passed some boats and they said this may have been one of the best races they rowed."

Forcino and Taylor finished ninth.

Bilkins and Murphy were also challenged, although their lead was never in serious jeopardy, late in the race by the Guerrieri brothers and Ventnor veterans Dennis Funk and George Miller, who hold the record time of 2:56.06 which they set in winning the race in 1987. Funk and Miller finished third.

"The Ventnor boats were right there and I don't know if we felt too comfortable or what," Bilkins said. "Bick mentioned he wanted to shorten the stroke so he'd have a little less stress (on his injured ribcage; see related story) and I had a couple of twinges, too, so we wanted to slow up a bit just to make sure. Those other crews coming up are outstanding and I don't know the exact distance but they were definitely making up ground. Those guys rowed a very

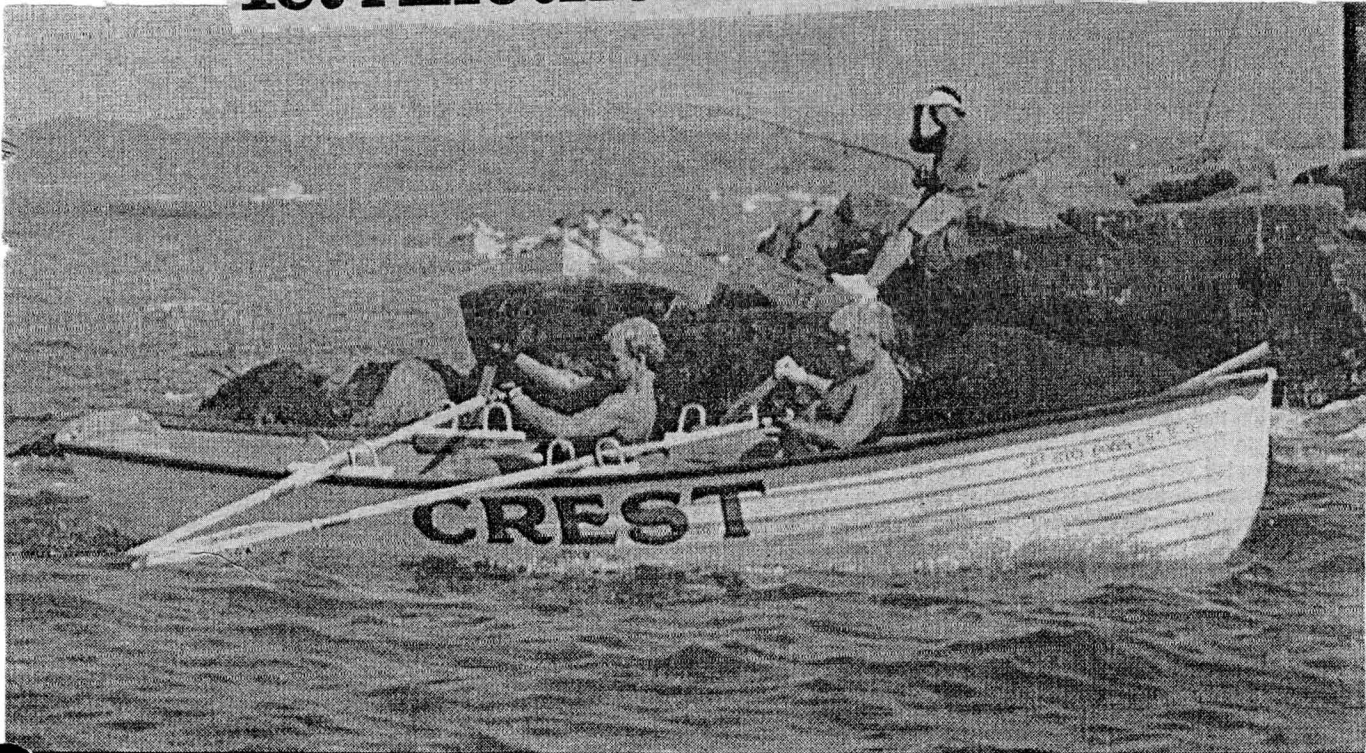
good race. But we just used a nice consistent stroke to take us in."

After the boats moved past the Cold Spring rockpile, Cape May's Wadlow and Murphy dropped out of contention after Wadlow began experiencing cramps in his legs. After stopping for a while, the Cape May crew continued rowing and gutted its way to a 26th place finish. Avalon's Mark Wachlin and Craig Whitehead finished fourth with a time of 3:06.18. The next Cape May County boat to cross was the Crest's Rick Greco and Pat Trinsey, who placed sixth in 3:07.33. Wildwood's Dan and Steve McGuinn were seventh in 3:08.10, followed by patrolmates Tom Killian and Joe Slater who posted a time of 3:08.25.

ROWING AROUND THE ISLAND:

With Hereford Inlet virtually impassable from the inside anymore due to sand accretion in the area, Funk and Miller's record time of 2:56.06 set in 1987 may never be broken unless the inlet is dredged sometime in the future. About another mile has been added to the race as the competitors must row all the way around the outside of the inlet to pass through. ... Ventnor had three boats place in the top 10. Wildwood and Wildwood Crest each had two. ... Bilkins has now won the Around the Island Row seven times — in 1995, 1993, 1992 and 1985 with Murphy, in 1979 with Dave Koper and in 1978 with John Greenwood. ... Bilkins and Murphy won last year's race in 2:57.48.

Bilkins, Murphy Win Yet Another Island Row



Dale Gerhard

Wildwood Crest's Bick Murphy (left) and Max Bilkins turn the rockpile at Cold Spring Inlet in the lead in the 21st annual Around the Island Row. Murphy and Bilkins have won the race four out of the last five years.



Dale Gerhard

Cape May's Kevin Murphy (left) and Jim Wadlow, the 1996 South Jersey doubles crew champions, led the Around the Island Row for more than half the race.

RESULTS: 1. Max Bilkins and Bick Murphy (WC) 3:04.28; 2. Matt Guerrieri and Mike Guerrieri (V) 3:05.10; 3. Dennis Funk

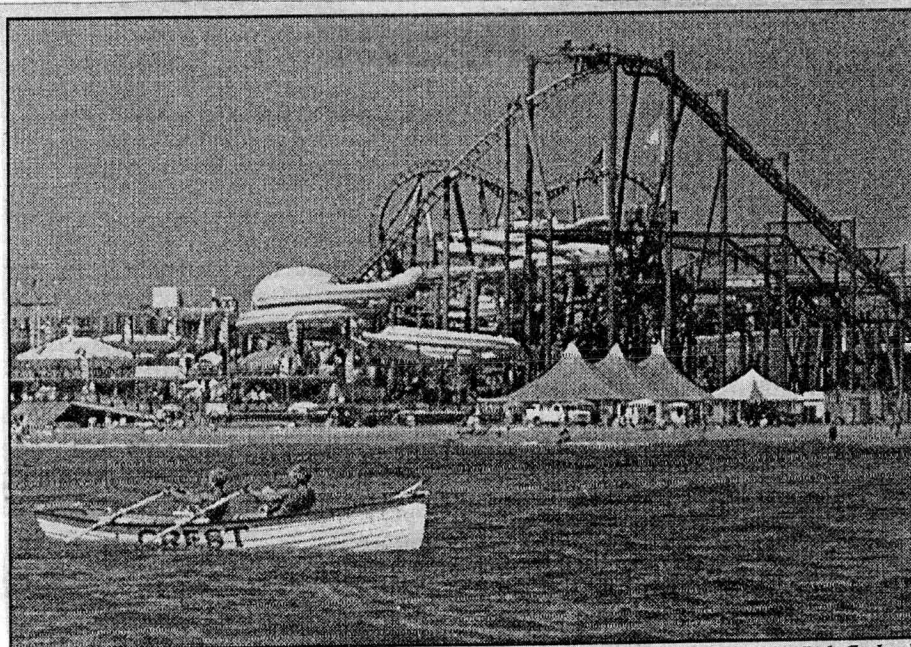
and George Miller (V) 3:05.31; 4. Mark Wachlin and Craig Whitehead (A) 3:06.18; 5. Jim Mason and Scott Jones (V) 3:06.59; 6. Rick Greco and Pat Trinsey (WC) 3:07.33; 7. Dan McGuinn and Steve McGuinn (W) 3:08.10; 8. Tom Killian and Joe Slater (W) 3:08.25; 9. Romolo Forcino and Joe Taylor (NW) 3:08.23; 10. Rob Garbutt Jr. and Matt Garbutt (OC) 3:09.37; 11. Rob Canavan and Bruce Hunt (B) 3:10.47; 12. John Kelly and Chris Oaves (M) 3:11.03; 13. Andrew Funk and David Funk (V) 3:12.32; 14. Matt Kelm and Mike McGrath (L) 3:13.26; 15. Shawn Daley and Tom Foley (B) 3:14.51; 16. Tom McLaughlin and Shawn Reid 3:14.57; 17. Skip Feraco and Tom Frederick (WC) 3:16.03; 18. Michelle Busza and Bill Quinn (W) 3:16.11; 19. Joe Corcoran and Matt Corcoran (B) 3:17.22; 20. Jason Read and Ted Frankel (AC) 3:18.33; 21. Tom Reynolds and Ed Schneider (W) 3:19.11; 22. James Gallagher and Charles Radomicki (SIC) 3:19.22; 23. Ed Harold and Bill Howarth (V) 3:19.39; 24. Luke Duff and Nick Tripican (V) 3:19.42; 25. Ed Fagan and Steve Kwalik (CM) 3:20.10; 26. Kevin Murphy and Jim Wadlow (CM) 3:23.56; 27. Joe Galone and Coleman Joyce (A) 3:25.30; 28. Brent Tracey and Clint Tracey (CM) 3:26.18; 29. Pat McMenamin and Kevin Quinn (NW) 3:26.34; 30. Tom Edwards and Scott Hall (NW) 3:29.10; 31. Ed McGinley and Pat Murray (W) 3:30.36; 32. Keith Jackson and Mike Mader (CMP) 3:31.23; 33. Pam Hasse and Derek Wanner (CMP) 3:32.26; 34. Bill Powell and Rich Schmid (A) 3:35.09; 35. Sal DeJewski and Bill Rehl (W) 3:35.39; 36. Tony Gambescia and Tom Ogden (NW) 3:35.44; 37. Linda Kelley and Tim O'Brien (NW) 3:46.29.

PAST CHAMPIONS

IN THE AROUND THE ISLAND ROW

The following is a complete list of past champions of the Around the Island Row, dating back to the event's first race in 1976. Ventnor's Dennis Funk and George Miller, who finished third in this year's race, set the record time of 2:56.06 when they won in 1987.

YEAR	CREW	BEACH PATROL
1996	Max Bilkins and Bick Murphy	Wildwood Crest
1995	Max Bilkins and Bick Murphy	Wildwood Crest
1994	Steve Mogck and Jim Wadlow	Cape May
1993	Max Bilkins and Bick Murphy	Wildwood Crest
1992	Max Bilkins and Bick Murphy	Wildwood Crest
1991	Bob McGinty and Cliff Murray Jr.	Ventnor
1990	Chuck Dunn and Ted Evans	Ocean City
1989	Stu Grant and John Kelly	Margate
1988	Chuck Dunn and Ron Kirk	Ocean City
1987	Dennis Funk and George Miller	Ventnor
1986	Dan O'Malley and Bill Sieck	Avalon
1985	Max Bilkins and Bick Murphy	Wildwood Crest
1984	John Milar and Tom Morrison	Ocean City
1983	John Herron and Ron Kirk	Ocean City
1982	Tom Morrison and Rick Shoyer	Ocean City
1981	Dan O'Malley and Pete Soderman	Avalon
1980	Dave Kerr and Dan O'Malley	Avalon
1979	Max Bilkins and Dave Koper	Wildwood Crest
1978	Max Bilkins and John Greenwood	Wildwood Crest
1977	Jim Troy and Harry Zander	North Wildwood
1976	Jim Troy and Harry Zander	North Wildwood



Dale Gerhard

Bilkins and Murphy were glad the Great NorEaster on Morey's Pier wasn't a real nor'easter that created rough surf or bad conditions for the race.



Dale Gerhard

Competitors enjoyed picture-perfect weather for the Around the Island Row.



Dale Gerhard

North Wildwood's Romolo Forcino and Joe Taylor finished ninth in the 1996 Around the Island Row. Forcino and Taylor finished the 19-plus mile course in 3:08.23.



Dale Gerhard

Wildwood's Bill Quinn pumps his fists in jubilation after he and crewmate Michelle Busza finished 18th in the Around the Island Row.

1996

Murphy Shakes Off Injury

Just To Compete

By BRIAN CUNNIFF
Sports Editor

1996

NORTH WILDWOOD — Max Bilkins and Bick Murphy almost didn't even get a chance to defend their 1995 Around the Island Row crown before winning this year's race for an unprecedented fifth time as a crew in 3:04.28 on Thursday, Aug. 15.

One of the most important intangibles in surviving — let alone winning — the Around the Island Row is staying healthy. Any number of things can happen out in the water: back spasms, cramps, pulls, twinges, general muscle, bone and even mental fatigue, etc.

But for Bilkins and Murphy, more specifically Murphy, they almost didn't get into the boat for the race because of an injury. While training a couple of weeks before the race, Murphy pulled a muscle and strained some ligaments in his rib cage. But after consulting with a physician, resting, doing light exercises and already being in tip-top shape, Murphy, 37, was ready to go.

"Last night gave me the big boost of confidence, because my side didn't blow up,"

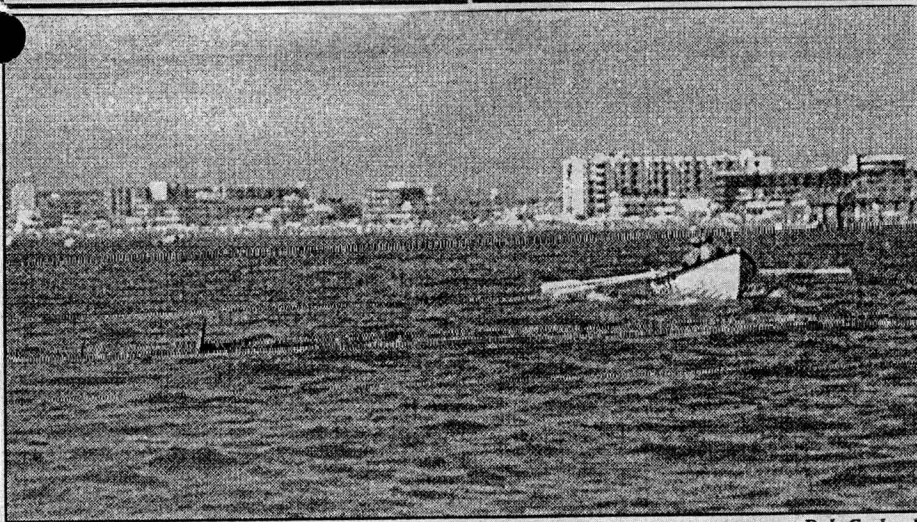
"But he's just a physical specimen. I don't think people realize it. Ounce for ounce I don't think people can compare to him and that's why he was able to make it back."

MAX BILKINS, DESCRIBING BICK MURPHY

Murphy said, referring to the South Jersey Championships held Wednesday, Aug. 14 which marked the first time he and Bilkins were able to row together since his injury. "This is obviously totally different than last night, so I still was a little concerned, but the conditions were right today. We didn't really have to lay back like some races and that's what was giving me the most trouble."

Bilkins, 44, credited Murphy's amazing resiliency and toughness as reasons for why they were able to get back in the boat so quickly after a what can be a very painful injury.

"I keep a record and a log of what we do training-wise and compare it over the years and see where we were successful and how we look loading up for a race," Bilkins said. "I was a little apprehensive not being in the boat together



Dale Gerhard

After passing the Cape May boat in the bay, the only things to get close to Bilkins and Murphy were these porpoises to the left of their boat.

for a while. I was doing a lot of stuff on my own and he did what he could in terms of running and other workouts.

"But he's just a physical specimen. I don't think people realize it. Ounce for ounce I don't think people can compare to him and that's why he was able to make it back."

After the race Murphy said he actually felt better than after any of the other times he competed in the around the Island Row.

"We don't do this race because we know we have a good chance of winning," Murphy said. "But when I'm in shape for something I feel like I always have a good shot.

"It actually gets easier (to compete year after year). You want to do more. One of the things I don't like about this race is that you hear, 'Oh, the old guys won again,' and I hate that. That's what makes you go harder and that's what makes you want to win.

"Every year we try to come up with inventive ways to keep (the training regiment) fresh. By doing that, it helps you enjoy not so much the end result but the road that leads you to that point. That's what makes it fun."

Wildwood Crest duo wins Island Row

■ Max Bilkins and Bick Murphy win for the fourth time in the last five years.

By GUY GARGAN
Staff Writer

1996

NORTH WILDWOOD — Veteran Wildwood Crest Beach Patrol oarsmen Max Bilkins and Bick Murphy took the lead midway through the race Thursday and won the 21st North Wildwood Around The Island Row.

The Crest boat was clocked in three hours, four minutes, 28 seconds.

Brothers Matt and Mike Guerrieri of Ventnor came in second in 3:05.10, their best finish ever, and the Ventnor alumni crew of Dennis Funk and George Miller placed third in 3:05.31.

Bilkins and Murphy have won the 21-mile row around Wildwood five times, and four of the last five years. Bilkins, a 44-year-old, 25-year lifeguard, also won the row two other times with different partners.



MURPHY



BILKINS

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With the usual course, a time under three hours is considered fast. The meet record is 2:56.06 by Funk and Miller in 1987.

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The Crest tandem was one of nine crews at the island row that had competed in the South Jersey Championships in Margate just 13 hours before. Bilkins and Murphy didn't place in the top five in the South Jerseys but it was still important to them.

"Going into last night (the South Jerseys) I hadn't rowed in 10 days," the 37-year-old Murphy said. "I've had a contusion and tendinitis under my rib cage, and last night told me I could row today. I was wary that things might go bad today, it was on my mind, but it never caused any type of pain. Rowing around the island gets easier (after years of doing it). This is the best I've ever felt

□ See Row, Page C4

Row

(Continued from Page C1)

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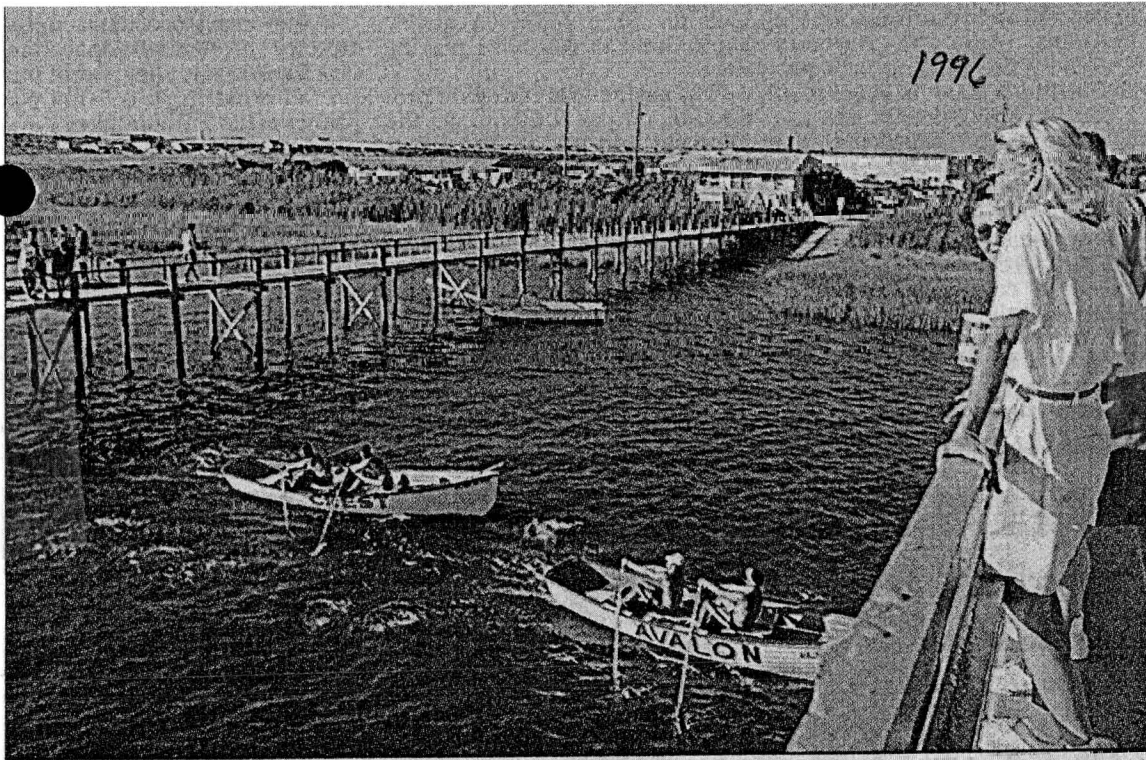
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Press photo by John Jablonowski

Spectators watch as the Avalon and Wildwood Crest boats pass below them in the back bay.



Press photo by John Jablonowski

Rowers make their way through the back bay during the 21st North Wildwood Around The Island Row.



WILDWOOD CREST DUO WINS ISLAND ROW (21ST NORTH WILDWOOD AROUND THE ISLAND ROW)

Press of Atlantic City, The (NJ) - Friday, August 16, 1996

Author: GUY GARGAN Staff Writer

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With the usual course, a time under three hours is considered fast. The meet record is 2:56.06 by Funk and Miller in 1987.

The winning time didn't seem too impressive but there was a big reason for that.

One of the Hereford Inlet's famed sandbars (at the top of Wildwood) has grown since last year, and the contestants were ordered to go around it. "It's definitely another half-mile, about 10 minutes more of rowing," Bilkins said. "I think it was a good move to put a flag there to go around it. It's such a long race that it won't matter if it's a little longer."

The Crest tandem was one of nine crews at the island row that had competed in the South Jersey Championships in Margate just 13 hours before. Bilkins and Murphy didn't place in the top five in the South Jerseys but it was still important to them.

"Going into last night (the South Jerseys) I hadn't rowed in 10 days," the 37-year-old Murphy said. "I've had a contusion and tendinitis under my rib cage, and last night told me I could row today. I was wary that things might go bad today, it was on my mind, but it never caused any type of pain. Rowing around the island gets easier (after years of doing it). This is the best I've ever felt after the race."

South Jersey winners Kevin Murphy and Jim Wadlow of Cape May led around the island for half the race, but faded to 27th. "Coming out of the (Cold Spring) inlet (at the bottom of Wildwood) I started to cramp up," Wadlow said. "I couldn't bend my legs. I had to row with my legs straight."

"Wildwood Crest was about 200 meters ahead of us, and we didn't think we could catch them, and we were challenged by the pack," sternman Mike Guerrieri said. "Funk and Miller battled us all the way."

It was a special day for the 44-year-old Funk because his sons Andrew and David, who watched him row around the island for years, this time were rowing too. The younger Funks were 13th.

"I watched them the whole race," Dennis Funk said. "They were about 200 or 300 yards behind us. It was pretty exciting to have my sons in the race. In a couple years, they'll be in the hunt."

Caption: (1) MURPHY Color (2) BILKINS Color (3) Spectators watch as the Avalon and Wildwood Crest boats pass below them in the back bay. Color photo (4) Rowers make their way through the back bay during the 21st North Wildwood Around The Island Row. Press photo(s) by John Jablonowski

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