



## Lifeguard races / North Wildwood BP's Around the Island Row set for Wednesday

Press of Atlantic City, The (NJ) - Tuesday, August 18, 2009

Author: GUY GARGAN For The Press, 609-272-7210

The North Wildwood Beach Patrol Around The Island Row, which will begin at 6:30 a.m. Wednesday, has been renamed in honor of the late Bud Tarbotton, who founded the race in 1976 when he was a North Wildwood City Councilman who oversaw the beach patrol. Tarbotton died in April.

What: The 34th annual Bud Tarbotton Memorial North Wildwood Beach Patrol Around The Island Row, a doubles race of approximately 20 miles which goes around Wildwood island.

Where: The race begins in the water at 1st Avenue and Surf Avenue in North Wildwood and goes counterclockwise around the island before finishing at 15th Avenue beach. In past years, the race was a complete circuit of Wildwood island, but a mile of the course was taken off starting in 2005 due to the rough surf and sandbars in the Hereford Inlet at the top of the island.

When: 6:30 a.m. Wednesday

Who: Doubles crews who are area lifeguards or beach patrol alumni

Defending champions: The alumni crew of Carl Smallwood Jr. and B.J. Fox pulled away to win by more than two minutes last year in 2 hours, 48 minutes, 19 seconds. Smallwood is a former Margate guard while Fox is an alumnus of Atlantic City and Longport.

Lifeguards to watch: Smallwood and Fox are back, along with the Ventnor alumni crew of Dennis Funk and George Miller that won in 2006 and was second the last two years. Also returning are Wildwood Crest veterans Max Bilkins and Bick Murphy, who have won the race six times. Bilkins and Murphy placed third last year. Margate's Chris Graves and Greg Smallwood, fourth last year, are set to go. Ventnor's David Funk, the only seven-time South Jersey champion, will row with Ventnor alumnus Ed Harrold. Others are Avalon's Craig Whitehead and Erich Wolf, Margate alumni brothers Jim Swift and John Swift, Wayne McMurry (Upper Township) and Bill Kindle (Wildwood alumnus), Wildwood's Tom McLaughlin and Steve McGuinn and the Ventnor crew of Jake Mason and father Jim Mason, an alumnus. Cape May's Erika Axelsson and Mary Grace Maggiano, 2008's only female crew, will go again.

What's unique: The row around Wildwood is the only South Jersey Lifeguard event in the morning, and the only one with the varying conditions of the ocean, inlet and bay. It's also the only area event where the spectators travel around to various checkpoints to see the progress of the race.

E-mail Guy Gargan: ggargan@pressofac.com

**Edition:** All

**Section:** Sports

[← Back](#)

# LIFEGUARD RACES / Smallwood, Fox win 2nd straight Around Island Row

August 20, 2009 Publication: Press of Atlantic City, The (NJ) Page: B6 Word Count: 909

Dennis Funk, 57, and George Miller, 58, finish in second place for the third straight year.

The lifeguard alumni crew of Carl Smallwood Jr. and B.J. Fox pulled away from their challengers Wednesday morning in the final ocean sprint to win their second straight Bud Tarbotton Memorial North Wildwood Beach Patrol Around The Island Row.

Smallwood, 38, and Fox, 36, became the first crew to win the race around Wildwood twice in a row since Max Bilkins and Bick Murphy of Wildwood Crest won in 1995 and 1996.

Rowing in a Margate boat, Smallwood and Fox won the 20-mile row in 2 hours, 40 minutes, 34 seconds. About 50 yards behind in second place were Ventnor alumni Dennis Funk and George Miller.

Funk and Miller, ages 57 and 58 respectively, are four-time winners of the race and have now finished second three straight years. About 40 yards in back of Funk and Miller in third was Margate's Chris Graves and Greg Smallwood (Carl's brother).

Carl Smallwood is a former Margate lifeguard who's now a state trooper. Fox, a former Atlantic City and Longport guard, is a captain in the Atlantic City Fire Department.

The pair completely dominated in 2008, winning by more than two minutes, but it wasn't quite so easy this time. Wildwood Crest 16-year guard Terry McGovern and Crest rookie Matt Benedetto led for the entire backbay portion of the race, with Smallwood and Fox two or three boatlengths behind in second.

"It was absolutely harder than last year," Fox, the stern, said. "Last year we got the lead early and led the whole way, but this time we had to be tactful, watch the field and be conscious of our conditions. We had to fall back on our conditioning.

"It feels good to win it again. Next year will be a whole different year. When you look at the factors of the race, there's a lot of young talent. That's enough to motivate you to work out and stay in shape."

Carl Smallwood is a three-time winner of the race, also taking first with Margate chief Rich Kugel in 2002. Only Bilkins (eight wins), Murphy (six wins, all with Bilkins) and Funk and Miller have more victories in the 34th annual event.

"We pretty much stuck to our race," Smallwood said. "We tried to stay patient and not let the Crest (McGovern and Benedetto) dictate, but row our own race. This year was a lot harder than last year. Dennis and George, and Greg and Chris kept the pressure on us in the ocean. I hope I can still be doing it when I get their (Funk and Miller) age, and still be competitive."

Funk and Miller moved into second place with about three miles left in the final ocean sprint.

"We had a great row," said Funk, the bow, and the father of top lifeguard rowers David and Ashton Funk. "We had a consistent stroke from start to finish."

McGovern and Benedetto lost the lead in the Cold Spring Inlet at the bottom of Wildwood and finished sixth. McGovern, in his eighth row around the island, had his best finish ever. Benedetto, 19, will be a sophomore with the Saint Joseph's University (Pa.) lightweight eight.

"Carl and B.J. went right out at the start last year and no one could catch them," McGovern said. "This year we wanted to shoot out with them, stay as long as we could and see what happens."

Sea Isle City's Colin Corcoran and Sean Riley, in their second race around Wildwood, rallied to

get fourth. Wildwood veteran Ed Schneider, 40, placed fifth with 19-year-old partner Brandon Joyce, who was in his first island row.

Note: Albert "Bud" Tarbotton Jr. founded the Around The Island Row in 1976 as a member of the North Wildwood City Council. He died at age 69 in March. The event was renamed in his honor.

Midway through Monday's race, Albert "Buddy" Tarbotton III and sister Michelle, the children of Bud Tarbotton, rowed out in the water at 15th Street beach in a lifeboat along with North Wildwood Beach Patrol chief Tony Cavalier and spread Bud's ashes into the ocean at the finish line.

E-mail Guy Gargan: [ggargan@pressofac.com](mailto:ggargan@pressofac.com)

## RESULTS

1. Margate alumnus-Atlantic City/Longport alumnus (Carl Smallwood Jr.-B.J. Fox) 2:40:34; 2. Ventnor alumni (Dennis Funk-George Miller) 2:41:11; 3. Margate (Chris Graves-Greg Smallwood) 2:41:40; 4. Sea Isle City (Colin Corcoran-Sean Riley) 2:42:38; 5. Wildwood (Ed Schneider-Brandon Joyce) 2:42:49; 6. Wildwood Crest (Terry McGovern-Matt Benedetto) 2:43:43; 7. Wildwood (Tom McLaughlin-Steve McGuinn) 2:45:17; 8. Wildwood Crest (Max Bilkins-Bick Murphy) 2:45:44; 9. Upper Township (Joe O'Neil-Jim Gibbons) 2:45:57; 10. Upper Township-Wildwood alumnus (Wayne MacMurray-Bill Kindle) 2:46:50; 11. Avalon (Craig Whitehead-Erich Wolf) 2:47:11; 12. Ventnor (David Funk-Ed Harrold) 2:47:21; 13. Margate alumni (Jim Swift-John Swift) 2:47:30; 14. Longport (Pat Armstrong-Tom Sher) 2:48:26; 15. Margate (Joe Palmer-Patrick Smith) 2:50:02.

---

**Press of Atlantic City, The (NJ)**

**Date:** August 20, 2009

**Page:** B6

Copyright, 2009, South Jersey Publishing Company t/a The Press of Atlantic City