

## WVYC Women's Race & Cruise to Elliott Bay 2023: Medieval Times

Hear ye! Hear ye! Ten boats – half racing, half cruising – and 33 women gathered at Elliott Bay on May 27-28 for the Medieval activities and revels hosted by Lady Deborah (Deb Patz) 2023.

Saturday morning arrived with sunny skies and fair winds providing excellent conditions for a smooth passage to Gambier Island for the cruisers and racers alike. Four sailboats and crews competed for honours in the race to Elliot Bay with all finishing the race in just under 2 hours! Songbird took first place followed closely by Seute Deern, Halcyon and Puffin.

On arrival at Elliott Bay, mediievally-dressed land crew greeted each boat and the revels began quickly. The cottage was decorated like a pavilion of the Middle Ages with Celtic hangings. Medieval board games (on decorated wooden boards) were played - games like Tablut, Gluckhaus, and even Tic Tac Toe with knights and dragons. But the make-your-own Coat of Arms activity was most popular. With a quick primer on heraldry, people showed off their creativity and artistry designing, drawing and colouring unique shields that were turned into buttons to be worn.

Activities continued on the patio with Lady Natalya (intermediate member) and Lady Sophie – both Knights of the Order of the Iron Helm at Academie Duello (where they teach kids medieval martial arts at Knight Camp and Knight Academy). The armoured duo engaged in a swordplay demo – starting slow and gradually speeding up to a real-time sword fight. There were many observers - even from other boats - on both patio and hillside.

Following the sword play there was a mead tasting and then the costume contest was on. It was amazing to hear the stories each boat invented to accompany their team costumes! A few creative examples: the Songbird team was decked in burlap sacks because their leader had spurned the advances of the King who took away their land and possessions; the Puffin team were defenders of the Puffin – complete with Puffin icons on their shields; a falconer accompanied by her a falcon (that looked remarkably like Hedwig the owl but that's the beauty of creativity). There's just not enough room to highlight all the remarkable stories and costumes.... and just when it was thought there could no further surprises, WVYC's Commodore Jody arrived as a black dragon. Naturally, Lady Natalya and Lady Sophie battled her and saved the day!

Dinner was a feast of BBQ ribs, salmon, grilled veggies and thick slices of sourdough bread, followed up by cinnamon-spiced apple pie. True to Medieval times, there were no tomatoes, no potatoes and no forks. The trivia contest that accompanied dinner included interesting facts about women of the Middle Ages, and because points were awarded for creative answers, there was much laughter in the scoring.

Awards were plentiful for the day's activities, first with the race award going to Songbird (for the third year in a row!). The group costume award was a three-way tie between the burlap gals of Songbird, the jumble of jesters of Halcyon, and the famous trio Joan of Arc, Eleanor of Aquitaine and a female Knight Templar of V-20 (Seute Deern). Janet Davidson received the award for most-creatively-assembled Medieval outfit, and Desiree from Serendipity received the most-authentic-looking outfit. The trivia contest was won by V-20 (Seute Deern). Finally, the Commodore Dragon received a kids book about knights in order to study up on how to survive in Medieval times.

After dinner, Lady Natalya and Lady Sophie taught dancing on the patio as the sun set over Elliott Bay. What a fabulous day and event! It was well-discussed and recalled over potluck breakfast on the docks the next morning before all the parting farewells and a beautiful sail home.

Here is hat's off and a HUGE thank you to the many people who made this event possible and wonderfully successful: John and the WVYC staff for the excellent and plentiful food; Ken Elliott, Joe Kostur and Don Davidson for all the land-based support and cooking; Charles Hansen for helming Chaperone for both race and land support; Natalya Patz and Sophie Magyar for being the stars of the land activities, Cynthia Des Brisay organizing a great race, and Deb Patz for hosting the land activities... and of course, to all the amazing women of WVYC and their guests for participating with such gusto to make this event as amazing as it was.

As for next year, the theme is to be announced – but pencil in the last weekend of May to come and join in! Cynthia of Songbird will be organizing the race, and Leslie of Puffin organizing the land activities.

Pictures can be found here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/rs2v12y4nk5u8cjbqj1q/h?dl=0&rlkey=xapptznsawbh8xmf18hzy6cfu>