

William I. Koch International Sea Scout Regatta

by David George
National Sea Scout Boatswain

At the end of July, Sea Scouts from around the country and as far away as Norway, Australia, and New Zealand gathered in Miami, Florida to participate in the third annual William I. Koch International Sea Scout Regatta. For six days, more than 30 teams raced for the Cup. While the racing was fun and competitive, it was not all we did while we were there.



There was certainly plenty to talk about with other Sea Scouts at the regatta and after racing you could usually find a bunch of us in the pool: relaxing, swimming, and just laughing about the day. On the off day while one fleet was racing (we were divided into two fleets) the other traveled down to the Florida Keys. There, we boarded a tour boat and an hour later we found ourselves amongst the beautiful coral reefs that make the Florida Keys famous. I can't begin to describe how peaceful and gorgeous the water was; we certainly couldn't wait to get in. We all donned snorkeling gear and visited three spots, which was really a treat for those that had never been to the keys. In talking to the other scouts, this was certainly one of the best parts of the entire competition; not being competitive but just having fun with everyone you have met. The Koch Cup is very different from other sailing regattas in that respect. At the Koch Cup, competitors are not only racing against each other but they are racing with each other.

I don't ever think I've ever laughed as much as I did those days in Miami. I met a lot of really cool people and hope that they race for the Cup in 2008. And speaking of the Cup let me fill you in with how this year's regatta went.

Sailing on perfect Vanguard 420's, the races we held on a windward-leeward course (if you don't know what that is, join a Sea Scout Ship). All of the days gave us decent wind strengths of 5-10 knots. But the last day was a real treat when the wind surged up clocking in at 23 knots. That day, the races were remarkably quick and while you weren't on the race course, you were power-reaching and surfing down the little waves, soaking wet from all the spray. This had to be some of the most fun sailing I have ever done and I know the others agree.





**Chief Scout Executive Roy Williams,
David George, William Koch, &
Commodore Jimmie Homburg**

On the last day after racing, we all got into our dress whites and got in buses to go to Mr. Koch's Palm Beach Estate where the awards dinner was held. Mr. Koch graciously welcomed us all into his home where we viewed his prized art collection, rare and unique pieces of history, and his collection of America's Cup sailboat models -the largest collection in the world. We then proceeded into a large tent in the back yard where the awards dinner was to be held. After a magnificent dinner with foods from around the world, the awards were given out. This year's winners of the Koch Cup were the guys from Sea Scout Ship 711, Del Mar, from Newport Beach, California. In second were the girls

from New Zealand and third place went to the SSS Fiesta Island from San Diego, California.

This third Koch Cup went wonderfully and I was so impressed by the venue that I can't wait to see where it is going to be in 2008. If you would like any more information on Koch Cup or to see pictures, please visit <http://www.seascoutcup.org>.