

**Sailing Weather Services Forecast**  
**Key West Race Week**  
**Issued: 0630 EST**

**NOTE:** There are no active warnings for the course area. Tune to NOAA Weather Radio on your VHF for the most up to date official National Weather Services warnings and advisories.

**Synopsis:** Two days with light winds coming up. Tomorrow looks lighter than today, but decreasing winds this afternoon may make racing difficult and tricky this afternoon. High pressure has slowly drifted over the south Florida peninsula overnight - settling in over the land where it was relatively cool compared to the surrounding water. Over the warm water of the Gulf Stream and the Florida Strait, the pressure is a little lower. The relative pressure difference between the high to the north and lower pressure to the south continues to support a northeast gradient over the keys this morning.

The high is expected to remain nearly stationary, but drift around a little bit while trying to move east today. As the day goes on, the high will weaken as the pressure difference supporting the weak gradient will all but die away. This is expected to decrease winds and result in a gradual right trend this afternoon. Models hint at a shift back to the left at some time this afternoon, so that is included in the forecast table, below.

**Current Conditions:** Mainly light winds under 10 knots reported everywhere. Winds east of Key West range from north-northeast to northeast. On Key West its mainly a northeast wind, while west of the area breezes veer to the east-southeast. The wind aloft as indicated on the Key West Doppler Radar is quite light and variable.

Skies over the area have been mainly cloud free overnight except for a few patches of high clouds. A cool and very dry air mass is in place over the region.

**Forecast Discussion:** Light northeast winds in the morning will hold relatively steady in speed and direction through about 1000. After this, wind speeds will gradually decrease while the predominant shift is to the right. Winds will become east or east-southeast for a time through early afternoon and continue to decrease on average. The breeze will become shifty and spotty in the afternoon. A slight left trend is possible in the mid-afternoon before the breeze starts trending off to the right again later on.

**Weather:** Mainly sunny and a little bit warmer today. Some minor high clouds may move overhead from time to time with no noticeable impact. A few scattered small cumulus may develop during the afternoon. It should be dry with no rain expected.

**Seas:** With the light winds, only slight seas are expected, mainly less than 3 ft all course areas.

**Detailed Wind Forecast for Today:**

Time(EST)	Wind Speed		Wind Direction (True)		
	Mean	Range	Mean	Range	
09	08	06-10	070	045-085	...possibly more left at first
10	09	07-11	075	060-090	...trending right
11	08	06-11	080	065-105	
12	08	06-10	085	070-100	...decreasing breeze
13	08	06-10	095	075-110	
14	07	05-09	090	070-110	...possible left shift
15	07	05-09	080	065-105	
16	07	05-09	090	075-110	...trending right again
17	06	04-08	100	075-115	

**Hedge:** 1) Sailable winds are expected in the morning, but it may start to lighten enough to put sailing at risk during the afternoon. At this point, not expecting a complete glass-off at any time, but it could get very, very light during the afternoon.

2) As you should often expected, as the winds lighten the wind direction pattern tends to become less stable and the shifts less predictable/reliable. In the morning, the cool air flowing over the keys should be reasonably steady, but as the pressure drops, watch for the wind trending right and becoming more spotty.

3) A persistent right shift is indicted in the forecast table from late morning through early afternoon. This is expected to be the predominant trend but the best way to describe the breeze will be as an oscillating shift on a persistent right trend. The minor left shift shown in the forecast table around mid-afternoon is a bit more of a W.A.G. on timing and amplitude. Its quite possible that we'll see another left shift in the afternoon, similar to the one observed yesterday (Monday), though not as pronounced and at lighter speed.

4) In the morning, indications are for pressure left and shift right. In the afternoon, there is no clear trend. REMINDER - current will have a big impact and will probably be just as important (or more so) than shift and possibly even pressure effects.

5) As mentioned in the above, the air mass continues to be very dry over the area today, so clouds are expected to be minimal. Some high clouds have been moving overhead during the night, and its likely that a few high clouds will continue passing over from time to time. But high clouds are generally disconnected from the surface winds, so we don't really look to them to provide us any breeze. Low clouds such as cumulus and stratocumulus are connected to the surface winds, so those are the ones that will most likely have an impact on the breeze. But there really should be little or no significant cloud action on the course today.

6) Forecast confidence is GOOD in the general pattern, but confidence less in the details. At the predicted low wind speeds, large directional forecast errors are possible.

**Outlook for Tomorrow:** Last day of high pressure dominating the region. The high which has controlled the weather during the last several days will be moving east through the Bahamas and away from the keys. A ridge associated with the high is expected to continue holding over the region most of the day, only very gradually eroding away to the east. Very slack gradients are forecast and it will be a struggle to produce a sailable wind.

In the morning, look for a weak northeast to east-northeast drainage breeze around 5 knots. This wind will die away after sunrise, and it will become quite light and variable by late morning. What little breeze there is should be coming from the east or east-southeast by late morning. A gradually right veering trend is forecast as the high pressure ridge moves away to the east. Also, a sea breeze developing on the southwest coast of Florida in the afternoon is expected to support an inflow which will gradually reach out to the keys in the afternoon, bring a weak flow of air in from the south.

The weather will continue to be mostly sunny. It will be a little bit warmer and the humidity will slowly rise. The higher humidity may allow a few more cumulus clouds to develop and impact the racing area in the afternoon.

Time(EST)	Wind Speed		Wind Direction (True)	
	Mean	Range	Mean	Range
09	05	03-08	075	060-120
12	05	03-07	115	090-135
15	04	02-06	135	120-170
18	04	02-07	170	145-190

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