**Night Race**
*Patricia Butkovich*

Such perfection
dwells only in dreams.
That June night, shirt sleeve comfy,
Wind a steady 15 knots
on the starboard quarter
The towering spinnaker
pushing our quarter tonner
to its hull speed.

The sunlight reflecting to earth
From the surface of the full moon
Cast a shadowy glow on the deck and sails
Making flashlights optional even at the midnight hour.
   It was a surreal, timeless, floating world
As the bow cut sharply through the black restless water.
The only sound to be heard
As it swished along the polished hull.

The dark night waters that
Managed to reach above the hull and spill
Across the deck were alive with
Shimmering specks of phosphorus.
So hypnotic was the sight,
   That I found an appreciative, ‘Oh’ or ‘Ah,’
Escaping my lips
Repeatedly.

The sea and the boat were like
Dancers meshed in harmony
To the beat of music
Playing only for their hearing.
The sea, in a dazzling jeweled gown,
Flowed gracefully around and over the deck
Receded coyly, only to return,
More lovely than before.

This euphoric time capsule faded with the dawn
As other sailboats and the finish line came into view.
Though it happened many years ago
I’ve only to close my eyes
And I’m there once more
Rushing through the sparkling moonlit water,
Trimming the spinnaker
As we race to Pensacola.