

## 2012 MC Nor'Easterns Regatta

For the twelfth year running Keuka Yacht Club in the beautiful Finger Lakes of New York host the Nor'Easterns MC Regatta. 20 Boats competed in moderate, no strike that, let's call it "interesting" winds.

Friday night rains prevented much of anything other than drinking and playing cards and such. Everyone found their hosts and was tucked into bed pretty early. Saturday morning sailors arrived at the club to see SSW winds at a nice 8-10. Race 1 was scheduled for 10:15. It didn't quite make that time.

Race 1 – After a delay while the RC chased the clocking breeze to the west, the race got off with Scott Norris and Chris Hawk quickly jumping out to a good lead. The 5-12 mph winds were shifty with 30 degree shifts. At mark 1, Norris and Hawk had a 15 length lead on the pack chasing them down. Both extended on the leeward making it a 2-boat race. On the windward leg large holes appeared and shifts got even wilder. Norris broke cover on Hawk to go another 100 feet or so before tacking which let him extend dramatically and left Hawk in a hole. Stuart Strother hit the right corner and closed the distance on Hawk narrowly missing second place at the finish. Norris however had checked out and won by a couple hundred yards. Will Hendershot from Montreal and Matt Newman from Hoover rounded out the top 5.

Race 2 – The wind continued it's clocking to the NW and North but picked up to a good moderate breeze. Race 2 started out eerily similar to race one with Norris and Hawk rounding the top mark in 1, 2. But the fleet was right on their heels. On the second windward the wind did a Crazy Ivan splitting the fleet a bit. Norris and Hawk split with Norris right. The right came in and Norris, led the parade of Sean Treacy, Stuart Strother, Chris Craig, Devon Howe and others past all those on the left. Hawk rounded 14th. Norris went on to win again followed by Treacy, Strother, Andre Marcotte, and Hendershot.

But the real story of race 2 was the seamanship of Chris Craig, DNF for the race. Chris rounded the bottom mark in fifth place with a very very short windward leg to the finish. He trimmed in around the mark, heard a bang, and the boom hit the deck. The forestay shackle broke. But the mast was still standing! The heavily trimmed main forced the boom onto the deck holding up the mast! He was sailing still...sort of. He might still pull out a good finish but he was below the lay line. He lay in the bottom of the boat as much as he could and tried to tack. But the handling was so poor he couldn't quite pull it off. While holding up the mast with one hand he lowered the sail, repaired the forestay, raised the sail and sailed in for lunch, too late to finish the race.

At lunch everyone had the same question. Who the heck is Scott "Chuck" Norris?

Race 3 – During the day the wind clocked 180 degrees to the right, then back 60 degrees, all the while oscillating 30 degrees left and right as it clocked. The poor RC continued to struggle. At the start, pin end boats could lay the mark on port while boat end boats were 20 degrees lower than that. Norris, Wynkoop, and Bob Cole started at the pin end with Craig and Hawk at the unflavored boat end. Craig banged the right corner, Hawk played the middle and the pin boats laid the mark. Strother and Craig followed. At the top mark Norris rounded first followed by the gang of Hawk, Strother, Craig, Newman,

in some unremembered order. These boats battled the whole race with Norris extending a bit, Hawk and Strother picking up on the long windward, and eventually catching Norris. Matt Newman also made large gains. Going into the last mark rounding, Norris, Hawk, and Strother were nose to tail. Strother made a great move toward a skewed line to almost win the race but didn't quite catch Norris. Hawk dropped to 3rd followed by Chris Craig and Matt Newman.

Race 4 – By 4:15 the RC had set and moved more marks than practically the whole season. The course had to yet again be completely moved. The race had a familiar feel. At the top mark Norris rounded first with Wynkoop, Cole and Hawk overlapped behind him. Treacy and Craig were close behind. Cole quickly jumped up to second and started chasing Norris. Two legs later he was able to roll over Norris and held on for the win closely followed by Hawk. Bob Wynkoop held off Sean Treacy to round out the top 5.

At the end of day 1 Norris had a seemingly insurmountable lead. The battle was for second with Strother 16 points, Hawk 17, and Treacy 20. Cole was 5th with 31.

Saturday night's turkey dinner with all the trimmings was spectacular. Sunday with only 2 scheduled races the start was set at 10:00.

Race 5 - Race 5 was started after the RC decided close enough was fine. The pin end was favored to where boats could lay the mark on port. At the boat you had different wind headed perfectly down the course. The fleet and anyone with any sense started at the pin. Locals Cole, Penwarden, Hawk, and Jenkins among others started at the boat. Local knowledge paid off a bit. The wind did another Crazy Ivan dying out and shifting way right. Cole led at the mark with Hawk, Penwarden, and Strother close behind. The wind dropped to almost nothing and got weird, or technically weirder. Cole rode a puff and checked out. The fleet scattered all over the lake looking for zephyrs. Chris Craig chased and got a miracle puff to pass a dozen or so boats, almost catching Cole and rolling into second. Leg 3 had the fleet reaching in East wind. Cole held off Craig to round mark 3 first followed by Strother, and I'm not sure who else because I (Hawk) was now 19th and quite a ways away. A following puff closed up a lot of the fleet into a giant jumble at mark. With 15 boats 4 and 5 wide beating to the short offset many rules were bent and words were had, all in slow motion.

Leg 4 had Cole and Craig battling for the lead. The tight reach had other boats strung out all looking for that puff or clean air. The advantage went to the boats in back that climbed high off the mark, found a building breeze and rolled over those below. The biggest recipient was a trio of Penwarden, Jenkins, and Hawk who went from 16th, 17th, and 19th place at mark 3 to 3rd, 4th, and 5th at mark 4. On the tiny final leg, Cole parked up at the line, and Craig crept closer. The miracle trio closed the gap quickly with Hawk catching Jenkins and Penwarden just as Cole found a puff to win with Craig second.

Hawk went from 2nd, to 19th to 3rd to ensure a win over Cole. But the overall places were still up for grabs. Norris and Treacy were deep, drifting along in the pack. But Norris was able to pull out an 11th place to clinch the regatta with Hawk second, 4 points back. Treacy's 13th put Cole in 4th place overall.

Chris Hawk