



2014 MCSA Blue Chip Championship

The forecast for the Annual MC Scow Blue Chip was not looking the greatest...As they say Spring Lake is where Nature Smiles for 7 Miles...well she sure showed the sailors all sorts of weather all weekend long.

Saturday the sailors were greeted with 12-15 MPH and some stronger gusts...Overcast skys and some occasional rain. Steve Schiller and his RC did a great job getting the 19 teams out on the water for some great racing.

There were 2 morning races in a nice South/South West Breeze. Most teams took crew as the breeze was up! Pete Comfort, Brett Hatton and Cam McNeil battled for the lead in the race with Pete taking the gun followed by Cam and Brett. There was also tight sailing all over the race course and some made some big gains throughout the race. Scott Harestad mentioned he was last at the first two marks, but fought his way back into 6th by the finish.

Race 2 got underway with similar conditions except this time a nice rain shower blew threw on the last leg. There were many lead changes in this race and at times it looked like some of the leaders had walked away with the race...only to be caught back up by the pack. In the end Pete Comfort took the win followed by Brett Hatton, Frank Reeg and Cam McNeil.

The teams headed in for lunch and to seek some shelter from the breeze in the Spring Lake Yacht Club. After a nice lunch at the Yacht Club the teams headed back out and the breeze had shifted more South so the racing was moved around the corner from the Yacht Club. Sailing in this part of the lake created for a fun racecourse. There was an opening in the lake and then you had to sail through a narrow section which quickly opened up again into the body of the lake. Many of the teams opted to sail the long starboard and hit the point on the east side

halfway up the course. It was all about staying in the pressure both up and down wind, as big gains were made by those who stayed in the puffs. Greg Simon with his daughter as crew was fast all day lead the 3rd race most of the way. Ted Keller, Dave Fox and Pete Comfort followed Greg across the finish line in a nice battle.

That concluded racing for the day...next on the docket was the annual Blue Chip Dinner. After a couple years away the sailors gathered at the Arboreal Inn for dinner. This is a great establishment and all were excited they opened back up... we were well take care of. Ted Keller provided the benediction before dinner and hit on the notion of growing sailing. There were many sailors in attendance who were sailing with family, as well as some multigenerational sailors who were in attendance. The MC fleet as a whole is a great family friendly fleet.

Sunday Morning brought more wind and some questionable weather. Steve Schiller kept the teams on shore as we waited for a cell to move through. The wind had shifted to the North West and increased in strength overnight. Steve and his RC team kept an eye on the conditions and as the cell began to break up he decided to send the sailors out. Despite the on and off showers the sailors made their way out to the race course. Most opted to take crew as the wind was 15-18 MPH by now.

The fleet got underway and off the line clean...in what would be the last race in the Championship. Cam McNeil, Brett Hatton and Andy Molesta got a jump on the fleet and lead most off the way around. Ted Keller and Pete Comfort were chasing the lead pack and trying to stay close. Jeff Cornetet was fast all weekend and always in the hunt...Jeff along with Todd Bosgraaf made some late surges in the race and were battling with Pete and Ted for the 4th place spot.

The annual MC Blue Chip is a great regatta and each sailor in attendance has a chance to win a race or even the regatta. Spring Lake is an amazing venue for the regatta as it challenges even the most skilled skippers to think outside the boat and really keep your eyes on the water. When sailing on Spring lake no lead is ever safe and each race is truly not over till you cross the line. There were many lead changes throughout the racing which always make for an exciting championship regatta. If you have not sailed on Spring Lake...you need too. Hit the regatta circuit and strive to qualify for the Blue Chip...its a great regatta with strong competition from the leaders all the way through the fleet.

Andy Molesta, Brien Fox and Ted Keller, along with their wives, do a great job of putting on this regatta each year. From Friday evening Brats and Beer through the awards and send off...they to a top notch job of making everyone feel welcome and well taken care of...this is a must sail regatta...get it on your schedule for 2015!

Overall results:

Pete Comfort-1st overall

Brett Hatton-1st Master

Frank Reeg-1st Junior

Mike Keenan--1st Grand Master

Casey Christensen-Gutter Ball Winner

Pete Comfort

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