

2019 MCSA Masters Championship

Keuka – New York

By Eric Hood – eric@melges.com

This past week the MC Scow sailing season kicked off with one of our major championships the MC Masters Nationals being sailed on Keuka Lake in New York.

The Regatta

Next time you see Keuka on any regatta calendar and schedule you absolutely have to come. Plus bring family or friends. There is so much to do here, see and enjoy. The original wine country in the United States. Keuka is one of the famous Finger Lakes. It is one of the smaller ones and is still 20 miles long with a width of ½ to 1 mile wide. Check it out on the map. The club is a MC, E Scow club and also has some good junior sailing going on as well. The MC class brought in Chip Mann and Larry Krause to help the local Keuka crew run four great races for us. Winds for practice day Thursday were 12-17 mph out of the north. Friday day one of racing saw two races with winds 9-15 mph with wind direction of 0 degrees. Saturday was more wind with two more races. Wind speed was 15-22 mph wind direction 340. We raced those two races up in the north branch if you look at the map. Sunday we tried to go for two more morning races with a noon cutoff but the morning thermal died as we launched. No racing on Sunday. So our scheduled 7 race regatta turned into a four race series.

The Sailors

The 45 boat fleet had some of the best MC sailors in scow world and the MC Class. Former Lightning World Champ Matt Fisher, former MC National Champ Glen Walborn, two time winner Brett Hatton, Scott Harestad 2017 MC Masters Champ, 2018 Masters Champ Vince Driessen, Former ILYA and Masters Champ EHood, CScow legend Bruce Rosenheimer and really a bunch more great sailors. As we look through the roster and now look back at the results you had probably 20 sailors capable of winning a race and probably at least 10 capable of winning the event. What was really great was seeing how well the mid-pack and back-end groups were sailing. That was special. The Masters group is really doing well. 15 states and two countries represented (U.S. and Canada).

The Results

Only two teams survived with all top ten finishes. Double digit finishes were the game changer for the top 15 boats with 3rd through 15 all having a tough race. Not because of bad conditions. 18 of the 20 legs sailed were good, fair and steady legs. We had two legs of the 20 legs sailed where giant race changing shifts came through. Most of us who have sailed here before were surprised at actually how steady it was all week.

Our new champion is Ted Keller a newcomer to the Masters fleet. Ted along with his son Ben won with a four race total of 15 points. Ted and Ben sail out of both Torch Lake, MI and Hoover in Columbus, OH. 2nd place former Lightning World Champ Matt Fisher sailed all four races with wife Lisa finishing with 17 points. The Fishers sail out of Hoover as well in Columbus, Ohio. The Keller and Fisher teams were out a ways on third place former Masters Champ Scott Harestad from Spring Lake who had a great regatta with 26 points.

Race winners were Scott Harestad race 1, Bruce Rosenheimer race 2, Vince Driessen from Gull Lake race 3 , Ted Keller race 4

Top Old Salt – Phil Ecklund from Union, CO. Top Mega Master – Allan Haeger from Lake Beulah, WI, Top Grand Master – Matt and Lisa Fisher from Hoover SC in Columbus, OH. Top Woman – Katie Arvesen from Gull Lake, MN

Full results are now posted at www.mcscow.org

Lessons Learned

Certainly I think the biggest lesson learned was a good one that Ted Keller our new champion just shared with me. He was saying when things look like they might go sideways on you to make the bad less bad. His example was race three the biggest wind race for sure. Ted was caught without his crew and he knew it could be a 15-20-25 type finish real easy. Instead he gutted it out, hiked hard and was super focused to stay in top 10 no matter what. He finished 6th. Good lesson for sure. Other lessons not getting off to the edges on this lake. That really never worked. It was always center, center left or center right for 18 of the 20 legs raced. Downwind sailing with waves for the last two races was critical not to submarine. So vang on steer more by the lee with a good windward heel took care of that challenge. Race 4 was the most challenging race with velocity changes. One of our two challenging legs was the last leg where we went from 22mph down to 4mph in a matter of a couple of minutes. That was at the top near the shore and finish. So shifting gears was a big deal. Vang on , vang off. If you had a crew then smooth in and out moves so you as skipper could focus on being still with your body, looking forward with focus on the breeze coming on you. All in all a fun and challenging week. All conditions, lots of shifting gears.

Other Regatta News-

Wow the season is just getting started with some big events coming soon. MC ILYA Invite at Gull Lake, MN wow what a cool site if you have never been there. Then we have the Nationals at Minnetonka, MN. Then the ILYA Champs at Winnebago. I will be going to the 90th Western Michigan Yachting Association Championships on my old home lake which is White Lake, Michigan. All of these events will have big fleets for the MC. So lots of opportunities coming up.

Stay tuned at www.mcscow.org , www.melges.com , www.wmya.org , www.ilya.org

Big thanks to Mari Johnson with incredible photos, check out and download at Regatta Girl Photography at www.regattagirlphotography.com .

Ronnie Hull our MCSA Communications director has fantastic videos, interviews in lots of places.

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