

Kalyn Froeschle wins the Indianapolis "Burl Harmon" Regatta

Indianapolis Sailing Club

May 5-6, 2018

With scores of 1-2-1, new owner Kalyn Froeschle captured her first regatta victory, assisted by the able team of Bruce Richards and yours truly, expertly adjusting forestay sag and top batten twist on the fastest red boat from the Cumberland. Runners-up were Bill and Mike Thomas, who have been sailing this regatta in the Happy Boat since they were teenagers. Life has turned, and now the boys are struggling to take care of an aging father.

Travelling turnout was unexpectedly light due to a smattering of graduations and weddings, and winds on Saturday were lighter than the long-range forecast, with few ripples and no racing. Our team squeezed in a short pre-dinner practice session at Bruce's request, as he was suffering from dangerously low levels of Lightning time, caused by the Nashville V-15 mutiny and other fleet maladies. The rest of the teams talked idly amongst themselves, relaxing comfortably on the hilltop Adirondack Chairs or engaging in bean bag toss or other games of skill and chance. The Derby was delayed to prep a muddy track, and once again our host Pete McGinity was left trying to Justify(!) his uncanny ability to pick a winner from a "random" drawing. As consolation, the rest of us sampled fine Kentucky Bourbon on the rocks, lightly muddled with simple syrup and fragrant garden weed; or alternatively, a margarita, to celebrate the Cinco de May holiday of our good neighbors further south.

Sunday brought more optimistic forecast and three races, and PRO Paul White gave us a challenging mark placement in the gap between the island and the Southeastern shore. Starting lines were short and our starts weren't stellar, but speed and placement were above par, providing moments of recovery on legs 2 or 3 in each race. Bruce and I speculated about a possible alternate mark placement we might consider were we the PRO, which foreshadowed our winning strategy in the penultimate race for glassware and left our adversaries questioning "the power of the long tack" as highlighted in this month's Sailing World. When pond sailing, pressure and geography sometimes trump conservative strategy, and the occasional "corner" is not necessarily a bad choice, if the gradient is strong enough.

Sort of almost missed the exit twice while chatting with Kalyn about her plans for the season, otherwise outbound and inbound travel was uneventful on dry roads under sunny skies, with only a splatter of rain drops as we pulled onto I-69 on a warm Sunday afternoon. Much stronger breeze on Saginaw Bay's SBLM4 chart while we were away, but water and air temps remain a tad chilly, so all things considered, our team was very pleased to be able to take advantage of this fine opportunity to get a head start on our season and bask in the glow of warm sunshine and gentle breezes on Geist Reservoir.

John McCree