

65th Hoosier Regatta

Todd Wake

Waiting for Ben in the pick-up line at Kohler School with the boat in tow we were hopeful that we would reach Wawasee in time to enjoy the Friday night welcome party. After enduring an extra two hours navigating around Chicago we pulled into WYC around 10:00 to the welcoming smiles of our hosts and fellow competitors. The delay left time for only one beer before we headed over to our housing for the weekend.

Staying at Katie and Bob's is always a treat. When we awoke in the morning we found Debbie and Adam Probst, Mike and Anna Earl (all the way from CO!) and Jim Thompson. After sharing some laughs, coffee and breakfast we decided to head over to the club and get our boat rigged. The day started out cool but warmed up by afternoon. Unfortunately, the wind never built to a level that would allow racing. To pass the time, some of us went sailing catching what zephyrs we could, there was a soccer game and a field goal kicking competition using Lightning masts as uprights. Tom Klaban was the clear winner of the field goal competition, barefoot! Racing was called for the day at 3:00. Jeff Schmahl served up hot buttered rum and informed us that dinner, "The Program" and bedtime would all be moved up an hour so that we could start racing early on Sunday.

The steak dinner was delicious! Donna Schmahl and Daphne Wagnon lead the group who prepared food all weekend long. Saturday brunch, Saturday Dinner, Sunday breakfast and lunch! The Program featured many fabulous prizes awarded by "random" drawing. If you want to know exactly what the program is and see the show emcee Jeff Schmahl puts on you will have to attend next year. Everyone was well fed and watered in preparation for the forecasted nice sailing breeze on Sunday.

Sunday was a beautiful day for sailing with a nice SE breeze and plenty of shifts to keep us on our toes. It was nice that Kevin Morin had brought along a MarkSetBot making the resetting of the starting line very easy! In every race Tom Klaban's team seemed to be in or near the lead along with George Sipel's, the Vanderhorst family and the boat grant kids. Our team was never in the lead near the beginning of the race but between Ben's awesome spinnaker trimming and grinding away at the leader we went into the last race with a 1,2 to Klaban's 2,1. With only time for one more race the third race would be winner take all. We snagged some weeds off the start and Tom got away to the favored right side. At the first leeward mark Tom was 1st, Geo 2nd, Surge 3rd and we were 4th but not far behind. Tom ignored his crew Beth's advice and did a double tack to cover us. We were able to take advantage of the fact that Tom was downspeed and split into a bit of a puff that allowed us to sneak by him. After getting by him we were able to sail him out to the favored right side layline, passing the other boats in the process, we were 1,2 at the final windward mark and held those positions to the finish. Watch out for Tom, Beth Groesbeck and Julia Matora, they are sailing very well, it's no accident they were 4th at the Master's NAs.

Now, to get on my President's soapbox, regattas like the Hoosier are the foundation of the Lightning Class. It is about host clubs putting in the effort make sure everyone has a great time. Sailors from as far away as Colorado and Buffalo teaming up to get another boat on the line. Competitors bringing items to donate to The Program. Jeff teaching himself to solder so he could make the trophies. Someone volunteering to get a little wet launching boats so not everyone has to go wading in the lake. Thank you to everyone who made the 2018 Hoosier Regatta possible!

