

Last Blast!
Nyack Boat Club – Fleet 75
Nyack, New York
September 24, 2016

Pos	Sail #	Skipper	Crew	Crew	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R7	Total
1	14888	Bob Sengstacken	Amanda Sengstacken	Daniel Zitin	1	2	1	1	[3]	1	6
2	14900	Gary Hurban	Joan Hurban	Mike Carney	4	1	2	3	1	[6]	11
3	14706	Grant Ehrlich	Jim Gardner	Eitan Ehrlich	3	3	3	[4]	2	4	15
4	14277	Peter Browne	Amy Villalba	Bonnie Rubin	[6]	4	5	2	5	2	18
5	14238	Dick Leonard	Tristan Jackson	Peter Artin	2	5	4	[7]	4	7	22
6	14348	Robert Shields	Chappy Hopkin	Alex Smith	5	[7]	6	6	6	3	26
7	15319	Dan Parietti	Jeff Sorenson	Ian Russell	[7]	6	7	5	7	5	30
8	14363	Larry Decker	Jan Crittenden	Debbie Shaw	8	8	[9]	9	9	9	43

Nyack's 2016 Last Blast! has sounded and it was a beaut, if I do say so myself. We had a perfect day with 70 degree temperatures and wind from the north between 12 and 18. This kicked up a bit of chop, so forward crew wore full foulies. Thanks for catching all that spray for us skippers! Everyone was on the windward deck nearly all day, and hiking maybe a third of the time. "Puff on, hike and de-power!" "Puff off, power up!" "Puff On!" "Off!" "On!"... Isn't it funny how you rarely have to tell them to stop hiking?

We are always happy to see the visitors and their crew who come to sail with us on the Tappan Zee. Good to see you, Chappy! We were especially happy with the return of our old friends Gary and Joan Hurban, visiting from Annapolis. They were members here for a long time. Gary was skippering, although they sailed in the boat named, "Hers," possibly an attempt to confuse us. I noticed that he used sails from "His," so she must have put her foot down on that score.

For me the key was to get and stay in phase with the shifts, trying to stay near enough to the middle. The pressure was going to come to us, rarely did we need to tack to get in the way of a puff. Puffs were big and wide, pretty much covering the course, so the question was, "Which direction is it blowing?" No auto-tacks, the shifts were not that big. So, get clear of other boats to have all the options available to sail your own race. Keep your eye on the mark, checking in with the compass. Avoid heeling much. Power through the bigger waves and go for height when you can. 'What would Justin do?'

One exception was after a leeward-end start when we did get pushed out to the left corner, but that worked out OK, too. There was a slight, slow but persistent lefty going on. The only course change all day was to move the windward mark West 20 degrees.

Someone said later, "When strategy and boatspeed come together..." like that's all you need. Maybe. We did make some good calls and we did not have to use boat-on-boat tactics very often. However, there was a time near the top of a beat when we were on starboard a little short of the layline and Gary crossed just behind us. We tacked immediately to pin him so when we tacked back to starboard he'd be following us in. If we had taken that hitch on port closer to the mark, he might have caught some extra air/shift and come in on starboard forcing us to duck.

And, while leading the fifth race, puffs brought two boats down onto us on the run to the downwind finish. We should have been more aggressive about luffing them up further away from the line, so we would all have had to gybe to finish. Then, we might not have been in third as we crossed the line overlapped. When our PRO Osman Kurtulus gave us the sixth race we were able to discard that third place. Some of the other boats did a much better job than us of getting good, high-value throw-outs.

Gary and Joan Hurban, with Mike Carney, got two first place finishes and took second overall. Grant Ehrlich came down from Niantic, CT with Jim Gardner and Eitan Ehrlich. They sailed consistently to finish in third place. We had eyes on both boats all day.

Dan Parietti organized a good event, with help from Eric Kent. I got to sail with my daughter, Amanda, and my regular forward, Daniel Zitin. Big thanks! They worked great together. We should do that more often.

Yeah, we felt lucky!

Bob Sengstacken
14888 *Lucky DOG*