



Cedar Point Yacht Club

Sailboat Racing at its Best



Spring 2007 Frostbiting Week 5 (4/08/07) Report by daily winner Mike Matan Four Layers

Well another cold day for this week's Laser sailing. I remember when I lived in the UK I often used to wonder why I bothered with a sport like sailing when it was only ever warm in July and August (if you are lucky!) But its still amazing that once you get out on the water its never as impossibly cold as it seems on the land. That's probably why while we had a select fleet of 15 boats today, those 15 people completed a total of 87 out of a possible 90 race finishes in a cold (37 degrees ish), breezy (15 to 25 knots ish), day.

Dave Foster made a good decision to race inside the harbor and postponed for an hour for the tide to come in. Never easy making the decision as a race officer but I think Dave allowed a larger number of people to compete safely given the cold conditions.

Sailing was interesting with the wind coming off the shore from the northwest. Big gusts and big shifts were the order of the day....I remember one race approachinng the gybe mark in little wind watching an obviously (very!) large gust of wind approaching from behind on schedule to arrive at the gybe mark at the same time as me...not entirely sure how I stayed upright!

Advice from today's sailing? Well when I was thinking straight I really tried to focus on sailing the shifts as opposed to just looking at boatspeed. The gusts were easy to see, the shifts were big so I really focused on trying to stay in the right shifts. The other key today, for me at least, was really working hard at playing both the tiller and the mainsheet. In the gusty conditions I worked hard at using my sheet hand to control the heel of the boat and A/ keep it as flat as practical (not always very flat!) and B/ to bring in extra power quickly to avoid a windward capsize. I then used my tiller hand to keep the boat tracking to the shift but tried to minimize tiller movement in the flat water to avoid it acting as a brake. By really working the sheet hard there were times when I was reaching up the beat with huge boatspeed whereas the boat next to me was healing over on its side with zero acceleration in the gust.

Hats off to Fred Abels, first radial in third place overall and sailing really well upwind (very flat), In the last two lap race Fred was hanging in with both myself and Blake in full rigs and managed to nip past Blake when Blake had a bad tack up the last beat for second, shows what is possible in a radial when the wind is blowing! Sarah Hatsell also had a second in race two in her radial (I think Sarah nipped past me in the last beat in this race without a bad tack!)

Brennan Gerster asked me if it was ok that he could no longer feel his hands. I told him that was normal (at least for me) and he promptly won the next race!

I've has a number of people ask me what I was wearing as I wasn't wearing a drysuit. I've been using the Rooster layering clothing system which, when I first wore it a year ago I was amazed at how warm it keeps you. The big advantages are that you are much more flexible and can move around easier than in a drysuit (which has a direct impact on speed in a laser) and you can also alter the number of layers depending on the temperature.

For today I was wearing four layers on top: Rooster Polyamide Lycra Top, Rooster "Hot top" made from 0.5mm titanium neoprene, Rooster "Shin Tech" Long john Wetsuit with hiking pad inserts, Rooster "Aquafleece" (amazing, fleece inner layer with a water resistant Polyurethane coating).

I also own a Rooster dry top as a fifth layer for very cold days although I wasn't wearing it today. (I think Alistair Duke who also wears the Rooster gear found this useful last weekend)

On my feet I was wearing Rooster Hiking boots with a pair of wet socks (the hiking boots are one size too big to fit the wet socks, I have a smaller pair for when its not so cold and you don't need the wet socks)

See everybody on Saturday at the Cedar Point Spring Laser Regatta!!

- *Mike Matan*

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