



Cedar Point Yacht Club

Sailboat Racing at its Best



Fall 2006 Frostbiting: Thanksgiving Extravaganza.

Marvelous weather and 52 boats on the starting line made week 8 a quite excellent day of racing. The breeze averaged around 5-11 knots with a dominantly southwesterly direction.

The first race was quite interesting. A combination of a short weather beat and a gate literally only 8 feet wide made for a bit of chaos. The top 5 in this race were the boats who started middle-left and were able to keep their lane until the first header. The rest of the fleet was clustered together. Having done a penalty turn the first leg I found myself in that middle herd of boats. My strategy at this point was just to find clear air and stay with it. Once I had neared the leeward gate the chaos had already started. There was a lot of yelling and fouling going on. Upon entering the 2 boat length circle I made it very clear who I was overlapped with and let the questionable overlaps go in front. This gave me an inside advantage to round the left gate. From this point I was able to catch a shift on the upwind and squeak into the top 10.

For the first half of the day the left side of the course was favored. However, the boats that started near the pin were not able to tack and cross since there was not a strong bias in either direction. With a generously sized line the best plan was to find a hole in the middle and take it out to the left side of the course. Downwind the right side of the course looking upwind seemed to be the play of choice for me because of the slight cross-course current and better wave action. On the last beat for the first half of the day the boats who went towards that small rock in the harbor came out victorious.

The second half of the day was disparate from the first as it offered an alteration to which sides of the course were favored. On the 4th start of the day there was a boat below me who tacked right under me and pinned me to weather at 10 seconds. Needless to say, my hole was gone. At this point I decided to tack out and duck the boats to weather in search of clean air. Eventually I found a proficient lane and a shift as well. With the boats on the left side of the course pinning each other out to the lay-line I decided to tack and hope for the best. After crossing most of the fleet I was now aware that the conditions for the rest of the day were going to be varied from the first. On the up-winds the new play of choice was to start near the boat and keep going out left until a considerable shift was sustained. Then the best thing to do was to tack out to the right and wait for another shift to occur. The left shifts were about 10 degrees, but very short in period. The right shifts were about 6 degrees, but lasted longer. That is why right became a safer play on the up-winds later in the day. The down-winds were still slightly right favored in the second half. However, with clean air it was possible to come out of the middle as well. The biggest thing downwind was to try and get on waves and stick with radical angles.

All in all, it was a great day of racing. The breeze was nice & steady and the weather was warm & sunny. That was especially nice considering that it's almost December.

Y'all come back now.

-Alex Weiksnar