

Frigid Digit

Severn Sailing Association – Fleet 329

Annapolis, Maryland

Octobrt 19–20, 2013

Pos	Bow/Sail	Skipper/Club	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	Total Points
1	30/ 15499	Starck, David	2	2	1	5	2	7	2	21
2	13/ 15257	Becker, Geoffrey/ SSA	4	9	3	2	4	17	1	40
3	10/ 14036	Coplan, Justin	7	10	2	9	6	3	5	42
4	78/ 15464	Taboada, Keith/ MRYC	11	4	14	6	1	5	8	49
5	00/ 15505	Fowler, Neal/ Hyannis	1	1	12	4	13	12	7	50
6	18/ 14950	Adams, Ed/ Ida Lewis	3	22	9	7	3	4	3	51
7	21/ 15495	MacDonald, Larry/ BCC	9	7	11	15	9	18	4	73
8	34/ 14922	Huntman, Jack/ MBC	10	21	6	14	14	2	9	76
9	22/ 14907	Cobbum, Craig/ AYC	21	11	13	17	5	6	6	79
10	02/ 15502	Allen, Thomas	16	6	18	8	17	1	21	87
11	26/ 15456	Hayes, Brian/ CRYC	18	8	8	1	20	25	12	92
12	49/ 14249	Sipel, George/ NCYC	5	3	15	23	19	13	16	94
13	33/ 15111	Cuccio, Gianni/ CPYC	14	13	7	11	10	30	22	107
14	43/ 15381	Patten, Caroline/ VT	13	15	4	40/DSQ	7	8	23	110
15	98/ 15498	Mergenthaler, Frank/ MBC	17	26	20	3	8	15	26	115
16	40/ 15240	Constants, Steve/ SSA	12	12	17	25	18	16	15	115
17	97/ 15197	Reiser, Matt/ Fleet 34	26	17	22	30	15	10	11	131
18	99/ 15015	Werley, John/ PYC	40/OCS	40/OCS	5	10	11	22	10	138
19	12/ 15512	Faus, John/ BLYC	15	25	16	16	12	33	24	141
20	73/ 15473	Hamilton, Chris/ CYC	28	5	10	13	31	21	40/DNC	148
21	84/ 15084	Buczkowski, Joseph/ Hampton	27	18	21	19	28	19	17	149
22	66/ 14866	Mauk, Bill/ CR	23	24	28	18	27	14	20	154
23	20/ 14120	Kirby, Collin/ CA	40/DNC	29	23	26	23	9	13	163
24	76/ 15276	Lange, Philip/ BCC	6	19	27	12	32	34	40/DNC	170
25	19/ 15055	Hutchinson, Hugh	19	23	26	29	30	26	25	178
26	16/ 15016	Brickell, Jamie/ SSA	8	14	33	33	33	28	30	179
27	53/ 1553	Welch, Rick/ PRSA	24	34	29	27	26	20	19	179
28	28/ 15428	Moyer, Dick/ Riverton	22	30	19	24	21	32	31	179
29	36/ 15336	Prior, Trevor	30	20	25	28	25	24	28	180
30	42/ 15142	Alsalam, Nabeel/ PRSA	40/OCS	40/OCS	30	22	22	11	18	183
31	24/ 14900	Hurban, Gary/ SSA	29	27	24	21	29	29	27	186
32	14/ 15300	Essman, Rick/ CYC	20	16	38	40/DNC	16	31	29	190
33	17/ 15377	Glenn, George/ OCYC	31	33	34	31	24	27	14	194
34	82/ 15425	Friebele, Joe/ SSA	25	28	31	20	40/DNC	40/DNC	40/DNC	224
35	54/ 15054	Lange, Jonathan/ SSA	35	31	32	32	40/DNC	23	33	226
36	63/ 15363	Kelly, Greg/ SSA	33	32	36	35	34	35	34	239
37	39/ 13139	Sarrafian, Roy/ NA	36	35	35	34	35	40/RAF	32	247
38	32/ 15232	Hall, Bob/ LW	32	36	40/DNC	40/DNC	36	40/DNC	40/DNC	264
39	27/ 7592	Gray, Corky	34	40/DNC	37	36	40/DNC	40/DNC	40/DNC	267

2013 Lightning Frigid Digit Report - By Airwaves coach/writer

Skipper: Geoff Becker

Trimmer: Billy Martin

Bow: Zach Thomas

Day 2

3 races (Races 5 and 6 - 4 legs downwind finish, Race 5 legs upwind finish) Wind 10-16 knots @ 310°-340° - puffy and shifty

A cold front passed over the area last night and left us with stronger winds and much colder temperatures...Fall is here! The RC positioned our course in Whitehall bay tucked up under Greenbury Point, which gave us some exciting racing with puffy and shifty winds coming straight off the land. We definitely had our ups and downs today with finishes of 4th, 17th, and a 1st in the final race of the regatta. Our finishes earned us a second overall for the regatta! Hats off to current World Champion David Stark for an impressive performance in winning this competitive event!

The challenging conditions created a common scenario for us that every team experiences at some time in their racing. In the second race of the day we had a few things go against us, had some bad boathandling and finished it off with sailing to the wrong corner on the final upwind leg. Our finish in that race was not great and with all the issues during the race we crossed the finish line very frustrated with performance. Added to the frustration, was the realization of another race to sail and our real challenge became getting ourselves re-focused before the next start.

Shortly after finishing we discussed some of the major problems we had during the previous race and tried to come up with simple solutions we could implement easily. We then took some time to relax and take in some food and water. I am often surprised when I hear sailors that don't like to eat much during a day of sailing. Keeping everyone's blood sugar up can help a grumpy crew become a happy crew again. After our post-race discussion and snack we went straight into planning our next race and going through our pre-race checks of the wind, the starting line and the course.

Sometimes it can be hard to put a frustrating race behind you, but to be able to sail each race at your best, it is an essential skill and like other skills, should be practiced. Each completed race can be used to help you move on and be more prepared to sail the next race.

Try to use anything during the race that can possibly be useful in helping your boat's performance in the next race.

Where were the boats in the fleet gaining or losing during the last race? Were there expected or unexpected wind shifts? Can anything else be predicted using the outcomes of the previous race? After a bad race, think of the next race as an opportunity to improve and apply the 20/20 hindsight gathered in the race before. A chance to use what you have learned, good or bad, and make your next race better than the last! For us today, it became our best race of the regatta when we crossed the line in first place!

Our takeaways from Day 2 are...

1. Lightnings are cool and now the weather is too! Brrrrr!
2. Try to put bad races behind you quickly in order to prepare for the next race!
3. Use the next race as an opportunity to apply your 20/20 hindsight gathered in previous races!

Day 1

4 races (all races 4 legs with downwind finish) Wind 8-14 knots @ 160°-180°

Back in the Lightning Class!! It has been several years for me since I last held the tiller of a lightning, and I now know it was far too long!! I loved sailing the boats then and they are still great boats to sail now for all the right reasons. Lightning sailors are a great bunch and the competition is always top level and the fleet at this year's Frigid Digit, being sailed out of Severn Sailing Association, is no exception. In fact, this year's 35-boat fleet has several former Lightning North American Champions and a couple of Lightning World Champions. My crew for this year's Frigid Digit is trimmer Billy Martin, a Lightning skipper in his own right, and a local high school sailor, Zach Thomas doing the bow. Zach is a senior at South River High School and today was his first time on a three-crew boat. He is learning the boat fast and got better with every leg we sailed. At the end of the day, our team improved each race, scoring well and finished the day with a 4th, 9th, 3rd and 2nd! That consistency earned us a current tie for second overall only a few points behind David Stark, the current Lightning World Champion.

Going into the regatta, especially this first day, we had a somewhat simple strategy. Knowing that it had been a while for me driving a lightning, having a young member of our crew learning the boat and the three of us sailing together for the first time, we decided to sail on the conservative side most of the day. We tried to stay away from groups of boats and avoid getting into trouble whenever possible.

During the races today, the lead boats in every race started near the starboard end of the starting line and tacked early toward the right side of the course. While this seemed like a tactic that could possibly get you to the windward mark in first, many boats were trying to do the same thing, so we decided to avoid the big pack of boats at the starboard end and start in the middle of the line for each race.

For three of the races today, the RC used code flag 'I' for the preparatory signal meaning boats would be less likely to push the staring line inside the last minute, especially in the middle of the line away from the ends. That is what happened, in fact, we found there to be a lot of space in the middle of the line and a significant amount of line sag at the starting signal. Because of the line sag, our most important tool for the starts today was our line sights! We made sure to get good sights before every starting sequence and re-checked it after every general recall.

Along with a good line sight, there are a few other tricks to taking advantage of mid-line sag at the start. If your sight is good and you have the confidence to go for the middle of the line at the start, it's a good idea to stay back off the line as long as possible. A boat confident with a line sight should never be a boat pushing the pack toward the line because the farther from the line before accelerating, the more time that boat will have to accelerate. Today, the mid-line pack of boats was sitting several boatlengths off the line to avoid being called over inside the one-minute rule of the 'I' flag. This allowed us to wait off the line and accelerate with 10-15 seconds (or more) to go before the start and get the boat up to full speed before the starting signal.

Having confidence in a line sight can allow a boat to attack the line unlike the tendency of most boats to be apprehensive and hold back because of the perceived risk and doubt. Today, we were able to get off the starting line consistently since we opted to avoid the crowded starboard end for the consistency in the middle of the starting line.

This allowed us to lower our starting risk while still being able to attack the line at the start and stay consistently in the front of the fleet. Our scores illustrate the outcome of that strategy well. We did feel we had the speed to win races, but the risk factors and our lack of experience as a team led us to making choices we knew would work for us and keep us out of trouble while we got more comfortable sailing together.

Our takeaways from Day 1 are...

1. The Lightning Class is cool!
2. Know your team's strengths and limitations.
3. Use the 'I' flag to be more aggressive on the starting line rather than more apprehensive.