

First Annual Moonshine Regatta  
Virginia Inland Sailing Association  
Smith Mountain Lake, Virginia  
April 14-15, 2012

Pos	Skipper	Sail #	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12	Sat. Score	Sun. Score	Final Score
1	Trevor Prior	15024	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	4	4	1	2	8	12	20
2	Patrick Phelan	15131	3	2	4	3	2	3	6	2	1	6	2	6	23	17	40
3	Charlie Wardwell	14044	8	9	2	1	5	2	2	4	2	3	7	3	29	19	48
4	Ron Buchanan	14485	4	4	5	4	6	5	3	3	5	1	5	4	31	18	49
5	Starling Mikell	15118	5	5	6	5	4	4	4	6	3	5	3	1	33	18	51
6	Nabeel Alsalam	15142	2	3	3	7	3	6	5	5	7	2	4	5	29	23	52
7	Randy Beauchamp	13738	6	6	7	6	7	7	7	7	6	7	6	8	46	34	80
8	Brian Ganjei	14376	7	7	9	9	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	7	56	39	95

First Annual Moonshine Regatta - By Randy Beauchamp

Several decades have passed since Lightnings were regularly raced on Smith Mountain Lake in southwestern Virginia. My wife Lauren, Charlie Wardwell, and I made serious progress towards seeing a resurgence on the weekend of April 14th and 15th when we hosted the 1st Annual Moonshine Regatta. The VISA (Virginia Inland Sailing Association) club sits in Franklin County which is popularly known as the Moonshine Capitol of the World. We thrive on homemade crafts, hospitality, and bluegrass music around here and I don't think we disappointed any of our visitors.

Most boats showed up Friday evening in time for a hot dog cookout and to get a preview of the local libations that would figure prominently in the Saturday night social. Saturday morning dawned cool and with calm winds but there was anticipation in the air – the forecast was for around 20 knots starting at noon. Eight boats set up, attended the skipper's meeting led by PRO Buster Jones, and then hit the water in building winds. We are marketing this regatta as an early season tune-up regatta so our goal was to run 7 short races on Saturday and 5 on Sunday. The 15-20 knot breeze meant that this goal was easily reached even though the legs were around 3/4 mile long. The breeze was also a little shifty – sometimes the marks were moved 20 degrees in between races. The capable race committee made sure these moves were done quickly, however, and all 7 races were completed in around 4.5 hours. Trevor Prior sailing with his daughter, Danielle, and Justin Copelan ruled the day taking 6 bullets. Patrick Phelan overcame a quick start by Nabeel Alsalam to slot into second. Charlie Wardwell capsized in the first race thanks to a back winded jib, missed the second race while swapping out crew, and then roared back to move into third on the day with a bullet and several seconds.

Racing 7 races in heavy wind and the appearance of several mason jars meant that most boats were left unpacked for some time after returning to shore. Dinner was amazing - smoked flank steak with a southwest rub and chipotle butter, chicken thighs, and veggies. Gary Hoffer quickly proceeded to demonstrate that his moonshine drinking strategy did not include the term "moderation". The night continued with a great atmosphere and good conversation. At one point there was a contest to see who could hula hoop and drink moonshine at the same time – we're pretty sure that was Gary's making as well!

Waking up Sunday morning to a beautiful orange sun peaking over the mountain tops would have been much easier but the peach moonshine was still on the brain. Postponing for 30 minutes due to breeze was exactly what everyone needed to get things together. Race 8 started at 10:30am in 5-6 knots and 75 degrees. Races 9-12 were sailed in similar wind conditions but the temperature peaked up to 85 degrees. The sides of the course were definitely favored and lighter crews fared well. Trevor did not win every race but still maintained his first place position over the fleet. Patrick kept second and Charlie kept third to round out the trophy positions. Both Ron Buchanan and Starling Mikell moved up one position to finish fourth and fifth, respectively.

The awards quickly followed racing in the afternoon. Known as "Hillbilly Crystal", the trophies were mason jars on wine stems, making a great conversation piece. The clear liquid inside the jars was pretty cool too! VISA thanks all competitors for making this a great inaugural event and for putting it on the ILCA map for next year! We were honored to have such enthusiasm and look forward to bringing Lightnings back to Smith Mountain Lake. With superb race committee work, great parties, good food, perfect winds, and a gorgeous location there's no reason not to come!