

Pennsylvania Governor's Cup
Susquehanna Yacht Club - Fleet 253,
Wrightsville, Pennsylvania
October 24-25, 2009

Pos	Skipper	Sail#	R1	R2	R3	R4	R2	R3	R4	Total	T/O	Total
1	Dick Hallagan	15255	6	3	6	8	2	3	1	29	8	21
2	Jason Werner	15083	3	4	7	7	3	1	10	35	10	25
3	Jack Jones	14923	1	1	12	6	6	2	12	40	12	28
4	Carol Park	14902	4	6	1	5	7	5	11	39	11	28
5	Charlie Wardwell	14044	2	7	10	10	1	15	2	47	15	32
6	Travis Odenbach	12008	19	2	3	2	11	12	3	52	19	33
7	Pat Phelan	15131	7	5	4	4	8	9	5	42	9	33
8	Gary Hurban	14900	9	12	7	1	4	6	7	46	12	34
9	Bob Bush	14654	11	10	14	3	5	4	4	51	14	37
10	Kevin Kuhn	14074	5	11	2	12	14	8	9	61	14	47
11	Trevor Prior	15024	10	9	5	9	12	11	8	64	12	52
12	John Bates	14525	8	8	15	13	13	7	15	79	15	64
13	Starling Mikell III	15118	19	15	13	11	9	13	6	86	19	67
14	Allen Crew	14699	19	16	9	14	10	10	13	91	19	72
15	Ken Kuzdro	14365	19	13	11	15	17	16	17	108	19	89
16	Dave Lutian	14287	19	17	16	16	15	14	14	111	19	92
17	David Thompson	15228	12	14	19	19	16	17	16	113	19	94
18	Jim Godfrey	14204	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	133	19	114

On Saturday, Oct. 24, 17 boats came out for one of the strangest sailing days we’ve ever seen! The forecast for the Lower Susquehanna River, where the 2009 Pennsylvania Governors Cup Regatta was to be sailed, called for rain, heavy at times, with thunderstorms, and southerly winds at 16 MPH, with higher gusts, and a high of 67 degrees.

It did rain Friday night, but by Saturday morning on the drive up the roads were just wet, and the skies were clearing. We registered at the host Susquehanna Yacht Club, rigged the boat, attended the skipper’ and splashed for the 11 AM start for the first race.

The wind forecast was accurate, with gusts to 25, and RC set a mile-long windward-leeward course pointed south. The intensity of the gusts was unexpected, and the difference between the gusts and the lulls substantial, making for difficult, but not impossible, conditions on the way to the windward mark. The first few boats that rounded decided to not set spinnakers, but then when SYC’s Trevor Prior rounded, he put one up. Shortly afterwards, others followed suit.

Unfortunately, shortly after hoisting, Trevor caught a gust that broke his spin pole and sent the boat over, providing crew with a complimentary swim. Trevor however recovered, and actually finished 10th, ahead of 2 other boats still on the race course.

(Visitor Jack Jones from Upstate New York loved the conditions and won the race, with last year’s regatta winner Charlie Wardwell from Virginia second and "New Daddy" Jason Werner from Annapolis third.)

Then, as is the custom at SYC, we all went in for a warm lunch of corn chowder, rolls, coffee, and veggies.

After lunch we headed back out, in a much-diminished wind -- 5 to 10 -- and darkening skies. Before RC was able to start the next race, the wind shifted to the west and diminished some more. So Cat-in-the-hat went up, RC re-set the course, and it started to rain.

Once the new course was set, we started on a 2-legger in winds that were by then 2 - 5. And it continued to rain -- harder. By the time we made the windward mark, the bilge had filled with rainwater. The first boats that rounded set their chutes, which soon became soggy and heavy, and not able to draw. Then as we rounded and set our chute, we lost sight of the leeward mark, and settled for just pointing in the direction of the boats ahead.

Next the fog rolled in -- thin banks at water level, obscuring our view of the boats ahead, and rolling over the hills to the north in thick banks reminiscent of a scene in a Steven King novel. For the first time ever we sailed by the compass alone, and fortunately found our way to the finish line. Half way down the leg our chute filled in a light zephyr, and we slipped past 3 other boats to finish 14th.

(Jones liked the lighter air, fog and rain, and won again, with Travis Oldenbach second and wily veteran Dick Hallagan, who had won the regatta an amazing 18 times in the past, was third.)

RC decided to run another race, even as the rain continued, harder than before. By then we were soaked and getting cold, So I made the prudent decision to come in, even though we missed the third -- and eventually the 4th -- race of the day. But we got the boat put away in time to get back to the hotel for a hot shower and a change into dry clothes before dinner at the SYC.

(Meanwhile out on the river, SYC’s Carol Park won the third race with Coast Guard LTJG Kevin Kuhn, who grew up sailing at SYC, second. Gary Hurban won the fourth race – shortened because of lightning -- with Oldenbach second. So the day ended with Park leading overall, Jones in second and Pat Phelan third.)

On Sunday morning the skies were clearing and the temperature was in the low 50s as we splashed with winds from the NW at 10 - 15 MPH. As the morning progressed the air warmed up and the winds diminished slightly, making for about as perfect a sailing day as you could hope for in late October.

RC ran three races, this time with the start line in the middle of the course, setting a 5-leg windward/leeward course pointing north, more than a mile long.

(Hallagan, who began the day in fifth, got it all cranked up to go 2-3-1 for a 4-point victory over Werner. Jones, whose score line unfortunately had a pair of 12s to go with his two bullets, came in third overall. Park was fourth, and Wardwell, who spent his toddler years at SYC when his dad Bob worked nearby, was fifth.)

The boats went in for the awards ceremony after the third race, but we stayed out for another half hour, mainly to wait for the crane lines to dissipate, but also to the enjoy the nearly-perfect sailing wind, the bright sunshine, the fall colors on the Susquehanna hills, and a cold beer.

David Thompson