



North American Women's Championship



Ruhlman Team



North American Women's Championship

North Cape Yacht Club
LaSalle, Michigan

August 3 – 5, 2011

Champions: Meagan Ruhlman
Abby Rowlands, Laura Jeffers

The Lightning Class has always been home to me. Having grown up sailing at Pymatuning Yacht Club, my true love and passion for the racing and competitive side of sailing flourished once I started traveling on the Lightning circuit, interestingly enough, at North Cape Yacht Club. I'll admit that at that particular point in life, I may have been a bit more interested in my home life, school, and the sports teams I belonged to; however, after two weeks, my world would never be the same. It's hard to pin point what I love most about the

Lightning Class, but one thing I deeply cherish is the precious balance we strike between tough competition and a family-friendly, nonthreatening atmosphere. Having focused much of my sailing away from the Lightning Class over the past few years, I can certainly say, it feels great to be back home!

I consider myself very lucky as a female sailor, as I grew up surrounded by strong, successful, and confident women sailors who had a huge impact in my



Ruhlman Team



Jones Team

North American Women's Championship



growth and were wonderful role models. I started as a crew for my brother, and I distinctly remember the dilemma Martha Fisher and I faced the next year with wanting to sail the Juniors but not being able to find a boy to skipper for us. Well, clearly that didn't last long, as my parents talked me into driving the boat, and Martha and I started our journey into the world of female sailing, almost always sailing with an all-girl crew. I knew, from that moment forward, that we were luckier than all the boys, because once we aged out of juniors, we could still have our two weeks in paradise at the beginning of August by competing in the Women's North Americans.

This year at North Cape was a special one for me because, as I previously mentioned, the first NAs I ever competed in was at NCYC. In the past, I remember the "adults" always talking about NAs in terms of not only place, but year. This was funny because to me and my friends, no year was needed, it was just North Cape, Connecticut, Buffalo, Sheboygan, etc.

As I look back and begin to describe North Cape 2011, I wonder—does this mean I'm now an "adult?" I think that pretty much sums up that week for me. So much has changed since 2001, and yet, some things just never will. I remember dancing in 2001 to the bands on various nights with Joy MacDonald. I remember dancing in 2011 to the bands on various nights with Joy MacDonald.

In 2001 what hooked me the most was the deep connections that were formed amongst all of us juniors.

The friends I made there are still some of my closet and most cherished friends. Though growing older has lead us down different paths, whenever we find our way back together, life couldn't feel more right. Indeed, in 2011, everywhere I looked, I saw juniors crowded together laughing, sharing stories, talking about racing, playing games, and enjoying this wonderful world we are lucky enough to live in.

While I spent most of the week living in déjà vu, there were often reminders of how things have changed. My front crew, Abby, and I spent a few summers together coaching at Edgewater Yacht Club in Cleveland, Ohio, where we taught, among many, three little boys around the age of ten. Imagine my surprise when Abby and I were walking through registration and I turned to her and said, "Weird, that guy looks like an older version of Stu, doesn't it?" Abby turned to look and said, "Oh my God, that IS Stu!" The three little boys who were crazy little Opti Racers were now young men sailing a Lightning together. After getting over the initial shock of how tall they were, I couldn't help but smile and think—well, it is sort of like an overgrown Opti...

I realize these articles are supposed to be about the racing details, weather conditions, how my team worked together to finally do what we set out to do, but upon reflection, the aforementioned memories are the ones that stand out in my mind, much more so than the racing. I've been fortunate to race many different boats in many different places, whether fleet or match racing, and the racing is what it is. Some days are



Dial Team



Prancing Team

North American Women's Championship

good, some great, and some are downright miserable. What makes the difference, makes the event, and makes this Class is the remarkable group of sailors and friends we have accumulated. It is quite rare to find the talent that we have combined with such modesty, grace, and encouragement. The Lightning Class exemplifies that you're only as good as your competition, and I am proud to be a part of a community through which support and companionship courses through the veins.

Overall, I'd say the Race Committee at NCYC did the best they could with what they had, and it was a great sailing event because we saw a range of conditions. The driving was tough, and impeccable crew work was a must. I was fortunate to have rock stars in Laura Jeffers on tactics and spinnaker, and Abby Rowlands, who does EVERYTHING. I certainly couldn't have made it through the week successfully without their intelligence, smooth maneuvering, quick thinking, patience, and humor.

In sailing, all too often, the skippers get the accolades. While there are a lot of talented drivers out there, the crews are the ones who gel everything together and get it done. Any good skipper should agree that his or her success lies in the hands of the crew, and I was very thankful to have Abby and Laura with me for the week, especially on that last day when we had to go out and win the first race, and then beat Ali in the second. Everyone who knows me knows that I can get a bit wound up, and am, therefore, my own worst enemy. I distinctively remember crossing the finish line

after the last race and thinking, wow, I can't believe we didn't mess that up. Trust me, I tried, but Abby and Laura were determined to overcome everything I put in our way—and they did an amazing job.

All in all it was yet again a fabulous week filled with many great memories. Though the particulars of racing are hazy to me now, some do stand out. In particular, I remember going down the final leg of the first race with a comfortable 7–8 boat length lead, only to all of a sudden find ourselves in a heated match race with Allie Jones and team. It ended with one good catch of a wave to cross the finish line, maybe three feet in front of their bow! Allie, Monica and Debbie put up a strong fight for first all week and certainly kept us on our toes.

As I think back on this week, particularly through female eyes, I am thoroughly impressed with not only the amount of girls in the junior program, but the amount of talent they exude—whether as an all-female team, a skipper, or a crew. One thing is for sure, this was a tough win to pull out for us, and it's only going to get tougher!

A final thank you to Laurie Dieball and team, Dave Schaffer and team, North Cape Yacht Club, Hank on the hoist, Coach Nick, my female competitors, my awesome crew and everyone who attended this year's WJMs! Of course, I simply cannot thank my parents, Rob and Abby Ruhlman, enough for everything they have done and continue to do to support me in all areas of life, but especially in sailing. I am proud to be a part of this Class, and I am SO happy to sail under my brand new pink flash!

Maegan Ruhlman

3 Abbies:
Abby Rowlands
Abbie Probst
Abby Ruhlman



North American Women's Championship



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Maegan Ruhlman, Abby Rowlands, Laura Jeffers



Runner-up: Allie Jones
Monica Jones, Debbie Probst



2nd Runner-up: Karen Dial
Kathy Gaddy, Diana Winsley

Pos	Sail #	Crew	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	Ttl
1	15075	Maegan Ruhlman Abby Rowlands & Laura Jeffers	1	1	2	2	(3)	1	1	8
2	4249	Allie Jones Monica Jones & Debbie Probst	2	2	1	1	1	2	(3)	9
3	14702	Karen Dial Kathy Gaddy & Diana Winsley	3	(5\DNF)	3	3	2	3	2	16
4	14933	Jennifer Prining Jamie Vanderhovel & Caroline Longshore	(4)	3	4	4	4	4	4	23

North American Juniors' Championship



Lutz Team



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August 3 – 5, 2011

Champions: Jason Lutz
Jonathan Lutz, Tommy Zanowic

Back in August of 2008, I was lucky enough to have won the Junior North Americans while manning the middle for my cousin, Taylor. I was ecstatic to have won, but, at the same time, was not completely satisfied and made it my goal to win the regatta again, except next time as a skipper. Of course, to try to accomplish my goal, I would need to recruit a first-class team. My brother, Jonathan, returned for a second year to be my bowman, while I enlisted one of my best

friends and longtime sailing partner, Tommy Zanowic, to fly the spinnaker. After winning our only "tune-up" regatta, the New Jersey State Junior Championship, we felt confident about our chances as we headed out on our ten-hour drive to North Cape.

We woke up on day one to a strong westerly breeze and building chop out on the Lake. We struggled to find our "groove" during the first race of the day and finished a disappointing



North American Juniors' Championship



sixth. We immediately called that race our drop and regained our focus for Race 2. After a few minor adjustments for the building breeze, we got off to a great start, hiked the boat flat, and never looked back as we won the race comfortably. The Race Committee decided not to sail a third race, due to the breeze, and we found ourselves two points out of first after day one.

Day two brought lighter breeze with some remaining lake chop from the day before. The first race of the day started poorly, as we rounded the first windward mark in sixth, but the combination of Tommy's excellent spinnaker work downwind and our pure speed upwind helped us finish second. After winning the second race of the day, we found ourselves at the top of the fleet again in Race 3. As the breeze was quickly dying, we finished a close second and ended the day at the top of the fleet by five points. I pleaded to the Race Committee to finish the regatta that night, as I was hoping to continue our hot sailing, but no such luck.

Although I hoped for breeze, we began day three in similar conditions to day two—lighter air and more Lake Erie chop. Race 1 was a struggle for my team, as we found ourselves struggling to hang with the leaders. Although we did not have the start to the day we had hoped, we still led by three points heading into what would be the final race of the regatta.

In the final race, we rounded the first windward mark in third, but soon caught both boats to round the leeward gate first. We again used our upwind speed to cover the fleet and stay ahead of the boats we needed to beat. Although we lost the race to a very fast Christine Moloney, we were ultimately satisfied because we soon learned, after a few minutes of nervously waiting, that we were finished for the day and had clinched the regatta. A pair of former champions, Connor Godfrey and Timmy Crann, rounded out the top three.

Winning this regatta would not have been possible without the help of my teammates. Jona-

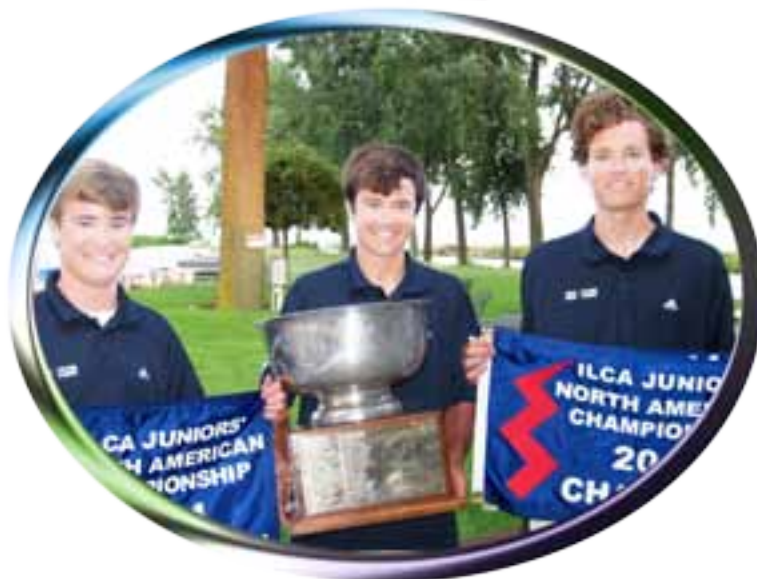
than did an outstanding job calling the breeze and helping me with tactics, while Tommy flew the spinnaker like a pro, used his long legs to help hike the boat flat and, most importantly, kept my nerves under control! I would like to thank Mr. Shaffer and his race management team, who did a great job getting seven races off in the always changing conditions. I would also like to recognize Laurie Dieball, Heidi Schultz, and the rest of the North Cape Yacht Club volunteers, who did a fantastic job organizing a successful regatta. And last but not least, we could not have won this regatta without the support and guidance from my father, Jody Lutz. Ever since I was seven years old in the Optimist Class, he has been right there to coach me—and give me a little push when needed! He has been my number-one supporter, and I am especially proud to have my name engraved, thirty-one years later, alongside his on the Junior North American trophy.

Jason Lutz





North American Juniors' Championship



North American Juniors' Champions

Jason Lutz, Jonathan Lutz, Tommy Zanowic



Runner-up: Connor Godfrey
Henry Ring, Brian Markarian



2nd Runner-up: Timmy Crann
Sam Jones, Lauren Jones

Pos	Sail#	Crew	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	Ttl
1	15166	Jason Lutz Jonathan Lutz, Tommy Zanowic	(6)	1	2	1	2	6	2	14
2	15417	Connor Godfrey Henry Ring, Brian Markarian	3	(7)	1	2	4	4	3	17
3	15122	Timmy Crann Sam Jones, Lauren Jones	4	2	3	5	(7)	1	4	19
4	14672	Christine Moloney Kayla Oak, Julianne MacDonald	5	(8)	6	3	3	3	1	21
5	15246	Joy MacDonald Adam MacDonald, Abby Bennett	1	5	(8)	8	1	2	5	22

North American Juniors' Championship



4th Place: Christine Moloney
Kayla Oak, Julianne MacDonald



5th Place: Joy MacDonald
Adam MacDonald, Abby Bennett



6th Place: Mike Gemperline
Scott Vining, Stu Wallace



7th Place: Kayla Ellis
Nick Lojek, Austin Neuman

Pos	Sail#	Crew	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	Ttl
6	15202	Mike Gemperline Scott Vining, Stu Wallace	2	3	5	4	5	5	(7)	24
7	14927	Kayla Ellis Nick Lojek, Austin Neuman	(8)	6	4	6	6	8	6	36
8	15251	Abbie Probst Danny Jordan, Max Cahn	7	4	7	7	(8)	7	8	40
9	15213	Michael Schmahl Andrew Schmahl, Bradey Wright	(12\ DNF)	12\ DNS	9	9	9	9	9	57
10	14416	Kayleigh Godfrey Erin Godfrey, Iliana Ring	9	9	(10)	10	10	10	10	58
11	14635	Harry Waskow Waskow & Waskow	(12\ DNC)	12\ DNC	12\ DNC	12\ DNC	12\ DNC	12\ DNC	12\ DNC	72



North American Juniors' Championship



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Joy MacDonald,
Adam MacDonald,
Abby Bennett

Michael Schmahl,
Andrew Schmahl,
Bradey Wright

Christine Moloney,
Kayla Oak,
Julianne MacDonald

Timmy Crann,
Sam Jones,
Lauren Jones

Kayleigh Godfrey,
Erin Godfrey,
Iliana Ring

Abbie Probst,
Danny Jordan,
Max Cahn