

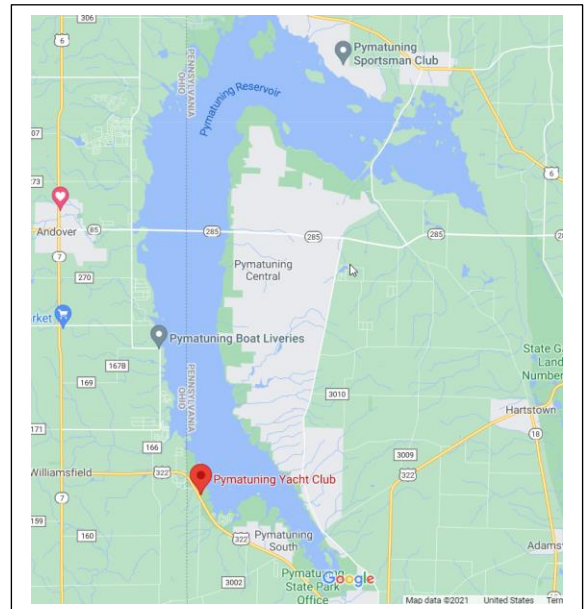
WHAT TO EXPECT OF THE SAILING AT THE 2021 WJM NA'S

Where do I start when trying to paint a picture of what to expect for breeze on Pymatuning during the WJM's? One would think after spending a literal lifetime on these waters, I'd have it down pretty well but you can certainly expect to hear "it never does that here" at least once during the event!

Fortunately, our PRO will be Jeff Borland who, although currently hailing from Annapolis, spent his youth and early adulthood racing in our Junior program as well as on Lightnings, so he is well versed in the conditions we can expect in early August.

We sail on the South end of the lake which is roughly seven miles long North to South and 1.5 miles wide West to East. When the wind blows out of the East, Savannah on it's craziest day, looks good! While we occasionally run fleet races with the breeze out of that direction, I certainly hope we won't have to run any races during the WJM's with an Easterly. Occasionally we get a strong Southeasterly flow which comes up the southernmost channel and can provide a solid, albeit shifty, windward-leeward course.

True Westerlies, while they can occur depending on the overall weather pattern, are rare and very shifty, although with a somewhat predictable pattern. What is more common are Southerlies with a Western bend that tends to be more pronounced closer to the Western shoreline than out in the center of the lake.



The best breezes come from the North which can also provide the shortest travel time to the starting area (although nothing is particularly long) as well as the best viewing from Club's front lawn for spectators. This direction also provides the longest fetch and therefore the choppiest of conditions when the breeze is on, although that's a relative term as anything beyond a two foot chop is rare. Winds out of the North and Northwest provide the best breeze, while out of the Northeast the breeze tends to be lighter and shiftier where nothing good ever happens in the center of the race course.

The very best breeze is what we all refer to as *The Doctor*. In the heat of late Summer, it is not uncommon for the breeze to be nearly non-existent until mid-afternoon (3:00-4:00 pm) when the thermal kicks in and provides great late afternoon and early evening sailing. And now, a cautionary tale: I remember one quite notable Ohio Districts in the late '70's where we waited for *The Doctor* and it arrived as expected, sending us out on the water after an afternoon of volleyball, etc and yes, the keg had been tapped about 11:30 that morning. It made for a very interesting couple of races!

Any of the various wind and weather prediction programs are generally accurate inside of 48 hours but in the end, it's still an inland lake and your eyes and senses are the most reliable instruments. It is unlikely we will be "surprise free" for the whole event but I know that Jeff Borland and his team have the experience with the lake as well as the talent required to minimize the surprises and their impact.

We look forward to seeing you all in August and providing a memorable event!

Cheers,

Rob Ruhlman

ILCA Past President, lifetime PYC member