

The Pennant

July 4th 2010

Newsletter of the Cayuga Lake Cruising Fleet

Latitude Race #1.

Here is Richard Stephens' report:

For the last two years we have been running a series of races, using a unique format developed here at IYC. It is called the Latitude race. This has been popular with the more relaxed racers in the fleet, and is suitable for all kinds of boat. Here is a quick recap of the rules:

- + All boats start at the same time (2:30pm, each Sunday)
- + The start line extends all the way across the lake, so there is no crush of boats at the start.
- + There are no marks to round. Each boat sails up the lake a distance appropriate for the speed of the boat. When a GPS reads the given latitude, they turn round and sail back to the club. We select the distances to make the race last 2-3 hours.
- + The first boat back over the finish line is the winner.

We had six boats on the start line for the first of the Latitude races this year: INVICTUS (Catalina 30), SNITCH (J-24), the two Weta trimarans raced by Ben Arthur and myself, and two other boats: Paul Kingsbury's Capri 22 and Bill Russell's Catalina 320. (Sorry, I forgot to make a note of the boat names).

There was a light northerly breeze, which seemed steady enough to set course "B" (approx 2 miles up the lake and back). However, the wind died away to nothing a few minutes before the start, and it looked like we would have to abandon the race. But the wind came back, enough to start the race and get our hopes up for a nice sail. Alas, it did not last, and the wind remained very light and flukey.

Paul wisely decided it was a better day for swimming than sailing, but the rest of the fleet battled their way to their turn-around point. At the half-way point I think Snitch was in the lead, followed by Invictus, then Bill, then Ben. I was about half a mile behind at that point. The fleet set their spinnakers and drifted back downwind. Bill was single-handing his boat, with a cruising spinnaker, and I could see it was very difficult to get it to fill. Sailing under these conditions requires a lot of jumping around on the foredeck, to catch every little puff of wind, which may come from any direction. When I turned around, I could see the whole fleet parked, about in the middle of the lake, with sails sagging, so I decided to stick to the east shore, and see if there was any breeze there. Sure enough, I picked up a gentle easterly, just a breath of wind, but enough to get me back in the race. Bill and Snitch turned on their motors. The race has a time limit of 6pm, and Invictus, Ben's Weta and Honey all finished the race within seconds of each other, just barely within the time limit. It was actually quite an exciting finish, with three boats overlapped, after three and a half hour's racing!

Tim Bonniwell	INVICTUS	1st
Ben Arthur	Weta 358,	2nd
Richard Stephens	HONEY	3rd
David Feavearyear	SNITCH	DNF
Paul Kingsbury	Capri 22	DNF
Bill Russell	Catalina 320	DNF

We have another Latitude race next Sunday. Let's hope for more wind!