

The Windward Sheet, Vol. 2016, No. 2

The weather forecast all day was for a line of thunder storms passing through St Joe in the evening. Early in the day, the projected time for the storms to arrive was 6:15PM. Notice the precision of that forecast. Late in the afternoon, it was pushed back to 8 PM, then 9PM, and then 10PM, as the storm was traveling slower than projected. It would turn out that most of these projections were off, and the storm had a mind of its own--as is so often the case.

The regular race committee was intact for Wednesday's race with the exception of Eric Mallen, who stepped up to fill in for Bill Thomas while he races with Cynthia. Eric's boat, White Knuckles Too, waits for warmer waters.

The original thought on the RC boat was to move away from the dredging activity so we dropped a marker near the D location and motored out to check the regular marks. About half way to the C mark we discovered a very pronounced wind line. As we got closer to C, the lake was completely calm with a wind speed of 0.0. We could see the wind line about half way to shore where a steady breeze was in place. We motored down to the A marker, picking up more wind along the way. According to our GPS that mark is somewhat South and East from the published location. Ken will look into this before next Wednesday.

The wind was still blowing somewhat from the SE and there was a noticeable shore breeze. The forecast was for rain later in the evening so the decision was made to use B and D for a W/L course. If there were still people at the PGA golf tournament they could watch the start from hole 8 and the 9th tee.

The pin end was favored as the RC boat slid a bit to the north as the anchor set firm. The Spinn fleet saw this right away and the bulk of the fleet took their pre-start maneuvers towards that end.

Cynthia led a tight group of starters at the pin but when the horn sounded she was over the line by about 10 feet. She restarted and took the starboard tack toward the beach as the rest of the fleet stayed on the favored port tack heading towards the pier. Zot made the tack to starboard next but the rest of the fleet stayed on the port tack until well past

the mark. Wellenreiter arrived first, and with a flawless spinnaker set took off for the next mark, increasing their lead on the fleet with each leg to win going away—both on the water and on corrected time. Their margin of victory over their fleet was a luxurious 2 minutes and 18 seconds. Bill Born on Distraction was again in hot pursuit and sailed another strong race to finish third on corrected time. Dirk Krueger, on Sea Raider corrected out on everyone in the Spinn fleet except for Welly, finishing second, just a scant 4 seconds ahead of Distraction.

Over in JaM, the starting boats similarly favored the Port end of the line and started on Port tack. Waterblue had an excellent start, as did Silver Arrow and Infinity. Carrera was in the mix close by but not leading. Infinity chose to fall down to gain boat speed, which allowed Silver Arrow to point high and go fast, setting themselves up as the most Weatherly boat on the beat leg. Carrera powered by Waterblue and worked into the lead, but had to sail lower than Gordon Dill on Silver Arrow to do it.

At the first mark, the top JaM boats were closing on the back-end of the Spinn fleet, and had to be cautious. Carrera overstood the first mark ducking boats and Gordon Dill used his superior pointing ability to regain much of the lead Carrera held. But traffic caused Silver Arrow to get bogged down while Carrera steamed low and fast, rounding the first mark just as the ratings would project, about 15 seconds ahead of Silver Arrow, for a dead heat on corrected time after the first leg.

Over in Spinn, Andy Grootendorst on Cynthia was making up lost ground after his early start, sailing mostly alone and going for the shore-side breeze most of the rest of us missed. He would come back from DFL at the start (by a few minutes due to his restart in heavy traffic) to correct out to 4th place, a tremendous finish which keeps him in 1st place (by a single point) for the Spinn series, just ahead of Bill Born, in second. Third place in the series is a tie between Welly and Patrick Nelson on El Capitaine Blued with Dr Stuart one point back and Gint Karaitas one more point further behind.

Back in JaM, Carrera had a good downwind leg but Gordon Dill again fought back when heading upwind. On Infinity, this was actually the first time they were able to give it their best efforts as they lost their radio last week and just had to follow the crowd around the course. For their first real race with us, they netted a respectable third place. We also welcomed Kelly Kearns back into JaM with his fast boat, Chateau Michelle. Kelly has been traveling on business the last few years and unable to race with

us. We are delighted to have him and know once he gets back in the drill of closed course racing, he will be another boat to watch.

Toward the end of the race, the Race Committee boat kept an ever present eye on the storm forming to the South and West, with Eric suggesting we shorten the course and head in. At that time the boats were scattered on each leg of the course and after discussing the rules for shortening a race we prepared to see if we could squeeze in the finish before the storm hit.

As the storm approached the bulk of the fleet was finishing, with only Silk, Attitude, and Elixer on the course the squall hit. Waterblue and the rest of the fleet were well on their way to the pier so we watched Silk and Attitude pick up the wind line first. Silk let their main sail out all the way and eased the jib as the boat must have come close to attaining hull speed as they flew past the finish line and went head to wind to get the sails down. It was extremely loud with the wind and sails flapping. A huge contrast as to how smooth and quiet it was when the Farr 395s and the Mumm 36 finished earlier. Eric and I on the RC boat commented on how little water they dragged and the small wake that they left. It looked as smooth as a tank test.

Meanwhile Attitude finished under full sail albeit nowhere near "trimmed." We radioed Elixer to take their own finish and pulled anchor in winds that must have been close to 30 knots.

Next we had to pick up the inflatable mark. The winds had set the anchor deep in the bottom. With the wind in their face and me trying to keep the boat steady and into the wind, Bill Womer and Eric Mallen muscled it in the boat and Kathy let the air out. We headed to the dock, surfing on waves that had quickly built in the channel.

Getting the committee boat back in the lift was a challenge with all the wind from the South. We had to make 2 runs at it. It was difficult to maintain enough speed to get on the lift straight and then be able to stop the boat before hitting the wall. The crew did a tremendous job hanging on until the lift came high enough to get the boat out of the water. In the end, we all made it work.

Queen's Cup News:

Ken Z and Louie have sent out a sign-up sheet for skippers and crew to help out on the Queen's Cup in about a month. We hope you will consider helping out on Friday night when the boats will be finishing, it will be a fun time to be watching the action.

In the meantime, we will hope for smoother waters and clear skies for next Wednesday's Race.

Best regards, Ken Z. and Jim S.

The Windward Sheet follows the SJRYC Race Fleet and is published at irregular intervals throughout the sailing season.