

S E P T E M B E R 2 6 , 2 0 1 8

Spindrift

Houston Sailing Association's Race Report

Taylor Made

When Jerry and Connie Taylor agreed to crew on a Y-Flyer last Sunday, they got a front row seat to the competition. One race on the Y flyer with Yours Truly, and one on the committee boat.

The Taylors signed up for an Intro to Sailing class with HSA in June after earlier sessions a few years ago with Strictly Sail. Since then, they have crewed on the Flying Scot with Joe Fulford and now on a Y. The Taylors, who had to travel from Northern Kentucky, weren't done after putting the cover on the Y. They ended up out on the water again in a cruiser and likely got back home a little late.

We would tell you about how that all happened but it is a little embarrassing for the skippers involved. Let's just say it has to do with dead batteries and empty gas tanks. That's the Taylors below in the catbird seats, so to speak.



Last Fall Series an Unqualified Beauty of a Day

It was a nearly perfect day for HSA's racing sailors Sunday. Warm, but not humid; windy, but not, overwhelming; sunny, but not punishingly so. Many of the twenty-five race dates in the HSA calendar are often hampered or hammered by the weather. Sometimes too much wind, sometimes too little. Sometimes really hot, sometimes really cold. Yet through all that, only one cancellation of a race date this year. It took a log loaded flood to do that.

But Sunday, all was forgiven. We kept hearing on the water and in the rigging area, "What a beautiful day!" And those in attendance soaked it up. The Hobie Fleet's one rep was Charlie Buchert even though it was a Hobie day, a fact that did not go unnoticed by newcomer Jerry Taylor, crewing on a Y. As much as he enjoyed the Y, he was impressed by the speed and grace of Charlie's Hobie 16. More about the races on the next pages.



Capris vs. The World

Wright and Pierok Get it Wrong Before Getting It Right

by Ken Wright

The best way I can describe the Handicap races yesterday were that we snatched victory from the jaws of defeat after snatching defeat from the jaws of victory. Confused? So are we.

Weather conditions were great, breeze steady as you'll get at Acton Lake and cool sun. Diane and I were late getting out to the course so we had to hustle and frankly didn't absorb the course totally.

Despite being somewhat late to the line (last across) we, with Ken skippering, got off to a fast start and were able to out-point Joe in his Flying Scott and so took a good lead at the first, windward, mark. During the long downwind leg and the close reach to the last mark, Joe continually gained on us, but still trailed. After rounding the last mark, due to a severe brain cramp, Ken thought we had to go around the original windward mark before finishing.

So we hightailed it up there, avoiding crossing the finish line, and were surprised to hear the gun go off as Joe and Leann broke into cheers at our gift. We hustled back to cross the line, but figured, that was that, another race ruined by a stupid mistake.

Diane took the helm in the second race, and we got a slow start and were well behind Joe at the first mark. However, Diane persisted and we made up some good distance on the downwind leg and Diane put on some speed on the ensuing beat and we just beat Joe to the next mark.

From there to the finish line it was a real dogfight, but the final approach to the finish was on a port tack and Joe was able to force us to tack by coming at us on starboard. We lost way in multiple tacks and Joe crossed the line ahead of us.

But apparently we were rescued by the Gods of Handicapping, as the Flying Scott has a lower (faster) rating than the Capri 14, and despite trailing Joe and Leann in both races, our adjusted times came out shorter. Who'da thunk it?



OktoberFast to Cap Season

While some are trailering boats home and others are setting dates for doing the same, there are those for whom the bell does not yet toll.

The Sunfish fleet is set to put a fitting climax on the season with a two day-laying-it-all-on-the-starting-line spitting match. Time to take off the gloves for this will be a bare knuckled brawl for the OktoberFast title with our own version of Ronda Rousey. Yes, Laura Beebe, the darling of the Sunfish circuit and the reigning Queen of the 'Fish for two years running is in the ring and taking on all comers.

If you haven't sent in your registration, it's time to do it. Dinner will be served Saturday in the Hueston Room after racing. Breakfast and lunch is the next day as we crown a champion for 2018.



Capri Duo Pierok/Wright Upend Giant Scot!

Editor's Note: After we discovered that the formula for figuring Portsmouth finishes wasn't all that hard, the English major in me came up with some actual true scores for Sunday's Handicap Fleet start. Note: the "handicap" title isn't for people sailing with physical handicaps; it's for handicapping boats of different classes to level the playing field. Here is Diane Pierok's look at Sunday's game.

by Diane Pierok

I would say we were strong between marks making up time several times but got edged out at the finishes. (Ed.note: Diane and Ken won both races after Portsmouth ratings were figured.)

Note to self: I made several errors in tacking at the wrong moment just before the finish.

Joe's experience and patience ultimately won the races. I'm glad we made them work for it, though. I am finally able to dissect my errors so that I can improve for the future. Now that is major progress.

We did an extra mark on the first race. Several weeks prior was a 1 and 1/4 lap X course. Yesterday was a one lap. We made that mistake in a joint effort by Ken and myself. I thought the marks were placed in funky places. If we were not watching everyone else go first, we could have easily gone the wrong way, but it was a good day.

Race Results from Sunday, September 23

Hobies

1. Charlie Buchert 1 1 2

Y-Flyers

1. Roger Henthorn and Bobbie Bode 2 1 3
 2. Pete Peters and Rose Schultz 1 3 4
 3. Mike Stratton and Jerry and Connie Taylor 4 2 6
 4. Kevin DeArmon and Charlie DeArmon 3 4 7
 5. Phil Robertson and Tony 5 5 10
 6. Scott Eversole and Paul Eversole 6 6 12

Handicap Fleet

1. Diane Pierok/Ken Wright 1 1 2
 2. Joe and Leann Fulford 2 2 4
 3. Stephen Cook and Jack 3 3 6

Fall Series Ends Beatifically!

Henthorn/Bode Take Close Y Racing

By Roger Henthorn

In the first race, after lagging behind, I got a nice puff heading into last mark. That mark was surrounded my Pete and Kevin, both moving a lot slower than Y2699. I tried for a quick inside turn, but Pete rounded up fast and called me on room. To save a turn, I hit the mark rather than Pete. That way I only had to do one turn, instead of two, and managed to pull up a second. According to a picture Jerry Brewster posted, I believe we were running last of the 6 Y-Flyers before the puff on the second to last leg.

In Race 2, after a messy start, I found myself trailing Mike Stratton for most of the race. Always just a bit behind. On the second lap and a few legs to go, I managed to get a lift Mike didn't catch, or didn't **cover**. Something about a "loss of cabin pressure in the other skipper's brain", allowed us to take the lead and hold it for the last two legs.

In both races, if you played the wrong side of the course, you lost big time. But being on the proper side when the breeze filled back in makes for a great recovery. We didn't finish last like the picture showed! (*Roger and Bobbie finished with a second and a first to take the day.*)



Pirates of the Actibbean?

Three members of the race committee showed up in tri-cornered hats adorned with skull and crossbones. Or at least that's what it looked like from a distance. Those yellow barrels may be full of gold doubloons for all we know. Next week's Round the Lake Race may have just had its preview. For it is pretty certain that pirate themes will show up there next Sunday. Time to get your Arrrgh on. More on page 6.

At left, Curtis Mears, Lucy Mears, and Brett Hart.



Y-Fleet Racing Gets Deconstructed

By Pete Peters

Sunday was a great day for racing. There was sun and wind which lifted our spirits because of the threat of an overcast day with rain. It was fun with six Y's on the starting line.

Speaking of starting lines, it was critical that you were on the line at the horn in both races. This was due to the fact that the lines were short and a wind direction was favorable for a certain position on the line.

Clear air was a key for good sailing on all the legs of the race. For Rose and I, the saying "blind pigs find an acorn every once in a while" was true for race one. Kevin should have won race one. Kevin sailed an outstanding race and both boats were battling all the way around the course.

The deciding leg was from one to four on the last lap. Kevin was in the lead after rounding mark one. On the Rose/Pete boat, Rose handles the sail trim and I sit on the low side to steer and keep out of the way.

We caught up to Kevin/Charlie on the reach and had a small overlap for maybe a third of the leg. What Kevin should have done to knock us out of contention was to head us up within five boat lengths of mark four and then head back down to the mark to break the overlap. Had they done so, all that was needed from that point would be to round the mark and head to the finish line.

Both of us did not have any other boats close to give us any problems. To sum up race one, the sailor's Rose/Pete had age going for them over the youthful sailor's Kevin/Charlie. Race two was even more competitive for the racers.

I believe we were fourth at the windward mark with some catching up to do. The winds were probably a little stronger and more consistent. As we looked over our bow, we saw Phil, Roger, and Mike ahead. Our motto is that we want to stay close to the boats that are in

front of us. The reason being wind shifts, wind filling in from behind, out sailing the boats in front, and mistakes made; such as fouling a boat or hitting a mark.

Race two was determined from mark one to mark four. Roger was in first with Mike close behind. The wind was basically the same on the entire leg. For us, there was no catching up this time.

by Mike Stratton

"He who makes the fewest mistakes wins," said Socrates. That's Socrates Johnson, an old salt from back in the day at Hueston Woods. I know the maxim but seldom live it. Nowhere was it more evident than in race one Sunday, when, inexplicably, I went for mark 5 when I should have been sailing for mark 3.

Roger Henthorn, who was below me, yelled at me to tack. I told him I wasn't ready to and went on my merry way. By the time I tacked and allowed him to do so also, I was feeling in control. However, I then sailed right by mark 3 as the others rounded it. Then Roger told me. I had just missed the mark. By a bunch.

I went back, rounded mark 3, but by then it was Goodbye Hannah for I was now firmly in fourth place after leading at the windward mark.

In race two I had the lead on the final lap until I violated a cardinal principle of covering boats and went right instead of left. Roger Henthorn simply said thank you, took my bullet and went home. Two races, two errors. I tried to blame my crew. It didn't work.

Round the Lake Race Up Next

You might be wondering how you go "round" a rectangle like Acton Lake, but you should know by now that we are capable of just about whatever we want to do.

Next Sunday is no different as HSA wraps up the "all fleets" portion of the season with the first ever Round the Lake Race. All six barrels will be put into use as every section of the lake will be utilized. The course? That will be announced at the 12:30 skippers' meeting on Sunfish Island. You can be assured that there will be six numbers in up for this one.

Meanwhile, what about scoring? The Race Committee will use the Portsmouth rating system 2018 to calculate each boat's finish. You get a handicap, you get a handicap, and you get a handicap. (With apologies to Oprah.)

Racing will begin at the normal time - 1:30 on Sunday. Marks will be set in each of the six sections of the lake from the marina area to the dam. You will need to round them in the order posted on the committee boat and finish where the committee sets up the finish line. All of that info will be covered at the skippers' meeting.

See next column for your boat's Portsmouth rating. If your boat is not on there, let us know and we will find it. Scores will be calculated during the post race picnic.

Portsmouth Ratings List

Flying Dutchman	87.9
Sunfish	99.6
Montgomery	15 108.2
Y-Flyer	86.7
Capri 14.2	99.4
Flying Scot	89.6
MC Scow	87.8
Catalina 22	90.8
Hobie 16	76
MacGregor 22	98.2
MacGregor 26	96
San Juan 21	94.7
O'Day 22	104.4
O'Day 25	94.5
Catalina 250	94.8
Hunter 23.5	96
MacGregor 19	98
Nacra 5.0	77.0

Portsmouth formula:

$$CT = (ET \times 100) / HC$$

CT is corrected time

ET is elapsed time

HC is your Portsmouth number.

