

June 3-5, 2011

### **MC-Scow Horse Race Regatta**

Saratoga Lake Sailing Club

Saratoga Springs, NY

The inaugural MC-Scow Horse Race Regatta at lovely Saratoga Sailing Club shows exactly what can be done by one family, an enthusiastic MC-Scow sailor from Connecticut, a pile of volunteer help and the desire to promote scow sailing in the Northeast. Fifteen MC-Scows from Saratoga, Keuka, Crystal (via Hartford, CT), Lake Eustis (via Putnam, CT), Quebec, Canada, and the travelling band known as Chris Norman from Lake Hopatcong all arrived at this new venue for MC-Scow Sailing.



Saratoga Lake, is situated about 45 minutes from Albany, NY and is known for the horseracing that comes to the town each summer season. The sleepy town is drenched in people, pomp and circumstance and is a haven for the NYC population looking for an easy summer getaway. The lake is perfect for scow sailing, running basically north and south with a few high bluffs and a wonderful view of the mountain range off to the west. The club is an old home that has been wonderfully maintained and updated with a great

lakefrontage, slightly separated launching and storage area and a huge plus for a regional regatta, bedrooms for most of the travelling sailors to crash for the evening.

Regatta Chairman, Devon Howe and most importantly, his lovely bride and children hosted the event with some prodding from Bob Wynkoop. Wonderful food, breakfast, lunch and dinner along with the all important free beer kept the light on till late in the evening Friday and Saturday evenings.

Friday afternoon, I was lucky enough to get to blather about sailing set-up, sailing strategy, boat preparation and all the rest that goes with a pre-regatta clinic. With most of the Saratoga Fleet in attendance, a few of the early arrivers from Keuka and Will arriving early from Canada, we had a great group. The breeze was up on Friday 14-20mph and we took advantage with a few boats hitting the water and yet again listening to myself give some tidbits of sail controls and angle of heel both upwind and downwind in the big breeze. As is normally the case with great Friday breeze, the forecast for the weekend was zero to zero with an occasional gust above zero.

The Howe family set everyone up with a Friday evening dinner in town at a local burger bar and the guys enjoyed a bit of the sights and sounds of Saratoga Springs. Brent Penwarden and Steve Bender have a great local story of town life as they were the guys staying off site. Needless to say, it is lucky that the

breeze forecast was correct for Brent or he would have been scrambling to hit the starting line on time. Just ask them about it when you come up to Keuka for the 2011 Nationals.

Now, onto the less important part, the racing!

Saturday dawned with glassy water, a leisurely skippers meeting run by our PRO: Clark Cooper and then an on-shore AP until after lunch. A slight breeze built and the fleet was off and running. The courses were all windward modified of varying length. Race 1 and 2 were short as the PRO was just hoping to get some racing in with the low side breeze that was presented the racers. Will Hendershot showed his



Will Hendershot

early form and rounded with a group of three at the top mark, sailed a great run, keeping the boat heated up just a touch more than the other leaders, squeezed out to a little lead and held on back to the finish of the WM1 course. Unfortunately for local and regatta organizer Devon Howe, he miscalculated the course (I guess printing the SI's didn't help with course management) and sailed past the windward mark. Bob Wynkoop took advantage and sneaked in for a 2<sup>nd</sup> place with Brent Gillette using the same lefty puff to squeeze past Zack for 3<sup>rd</sup>. Chris Hawk came from being OCS and rounded out the top five. The key to this race was get to the front early. With

an entire race of not much more than 10 minutes, the leaders got rich and those that had a rough start were stuck duking it out in the pack.



Brent Gillette

Race 2 had more of the same breeze, but another lap added to the course. Still hard left was the key and even more important to be left in this first beat. As this skipper got held out in the middle and played the meet and greet the fleet program, I cannot give a great play-by-play of the front, but clearly the key was left on the first leg, followed by left for the leaders and actually right on the second beat for the mid-pack. Brent took the gun with Will second and Chris Hawk third.

Race 3 had a freshening breeze (the most of the regatta 5-7mph) and a stretched out racecourse. A nice beat with a northerly breeze made for some good sailing. Zack was lucky enough to be consistent up the first beat and used a nice lefty at the mark to take the lead. Zack went on to hold on in this race despite a hard charge from Chris Norman and Chris Hawk. The second beat had Hawk hard left, Norman hard right and Zack working the middle. Hawk closed on the run and missed stealing the win by only a couple feet at the finish line. With three races in the books, the fleet hit the dock for a re-cap of the day and a great chicken dinner.

After day 1, it was a three boat regatta with Brent in the lead followed tightly by Will and Chris Hawk. Zack had an 11 on the scoreboard so he needed help on Sunday. A few of the guys regaled in watching a bolt rope being released on Zack's 1712 sail and saw approx 8 inches of rope shrinkage go away. This is

something that everyone should check with a sail over 1 or two seasons old. The more the luff rope shrinks, the rounder the sail will be at the luff and also harder to hoist.

A rousing game of euchre along with some late night mac and cheese and spaghetti and meatballs to soak up the free beer kept everyone entertained once the sun went down. Sunday forecast was for more of the same but out of the south.

Sunday dawned with no good stories from Brent, so the entire fleet was anxious to get on the water in a dying southerly. By 10:00 the breeze was fading fast, but race four was underway. Bob Wynkoop, Chris Hawk and Zack Clayton had a nice first beat. Bob had a great chance to lead at the top but the breeze on the left faded and Zack and Chris powered in off the right. Chris squeezed to the lead on the run and work hard right to the freshening breeze and took the lead for good and held on for a race win to hold the lead after four races, but the scores were tight. Chris Norman worked a big left hand shift on the half beat to the finish to push forward in the fleet and finish third in this one. Sean Tracy had a good one finishing fourth and the two leaders from day 1 were 5 and 6, opening the door for any of the top three to win the event.



Race 5 had less pressure and a shift of the course to the right. The key here was to get onto a port quickly after the start and you were almost on the layline. The guys being pushed further left had to reach into the mark. The big left meant the starboard gybe on the first run was a good move and the

leaders all gybed away opening the door for Devon Howe to take the lead at the bottom pin, with Zack right on his heels. As the breeze faded it was key to stay in the breeze, look up the lake and find the new breeze early. Chris Hawk pushed to the middle to protect from Will on the left and Zack took advantage by working into the new pressure further right to lead at the top mark. Will Hendershot realized if he was to win the regatta he needed to make a move on the final run and split with the fleet. This paid as he rounded right on Zack's heels at the bottom and used some good speed, and a nice left shift to take the gun as the breeze went totally flat. 2<sup>nd</sup> was Zack with Sean Treacy having his best finish of third in this one and Brent sneaking in for fourth. Chris Hawk got pinned in a hole and faded to 7 in this last race opening the door for Will to come in and bring the regatta championship back home with him to Canada.

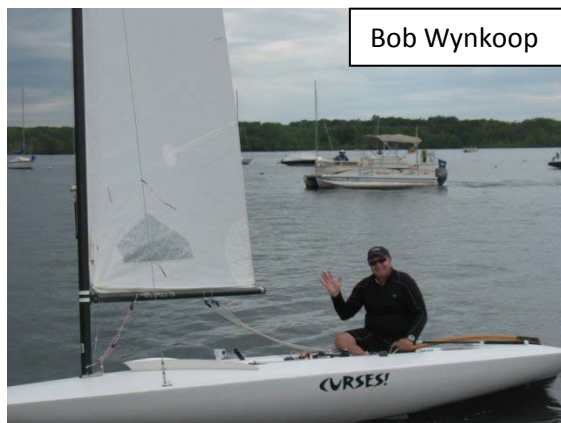
#### Final Top Five

Will Hendershot  
Brent Gillette  
Chris Hawk  
Zack Clayton  
Chris Norman

Congrats to Charlie Murphy, the newest SLSC MC-Scow owner, the proud new owner of 1712. We expect this Thistle sailor to be at the 2011 Nationals along with the rest of the Saratoga Fleet. What a wonderful job done by the entire club with tons of RC help, launching help from John Kimball of SLSC.



Brent Gillette, Will Hendershot, Chris Hawk



Bob Wynkoop

Certainly a destination event, but expect this new MC fleet to grow. Personally I have to thank Bob Wynkoop for finding me a boat to race, getting me to the regatta and making the rest of the guys think that I know what I am doing. It was great to be back in the boat again and expect to see myself at the MC ILYA Invitational in July and a big push to attend the 2011 MC Nationals at Keuka Lake, NY this fall.

See you then,

Zack Clayton  
Dimension-Polyant Sailcloth, Inc.