

Laser[®] 28

2011 Laser 28 North American Championships

Dorval, QC Canada
September 24-25, 2011

Fall is always a much anticipated month as some of the best competition of the year is in September. This year was no exception as the 2011 Laser 28 North American Championships were held at the Royal St. Lawrence Yacht (RStLYC) in Montreal, Quebec.

Along with a strong fleet of local boats, we had crews from Ottawa and Magog joining the fun for 9 scheduled races over two days. A fleet of 12 boats was on hand for the expected tough competition.

Denise Bienvenu, as Regatta Chairman, once again put together an excellent event with the generous support of Evolution Sails, Vitaulic and Rogers Fire Protection. Paul Lhotsky was instrumental in working to get sponsors aboard. The RStLYC was very helpful in ensuring the boats were launched and hauled at the convenience of the crews thanks to Dave Gillies.

The Principal Race Officer (PRO) was Peter McBride, also the Commodore of the RStLYC, and many volunteers staffing the Race Committee (RC) boat, generously loaned by Denise's mother, and the mark boats. We can't thank all of the volunteers enough for helping out.



Saturday morning began at 8h30 with the Skipper's Meeting on the front lawn with many of the crews looking great in the regatta polos generously donated by Vitaulic. The meeting was short and concise allowing everyone an early start out to the race course about 30 minutes west up Lake St. Louis.

The weather forecast for the weekend seemed to change every few hours leading up to Saturday. As everyone headed out, the expected 7 knots gave way to 12 knots as the boats got dialed in with the lappers. An unforeseen delay prevented the RC from getting out to the racing area on time for the scheduled start. Once the course was setup the wind had calmed a bit, the temperature rose and the race was on to change headsails for the genoa before the start signal.



All 5 races were sailed in a windward leeward configuration with the start/finish line half way up the 3/4 to 1 mile weather leg. Leeward gates were used along with an offset weather mark.

An easterly breeze and current added to the excitement at the first start as 5 boats were over early prompting individual recalls. The first half of the race was sailed with all crews on the rail with genoas in about 7 knots of wind. On the last downwind approaching the leeward gates the wind gradually lightened with warming temps setting up the short upwind to the finish. In about 2 knots of wind Colibri was first around the gate and up the right side with Convictus and Seagal going left. As the wind lightened up the right side Colibri was out of air as Convictus and Seagal made way on the left. Convictus was first to cross the finish line followed by Colibri and then Seagal. Unfortunately for Convictus, she was scored OCS.

Higher than forecast temps at mid day chased the wind away and at about 13h30 we were done for the day.

Once back at the RStLYC, some afternoon debriefing would lead into the traditional 5 to 7 dock party followed by a BBQ steak dinner in the clubhouse with a DJ. Many of the boats were in good form for the dock party offering plenty of libations and concoctions to one and all. I'm sure many still remember the now infamous 'brocoli slime' offered up by the boys from Colibri once upon a time at a similar event.

Dinner was excellent and plentiful with calm winds and warm temps to add to the ambiance. The DJ was good and had the dance floor packed. Some of the veteran sailors got the floor warmed up which soon brought out plenty of energetic revellers. The DJ even belted out a surprisingly good Elvis rendition much to the delight of all. The evening was a lot of fun but predictably didn't go too late into the night. The racing, hot temps, dock party and dinner were to be followed by a 09h00 start on Sunday in the hopes of having at least 4 races before the 14h00 start deadline.

The first start of the day was nothing like the day before, with the current against us and everyone feeling a little more settled in, all the boats got away with no one over early. Racing was tight, as ever, and as you can see from the photos, boats were overlapped 4 wide on the runs and the crosses upwind were a game of inches.



We were able to complete 4 races on Sunday in spectacular conditions, good winds, warm temperatures and tight racing made for an excellent fall day. The wind did drop to the expected 7 knots around mid day but with flat water it still made for good racing.



After a good start in the first 2 races our luck ran out a bit in the 3rd race of the day. After rounding the last leeward mark in 3rd we picked up some weeds and were passed by 2 boats on the short upwind to the finish. Race 4 offered it's own challenges, as the temperatures hit the mid twenties Celsius and the winds at their lightest for the day, the middle of the course was not an advantageous place to be.



The boats that went up the right side on the first upwind made out well and shook up the order a bit. Going up the left side of the course on the second upwind paid huge dividends as the pressure seemed better on the left by this time.



Don't miss all of the event photos on the class website, we have a couple of galleries from the event with photos from me on Convictus, from Marc Bienvenu on the RC boat and Jake Goodyear on one of the mark boats;

<http://laser28.org/GalleryAlbumsClass.aspx>

Many thanks once again to Denise Bienvenu, Peter McBride, Paul Lhotsky and the many volunteers that made the event possible. Well done to Colibri, Andanzas and Sea Gal for their podium positions. Hope to see more boats next year.

Paul White
Convictus
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