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Subject: Gig Harbor Cup #8 IOM regatta write up 10/3/15

It was a perfect fall day on Saturday, October 3, 2015 at Gene Coulon Marine Park. Marine overcast/ cool gradually turning to clear skies and comfortable warm sunshine by days end. The wind came out of the North and Northeast. The wind was brisk at times with a few light air moments mixed in. A few of the races saw us in upper A rig conditions but there were only a few nose plants. Surprisingly the chop wasn't too bad. For a first we sailed the same course every heat. However there was quite a bit of weed before our noon break. Everyone was snagged at least once or twice. And there were some tricky shifts, especially at the windward mark, which is unusual for a North wind. But all in all the racing was delightful.

Twelve skippers were at the start and like a broken record Kelly Martin began reeling off bullets until he sailed around the leeward gate instead of inside. Weed and several encounters with wayward skippers kept him from a sweep. He was our champion by a healthy margin. The big surprise, or maybe not a surprise, Scott McConnell finished second just in front of Jerry. Congrats Scott on some great sailing. Mike and I had good days finishing fifth and fourth respectively.

I am extremely impressed with the overall improvement in skipper ability. Everyone has gotten MUCH better. We are bunched closer together at the finish, scoring is more balanced, there are fewer screw ups and there is a better understanding of the rules of racing. It is great. If you feel you are still struggling, ask one of the big dogs how to trim your sails, get better starts, and etc. They are more than willing to help. We do not any one of you to lose interest because you can't compete at a high level. We need to keep our fleet growing. And here is an idea. What if Kelly, Bob, Joe or Jerry (remember he talks in reverse) takes a break and coaches one of you for a heat. He in return gets an additional throw out or his average score (whatever works best with our scoring system). Coaching is the best way to learn. Nothing like a good hands-on critique on how to sail faster and smarter.

Our final regatta is in two weeks and as we near the end of the season a special thanks goes out to those who put all this together. We simply drive to the park, throw our boats in the water, race and then drive home or visit the Red Robin for food and refreshments. Priceless. So, thank you Ron Hornung, Jerry W Brower, Joe D'Amico and the wandering Bob Wells for all the work. Also thanks goes to Drew for driving over and assuming the RD duties Saturday.

Unlike the last report that focused on the "off the wall" antics of our skippers, we must return to the polished and profession decorum always upheld without pause by SMYC and GHMYC prior to Bob's departure to far lands. Our Commodore and famous editor returns next week. So this ends the report but I will throw out a few harmless quotes heard Saturday.

"I am going back to my britPOP!", a disgusted Joe D'Amico.

"That was a really hard hit, I am going to have to protest you", Byron Pimms.

"That is twice I've had to twice remove weeds in the same heat. Twice!" Author unknown.

"Blackledge you are barging again" Many.

And my favorite quote came, after a very disappointing day out on the carpet, from Kurt Wells while convincingly in the lead the last heat about fifty feet outside and beyond the finish line after lap one. "I think I'm going to get a bullet!". As you will remember we sailed only one lap instead of two in the final heat. Almost in tears Kurt circled back and finished in the middle of the pack. Hornung caught this picture of Kurt's expression.



Photo by Ron Hornung.

Thank you all for joining us,
Ron B.