

Cotton Pickin' Regatta
Delta Sailing Association – Fleet 274
Memphis, Tennessee
September 21–22, 2013

Pos	Sail#	HelmName	CrewName	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	Total	Nett
1	15360	Clarke Newman	Deanna Newman, Ralph Bilnoski	1	1	1	1	3 (13.0 DNS)		20	7
2	15329	Tommy Meric	Scotty Barrett, Randall Dannemon	2	(4)	4	2	1	2	15	11
3	15100	Brad Currie	Nate Currie, Alexander Lavell	(3)	3	3	3	2	1	15	12
4	15308	Bill Killebrew	Mike Osborne, Dustin Drumm	4	(6)	5	5	4	3	27	21
5	14488	William Baxter	Richard Murff, Herb Cochrane	(7)	2	2	7	7	6	31	24
6	14136	Cal Herman	Haley Leesley, Robby Swayze	6	(7)	7	4	5	4	33	26
7	15201	Robert Bernhardt	Scott Kircher, Mike Arndt	5	5	(8)	6	6	5	35	27
8	14666	Crit Currie	Claire Holihan, Keith Councell	8	8	6	8	8 (13.0 DNF)		51	38
9	14338	Lynn Jones	Sarah Girdner, John Harpole	11	11 (13.0 DNF)		10	9	7	61	48
10	14065	Carl Panetta	Anna Clay Panetta, Joshua Panetta	9	10	9	9 (13.0 DNF)	13.0 DNS		63	50
11	12397	Warren Ayres	Jere Fones	10	9	10 (13.0 DNS)	13.0 DNS	13.0 DNS		68	55
12	13258	Richard Caldwell	David Morris, Bobby Whitemore	(13.0 DNS)	13.0 DNF	13.0 DNF	13.0 DNS	13.0 DNS	13.0 DNS	78	65

After heavy rains along a cold front made most of our travels to DSA a real beating, Saturday dawned fresh and clear with sunny skies and sixty-five degree temperatures. You gotta love a good autumn cold front! The breeze was fifteen-to-twenty out of the north, but with all the vertical instability behind the front, the winds were very puffy and very shifty. With twelve entries in the third regatta of the 2013 ILCA Southwestern Circuit, the Cotton Pickin' Regatta was shaping up to be a lot of fun. Lake Arkabutla in northern Mississippi was down, but the water level was sailable, and the fleet headed out.

Race one began with a mid course start and the bulk of the fleet going right while we worked up the left side with Cal Herman from New Orleans. Near the top of the leg, it looked like Tommy Meric from New Orleans was launched, but the winds backed, and the boats out left were right there with him at the first mark. A quick gybe set put us in front with Cal, Brad Currie from Nashville, and Tommy right there as well. Up the second long beat, we sort of played the varying pressure up the middle of the course, and we stretched out the lead a bit. Rounding second was Tommy, followed by Brad. Bill Killebrew from Nashville and Robert Bernhardt from Pensacola were fourth and fifth. These positions held through the finish.

We sail the second race on the same course. This time, local sailor, Bill Baxter, was really in phase with the shifty breeze and rounded first with us right behind. Again, we played the pressure downwind with a series of gybes that slipped us by Bill at the bottom. Brad Currie was third and Tommy was fourth. Things stayed the same through the finish.

After a great lunch back on shore, we headed out to do two more races. The third race was a carbon copy of the second, with things playing out just like they had before. In the fourth race of the day, we really got dialed in, and lead at the top mark by the length to the offset mark. We lead all the way, followed by Meric, Currie, and Herman.

After a great day of sailing, the traditional barbecue dinner was held at Delta Sailing Association, and a good time was had by all. Someone even set up their satellite dish to watch the LSU game. Don't ask, it's a southern thing.

Sunday morning dawned with winds so light that I was worried we would not get any racing in, but about fifteen minutes before the start of the fifth race, the breeze piped back up to where it had been the day before, and it continued to build. With a comfortable lead, we just tried to play it safe. We started in the middle of the line, and worked up the middle of the course. Meric rounded first, followed by Baxter, Killebrew, Brad Currie, Herman, and us. Again, the starboard veer called for a gybe set. We were able to get the inside and slipped into second. A fleet of boats goes slower than a single boat, and since Team Currie was the last to gybe, he was the only boat not in the pack. Brad was able to slip by the pack to leeward to round second. We were third, followed by Killebrew, and Herman. Cal was able to track down Killebrew on the long second beat for fourth place, and with a third place, we would be able to clinch, so, we just covered the boats behind, while Currie and Meric fought it out in first and second. Since the two of them were tied for second going in, they had a pitched battle. Both boats built a lead while we covered tightly. We were able to play a few gusts going down the run to open up a gap on Team Killebrew, and we coasted to a third behind Meric in first and Currie in second. With the regatta in hand, and a long drive back, we decided not to sail the last race. We headed in to pack up while the fleet sailed the final race in the strongest breezes of the regatta.

The last race was a battle between Team Meric and Brad Currie. Being a point up, with a better throw-out, and the tie break advantage, Brad had his work cut out for him. Team Currie did all they could do finishing in first, but they needed two boats between themselves and Team Meric. It was not to be. Tommy, along with his crew Scotty Barrett and Randall Danemon finished the regatta strong with a second place to secure second overall. Brad Currie and his crew, Nate Currie and Alexander Lavelle, were third. Fourth overall went to Team Killebrew, with his crew Mike Osborne and Dustin Drumm. The top local sailor was Team Baxter, with his crew of Richard Murff and Herb Cochrane, behind the pair of second places finishes in races two and three, finished fifth.

PRO Tim Fox and his crew did a great job getting all six races in with all the shifty conditions.

Team Newman, with the crew of Deanna Newman and Ralph Bilnoski, sailed the best regatta they have in a while, to finish in first and move into a three point overall lead in the Southwestern Circuit over Tommy Meric, and a seven point lead over Larry Frost from New Orleans. With three regattas to go in Dallas, Jackson, MS, and Pensacola, FL, it is still anyone's quest for the big red flash.

Clarke Newman