

Higgins Lake Invitational Regatta

Higgins Lake, Michigan

August 3-4, 2002

Pos	Sail#	Skipper	Club	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	Total
1	14807	Jim Allen	Pontiac	3	1	3	1	1	9
2	14780	Colin Park	St. Petersburg	1	4	2	3	3	13
3	14464	Tom Klaban	Pontiac	2	7	4	2	5	20
4	14474	Dave Decker	Grand Rapids	6	3	1	8	4	22
5	15069	Ward Detwiler	Pontiac	7	5	6	5	2	25
6	14577	Chris Jacobson	Bay City	4	2	7	6	9	28
7	14774	Tom Vickers	Crescent	8	8	5	4	6	31
8	14760	George Siegle	Lansing	5	6	8	9	8	36
9	14468	Blaine Severin	Lansing	9	11	9	10	10	49
10	14267	Neil Harrison	Lansing	11	9	10	11	11	52
11	14909	Clarence Johnson	Pontiac	DNC	DNC	DNC	7	7	53
12	13293	Casey McGovern	Higgins	10	10	22	DNC	DNC	57

As I approached the mainland parking lot from our Treasure Island Clubhouse about ten o'clock on Saturday morning, I was pleasantly surprised to see half a dozen Lightnings already assembled. Within a couple of hours 11 boats were rigged and towed to the Island. It should have been 12 but a sick locomotive somewhere in Ontario needed the attention of one of our skippers! After lunch was served at the Clubhouse we set out into the clear, blue water of Higgins Lake for some much anticipated sailboat racing.

The skies were clear and sunny with winds out of the southeast, blowing at 5-10 miles per hour at the start of first race. The windward-leeward course saw Tom Klaban, Chris Jacobson, and Jim Allen around the windward mark first. By the end of the five leg race though, Colin Park had managed to pass them all. He was followed by Klaban and Allen. The wind was building somewhat for the start of the second race. Chris Jacobson was fastest up the first beat, followed by Dave Decker and George Siegle. In the end however, Jim Allen finished first, followed by Jacobson and Decker. The wind began to fade as the afternoon wore on and we started the third race. This time Colin Park reached the windward mark first, followed by Allen and Klaban. But Dave Decker finished the course first; Park and Allen were next, completing racing for the day. We returned to the Island for cold refreshments, interesting stories, and bold-faced lies.

Sunday morning I awoke to rumbles of thunder and flashes of lightning as I prepared to make my way out to the Island. I arrived just in the nick of time, as a ferocious storm front came across the lake, forcing us to hole up in the Clubhouse for an hour. Finally, it stopped raining sideways so we could ferry the competitors out to the Island where their boats had been safely moored for the night. The rain eventually quit, allowing us to set a course under cloudy skies with winds from the southwest at 5-10 miles per hour. The wind continued to build, making for a crowded windward mark rounding. Colin Park was first to arrive, followed very closely by Jim Allen, Clarence Johnson, Tom Klaban, Ward Detwiler, Decker, Siegle, and Jacobson in the span of about one minute. The wind continued to build and shift to the west making for a pretty quick race. When all was said and done, Jim Allen was first to finish, with Klaban in second and Park falling back to third place. The Race Committee shifted the course to suit the building breeze as the sky continued to clear. With the wind now blowing in the teens out of the west, the last race of the regatta got underway. It was another quick beat with Park leading Siegle and Detwiler into the first mark. But Jim Allen found a way to pass them all. He won the race with Detwiler and Park following.

That finish propelled Ward Detwiler from Pontiac into fifth place and he and his crew were awarded those trophies back on the Island. Dave Decker from Grand Rapids ended up in fourth place. Third place honors went to Tom Klaban and his sons from Pontiac. Colin Park, back from St. Petersburg, Florida had to settle for second place hardware as Jim Allen with crew Jane Allen and John Morley from Pontiac took top honors. Boats were then towed back to the mainland to be broken down. The skies continued to clear as the crews packed up and started their travels downstate; each having experienced some competitive sailboat racing in one of the most beautiful locations anywhere. If you like lots of clear, deep fresh water, beautiful sandy beaches, and northern Michigan countryside, you should give us a visit next year!