

2023 Moonshine Regatta Report

Prior to this regatta, the weather forecast for Smith Mountain Lake in southern Virginia looked daunting (gusts to 30, rain, cool temperatures) but we embraced the reasons we love this regatta so much, the importance to the class and our Lightning District of supporting the event, hitched up the boat, and committed to attending. Randy and Lauren Beauchamp and the Virginia Inland Sailing Association have done such a wonderful job over the last 11 years of making Moonshine participants feel like treasured guests that it was impossible to stay home. Organizing a great regatta takes care, planning, and a lot of volunteer work, so when great people put forth all that effort it's a joy to reward them by showing up. We decided to ignore the forecast and go have a wonderful time.

It was the right move. The drive down to VISA through the lush green Virginia spring countryside was beautiful, and a welcome relief from the stress and strain of everyday life in the 21st century. When we arrived, the clubhouse was open waiting for us with food, drink, friends, and the lake life going full swing. It was wonderful. Our Airbnb was within walking distance of the club and we settled in easily ready for a great event.

Saturday morning a band of rain and thunderstorms postponed the start of racing for an hour and a half, after that the lake settled down to light/moderate conditions from the northwest and some great sailing. The Race Committee set a moderate length windward-leeward course with the start/finish line in the middle and got off three interesting two lap races as the sky slowly cleared, and the sun eventually made its appearance. This format kept the racing close, put a strong emphasis on close and coordinated crew work, takes less RC work to set up (no gates or offset marks to move around), and works very well for small to midsize fleets. I liked the course a lot!



A "bad weather day" at Smith Mountain Lake

Bob Wardwell, Bucky Buchanan and Sam Dutilly also found the conditions greatly to their liking, pulling off an undefeated day despite strong challenges by Joe Buczkowski, sailing with son Zach and local phenom Pam Poldiak; Lisa-Marie Lane sailing with Jim Lane and Richard Brown, and Bill Cabrall, teamed up with Raeyane Farrell, LeAnn Myhre, Arin Kaye and Matti (it takes a village to sail Bill's boat). By the party, Team Cabrall held a slim 1-point advantage in second place over team Buczkowski, with Team Lane a point further back.

It's worth noting that Randy Beauchamp was able to find local crew for several of the teams, getting Pam Poldiak on Joe Buczkowski's boat and Richard Brown onboard the with the Lanes. Getting local sailors on the boats was a great way to increase both participation in the event and exposure for the Lightning at VISA and hopefully will generate more demand for the class there.

Sunday dawned clear, cool, sunny, and absolutely beautiful. We were back out on the racecourse by 9:30 and quickly got off an additional two races filled with close, tight, and wonderful sailing. In light air. Once again, Team Wardwell dominated, pulling off an undefeated weekend (once they got their nose out in front it was impossible to reel them back in, they were very fast!), while Team Buczkowski emerged from the scrum in second place, and Team Cabrall settled for third.



The Moonshine Fleet enjoys a wonderful end to a great weekend racing Lightnings on Smith Mountain Lake

Everyone was off the water, packed up and off for home by early afternoon, in time to make it back to places like Hampton or Annapolis by sunset. It was, all in all, a stellar weekend, with fantastic hosts, a beautiful setting, well run races, great food and drink (the signature regatta beverage came in peach, plumb, banana, apple and black cherry flavors and was fantastic), and a wonderful party, well worth the effort of attending. Anyone who took counsel of their fears weatherwise and stayed home missed a spectacular time and a wonderful weekend.

Results are below:

Skipper	Crew	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	Total
Bob Wardwell	Bucky Buchanan, Sam Dutilly	1	1	1	1	1	5
Joe Buczkowski	Zach Buczkowski, Pam Poldiak	4	2	3	2	2	13
Bill Cabrall	LeAnn Myhre, Arin Kaye	3	3	2	4	3	15
Lisa-Marie Lane	Jim Lane, Richard Brown	2	4	4	5	4	19
Randy Beauchamp	Jessie Heasley, Bart Smith	5	5	5	3	5	23

Bill Cabrall
Lightning 15615