

Red Flannels Regatta
Chicago Corinthian Yacht - fleet 5
Chicago, Illinois
September 26-27, 2009

Pos	Sail#	Name	Club	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	Total
1	15260	Faude, Bill	Chicago	1	3	TO-5	1	1	1	1	8
2	14938	Stix, David	CCYC, Chicago	6	1	1	2	2	2	TO-DNF	14
3	15158	Orlebecki, Pete	Fond du Lac, WI	TO-11	5	2	5	3	5	2	22
4	15259	Wagnon, Brad	Wawasee, IN	TO-8	6	3	3	4	3	4	23
5	15213	Schmahl, Jeff	Wawasee, IN	TO-9	4	6	6	8	6	3	33
6	15167	Gibson, William	CCYC, Chicago	4	7	4	4	6	9	TO-DNF	34
7	15137	Adamski, Steve	Green Bay, WI	5	8	TO-10	7	9	4	6	39
8	14613	Ehrenberg, Jeanne	CCYC, Chicago	2	2	9	9	10	TO-11	8	40
9	14844	Burke, Dennis	CCYC, Chicago	3	9	8	8	7	TO-10	7	42
10	15332	Considine, Pat	Chicago	10	10	11	TO-DNF	5	7	5	48
11	14015	Steffenson, Doug	CCYC, Chicago	7	11	7	10	11	8	TO-DNS	54



The 2009 Red Flannels were contested as they have for over 50 years at the end of September on the waters of Lake Michigan. This year 11 boats competed in 7 races in fantastic conditions perhaps globally-warmed enough so that some competitors were openly wondering if the regatta might better be named the Red Bikini or perhaps even the Red Thong regatta. True, the days of even 10 years ago when seasonal Lake Michigan North Easterns would greet the fleet with 20 knots and 8' rolling waves seem long gone.

One element of this successful fresh water classic that thankfully is not long gone is PRO Bruce Thompson and an all-volunteer race committee who did a fantastic job getting 7 races in over a little over a day and a half. Bruce told the competitors that the races would be run efficiently with little time between races so that less time would be spent reaching around behind the starting line and more competing and he didn't fib.

Last year's Regatta Chairman Bill Faude promised the Fleet at the 2008 awards that if 30 boats didn't register for the regatta, the 2009 event would be free. 2009 Regatta Chairman William Gibson helped make him an honest man by decreeing that this year's event would live in the entry fee-free zone. No regatta fee! Free beer the whole weekend. Only the dinner came with a reasonable fee. What better way to combat a worldwide economic crisis than by cutting prices and finding everyone a place to stay?!

Past Fleet 5 fleet member David Schmahl did his part to make the weekend memorable by docking his S&S 47 "True Romance" in a slip just off the club where it became ground zero for a large impromptu bash following sailing on Saturday. What a great time. 35 people on deck, and True Romance floated approximately 1/4" below her waterline. I'm telling you that yacht is a...proper yacht. Next time there are tornado warnings, I'm pulling my family out of our basement and spending the storm down below on that boat. Bunk beds (births)...more teak than could possibly be cleaned and varnished in my lifetime. It seemed entirely appropriate that this yacht was designed by Olin Stephens' firm. I didn't see it with my own eyes but I'm confident she has a skeg.

The sailing was also noteworthy. After sailing on Saturday any of about 5 teams harbored realistic chances of winning. Sunday brought fresher pressure from between 14 and 22 mph from the WSW with accompanying +50% magnitude puffs and up to 30-% directional shifts. The forecast was for breezes to build all day up to a top end somewhere in excess of 40. PRO Thompson got the group out there an hour earlier than on Saturday to be sure we got all three scheduled races in before the conditions became impossible.

A nice battle between Dave Stix's and Bill Faude's teams at the top of the leader board ensued. Faude made this much more interesting by finding the second row in what certainly should have been a single row start in each of races 5 and 6. Fortunately for those guys, there were some gains to be made bailing out early in each leg and being right of most of the fleet -truth told, they didn't have any other choice.

Drama for who would win the regatta effectively ended at the top of Team Stix's mast when the shackle fitting pulled out from the swage seconds after the start of race 7. Anyone who has ever had to sail upwind in 20-+ about 4 miles without a main will understand what a bummer that can be. We've heard about Lightning World Championship races being contested in LOTS of breeze in South America in the early 70s with jibs only. Somehow that was probably more glamorous than their trip in from the race course. That was a bummer indeed.

So Lightning 15260 won the event with Bill Faude, Jared Drake and Andy Camarda on board. Andy was excited enough about sailing Lightnings in breeze that he vowed to fill out a boat grant application. We could use young blood like his in the Class. Or else maybe we just have some young blood like his in our boat...those other two guys aren't getting any younger. It's your move on that application Andy.

Dave Stix's team of Brian Barkley and Steve Diaz had the 14938 going the right way and quickly too before disaster struck. Rust may never sleep, but turns out stainless is something over which to lose some. Let Dave's be a cautionary tale: go out to the garage and inspect your halyard balls. C'mon, go out and do it right now. Don't hesitate because its cold now and your boat's behind your Weber grill and your pressure washer. All may not be well inside your mast bag.

Pete Orlebeke with Kim Orlebeke and Lori Jost sailed consistently well. They were so far launched in the first race that only either confusion about which second windward mark to round or going so fast they entered a time warp, could have cost them that race.

Brad Wagnon's team had Brad and the Prom Dress yacht off and running faster than this reporter has seen in years. If this trend continues, in about 2 years Brad will be hoisting the NA's trophy.

Ok, you can only write so much about an 11 boat regatta. We all had a great time. And if you missed it, you probably didn't have as much fun as we did. Hope you all come next year. I'm pretty sure the beer will still be cheap...the soft drinks too for you politically correct ones.

Bill Faude