

Mississippi Valley District Championship  
 Carlyle Sailing Association – Fleet 266  
 Carlyle, Illinois  
 June 8–10, 2007

Pos	Sail#	Skipper	Crew	R1	R2	R3	Total
1	14834	Matt Burrridge	Ian Schillebeeckx, Caleb Leonard	1	4	2	7
2	14636	Dan Moriarty	Tobi Moriarty, Alina Moriarty	2	1	4	7
3	14614	Scott Zerban	Bart Snyder, Carson Menges	3	5	1	9
4	14766	Terry Burke	Edd Burke, Brian Burke	4	2	5	11
5	15308	Bill Killebrew	Mike Osborne, Denis Colby	5	8	3	16
6	14009	Paul Hanson	Kelle Hanson, Andrea Sepanski	8	3	9	20
7	14260	John Folwell	Bob Lacker, Jessica Snyder	6	7	7	20
8	14488	William Baxter	Mike Arndt, George Nagy	7	6	8	21
9	14798	Nicholas Beckmann	Ian Moriarty, Sam Bibb	9	9	6	24
10	14065	Carl Penetta	Pablo Sharkovich, Paula Sharkovich	10	10	10	30
11	14116	Cully Ward	Barbara Ward, Beth Ward	DNC	DNC	DNC	39
11	14706	Bill Hofmeister	Chip Clifton, Ted Chapin	DNC	DNC	DNC	39

Carlyle Sailing Association hosted this event with a smaller than expected but still competitive fleet of 12 boats registered. The reasons for the low turn out were many, no water in Memphis (2 boats made the journey) and undoubtedly a limp wind forecast. We welcomed new Lightning sailor from Memphis, Carl Panetta, to the group.

All week long the weather had been glorious blue skies, 70-85 F with 15-25 mph of wind. Just as it is important not to lead a race too soon at Carlyle, we got the wind too soon in the week and the wind forecast looked anemic to non existent for the weekend. I packed the bocce set in the trunk just in case, good thing too.

District Commodore Rick "Plasma" Bernstein amazingly was not sailing any of his Vindicator armada this weekend so he served as PRO and utilized a 38' sloop with plasma TV and AC as the RC boat. No wonder the heat and light wind did not seem to bother him!

Race #1 did not happen on time; we went out in the dying morning breeze and wound up being towed in for lunch with no races. During the break in the action on land (read as "failure to achieve action") cool beverages were served, bocce games played and the stories mostly revolved around our friend Bruce Goldsmith's huge positive impact on Lightning sailing and everyone who met him. The stories got funnier and funnier as everyone relaxed and suddenly it was not about sailing any more, it was about friends and families enjoying the camaraderie.

As the postponement promised to drag into "early cocktail hour" few competitors noticed the wind increasing subtly. Even this author drank a chilled malted beverage before realizing that we might actually race.

One competitor was so sure the wind was gone forever that he informally renamed his yacht "9:43" to indicate the time of the morning his crew began sipping the first malted beverage. Although atypical, this skipper did follow through with his vow to race "with an open beer in my tiller hand" to honor the memory of Bruin (funny, I never saw Bruin do this). Sheetting and tacking was going to happen in slow motion anyway, so the logic went. I just thought they wanted to "win" the party since it probably was the only competition likely to occur, given the wind.

Race #1 – Post cocktails (for some) - The wind appeared favored the left of the course with a geographical "parking lot thermal" but the windward mark was on the other side of a big dead zone, so getting around the mark was going to require choosing your opportunities to get right but stay left as long as possible to have pressure. However at the start, Team Moriarty (Dan skippering, Tobi and Alina running the boat) and Yeti (Matt Burrridge skippering, Ian Schillebeeckx and Caleb Leonard as team mates) hit the first shaft of breeze (going right) and achieved some separation from the fleet quickly. Moriarty closed slightly on each beat but gained significantly on every run to within a single boat length at the down wind finish. Gybing angles were very acute and Scott Zerban (Carson Menges and Bart Snyder opening the drinks and trimming sails) of CSA played all the runs correctly to grab the 3rd place finish.

Race#2 – Getting ugly – The RC worked to keep the beat square as we experienced 50 degree shifts and large streaky holes. Some form of madness possessed the defending District Champion Paul Hanson along with Moriarty and Burrridge teams as they each went OCS jousting for the pin end start (my fault). After 2 of the 3 re-rounded the committee realized a procedural error with the flags had been committed and the race was quickly abandoned so a "do over" could be attempted in the slacking breeze. The restart happened when the wind was in a right phase but it swung hard left and Moriarty was positioned perfectly earning a healthy lead which he extended. Burrridge was WAY behind at this point and can't pass along details of the race because he had no binoculars or telescope on board. Focusing on closing the distance Burrridge's team did climb to 4th (strength of multiple gybes and off the wind shift picking by Ian and Caleb) with Team Burke (Terry skippering and sons Brian and Edd) finishing behind Moriarty in 2nd. Paul Hanson with wife Kelle and Andrea Sepanski on board finished the race in 3rd.

Race #3 – True pain, for everyone except lefties – The first part of this race was saved on a bad sector of my hard drive so I can't retrieve it, total blur. I vaguely recall a "help me I'm being smothered" feeling and fighting to avoid the middle of the beat the whole time. Ultimately, the timing of the crossing pattern to fetch the windward mark was the most important factor. This was a roll of the dice but Dan and Terry had been leading and appeared to be crossing on port at the correct time when the wind suddenly softened. At the same time Zerban, Bill Killebrew from Nashville and Burrridge all hit the left corner so hard they left a dent in it and tacked to port only about 75 yards left (over stood, duh) of Moriarty and Burke but in a refreshed wind. This separation and streak was enough to carry the 3 lefties over and past Burke & Moriarty at the mark.

No one thought the run to the finish in this race would decide the regatta but it did. After some spinnaker set follies (listen for the sound of rolling empty cans) Zerban and Killebrew held on starboard downwind towards the shore and gybed to port for the long carry to the finishing pin. Various streaks and lulls lifted and headed them but they were committed to the "parking lot thermal" side of the run. Burrridge and Moriarty were glued to each other as Dan would keep the series lead by finishing just behind Burrridge. These two found a nice streak on port early in the run and then gybed back to starboard and aimed at the favored finishing pin, heeling to windward with centerboards up, almost willing their boats forward dead downwind. The spectators on land had front row seats to witness the fleet compress and aim at the line.

A last minute surge and ease of the spinnaker sheet earned Zerban the victory over Burrridge right at the finish line. Some accounts said that the spinnaker flying ability of Bart Snyder had given them the edge by only 6".The distance did not matter, Burrridge was 2nd and Killebrew (with Mike Osborne and Dennis Colby) nosed out Moriarty for 3rd with Terry Burke 5th.

When this race ended it was almost 5pm and time to get off the lake while we still could. The standings showed Burrridge (1,4,2) and Moriarty (2,1,4) each with 7 points, Zerban (3,5,1) with 9, Terry Burke (4,2,5) with 11 and Bill Killebrew (5,8,3) with 16 points. Each of the 3 races had been won by a different team. With identical scores, Matt's nosing out Dan in the last race broke the tie in his favor. It can't get any closer than this and we all had a good laugh relating the punch and counter punch way that the last leg and 1/8 had gone in the last race.

The evening festivities included an impromptu fried food gorging contest / salad bar eat out at the local American Legion hall with big screen baseball and \$1 mixed drinks. It had been a long day and yet even the sunburned ones were smiling.

The next day everyone rigged and launched with a purpose but the racing was called due to lack of wind, We elected Bill Baxter as Commodore between rounds of bocce and the first annual Junior "lawn Sumo wrestling championship" with Ian S. the winner. We look forward to a newly re-filled Lake Arkabutla near Memphis for our MVLD championships in 2008.

Matt Burrridge  
 14834 - *Yeti*