

the
Acton Action

August 17 2016

Sunfish Swarm

This Sunday a swarm (school? gaggle? herd? throng? mob?) (Yes! Mob!) A mob of Sunfish will take to the lake for the 3rd Sunfish regatta of the season - Augusto!

Winds will be 10-15 but racers may have to dodge a shower or two. The first two Sunfish events were polar opposites of light and heavy air. This one will present its own challenges, but the series is the closest thing HSA has to a club championship.

Sailors from all fleets and all kinds of boats come together in the four events under very different conditions, so it is a good test of overall ability.

So far the only one who has done well in both very light and very heavy air is Laura Beebe. Here we go.



HSA Ready to Race; Weather Deities Say Nay

If you are wondering why the sailors above are lounging around the restroom, it isn't just because the men's restroom is out of order. (They used the ladies side.) The overhang was one of the few places to hide from the downpour. After the rain went away about race time, the wind had also decided to stop. A quick vote and the day was abandoned. The race committee was relieved. Good choice. Two hours later, lake was still glass.

Save the Date!

Learn to Race

This Saturday

If you would like to jump into this clinic, let us know. We'll give ya details.

AUGUSTO!

This Sunday

The halfway point is here in this series. Will a new leader emerge?

Fall Series

Sunday, Aug. 28

The fleets back in action with, no doubt, pent up enthusiasm after a rain out last week.



Rain Delay

The overhang of the restroom wasn't the only hideaway. Below right, Roger and Bobbie take refuge in the doorway of the storage shed, and, below left, deep inside the shed as well. Four juniors dig into the box of board games as they await the rain. Others were biding their time in cars.



Mac Dinghy Marvel

Robert and Rebeca Meador's 1970 Mac Dinghy restoration is nearing completion. The McClintock-Dubdam built boat, a Dutch creation, should be ready about Labor Day, according to the Meadors. If you have a boat you are working on, send us a pic and we'll put it out there for AA readers to ogle.

In a recent issue we misidentified Kiana Berry's purchase of a Windmill, which she and her dad are working on. Sorry, Kiana.





Before the Wind Take Readers Inside the World of Sailboats, Boatyards, and Racing

A novel about racing? Well, yes, they exist. The racing in this one isn't the primary focus but it's there. The real story is the Johannssen family. The setting is the Puget Sound near Seattle and Olympia, Washington where the family has built boats for three generations.

The narrator is Joshua Johannssen, the now 31 year old who lives on his boat and works at a boatyard full of eccentric liveaboards near his family's business. Josh tells the story of his unusual job and his dysfunctional family.

The dad and granddad are called the "Bobo's" by those who know them. They are the designers and builders of a variety of sleek racing machines called Joho's. But all three children have left the nest to pursue their own destinies on and off the water.

Josh, the central character in this sailing saga, has finally given up on his father's incessant needling and moved to another marina to repair the hopeless and sometimes rotted hulls of countless and clueless would-be deep water dreamers. Just because he loves boats so much. Older brother Bernard is on the run from the feds for his part in organized protests for various environmental causes and living on the lam on a boat somewhere in the

Pacific where he helps a Greenpeace like group ram whaling ships.

Younger sister Ruby has fled to work on a hospital ship in Africa and for other humanitarian causes, leaving behind a reputation as the greatest racing sailor the Seattle area has ever known.

Ruby and Bernard return home to try and bring the family together perhaps one last time as they reunite in the 122 mile Swiftsure International Yacht Race, an actual annual event in the Pacific Northwest, in one of the family's re-designed classic Johos.

Author Jim Lynch has a good story to tell and his language is worth the read itself. But it is the intrigue of this family's often hurtful interactions that keep you riveted. There is humor as well. Josh's workmates at the yard keep asking him about his many adventures in online dating and Josh obliges to everyone's delight, including ours.

The book, published this year, is available in some libraries and at Amazon. For a really good review of this book at the NY Times, [click on this link](#):

Here is a [link to a much better review in the NY Times](#).

HSA's Ken Wright Goes to Gull Lake, Takes on Sunfish Masters

A Trip to the US Sunfish Master's Championship Regatta, Gull Lake, Michigan

Or: *How I Got Skunked by the Wolverines by Ken Wright*

Having received an open invitation as a member of the United States Sunfish Class Association, I boldly decided to accept and travel to Gull Lake (near Kalamazoo MI) to participate in the US Sunfish Master's Championship August 6 & 7.

The event was hosted by the Gull Lake Yacht Club; they've hosted several similar events, so they've had plenty of experience, and did a nice job. It's a beautiful site; the lake is about 3 or 4 times the area of Acton and much clearer and cleaner, despite fairly heavy boat traffic and a lot of shoreline residences.

I arrived on Friday 8/5 shortly after noon to participate in the pre-regatta clinic given by Rich Chapman, past champion. Unfortunately, I arrived late and missed his discussion on normal boat setup.

He covered use of the Jens rig for heavier air, to help depower the sail, and I was surprised to hear that some Sunfish sailors (presumably lighter weight ones) use it full time. We then went out on the lake to do some practice starting.

Saturday, we met and all 38 sailors were introduced. Though we all sailed as one group, we were classified by age into decades: 40 - 49, 50 - 59, etc. all the way up to the one sailor over 80! The wind was good, starting at 5-10 and building to 10 - 15 from the northwest (slightly cross-lake) with a noticeable oscillation in direction.

These were really fun sailing conditions and we did a nice variety of courses: windward-leeward with one or two laps and triangles. After 4 races, we called it a day and retired to the club

house for drinks and a fine dinner in the Gull Lake Grill across the street at their golf course.

Sunday's air was from the east, light and dying. We only got one race in and most of the late finishers (yours truly) were drifting in. We either paddled in or were towed.

Because of the division into age groups there were lots of awards to be given: a total of 14 out of 38 sailors. Dan Norton of Devils Lake, MI (40-49) won the overall trophy with the automatic berth to the Worlds. He had an impressive total score of 9, never finishing below 2nd place in any race.

He was followed very closely by Doug Kaukeinen of Rochester, NY in the 50-59 group, with 11 points (and 3 first place finishes). Dick Tillman of Wawasee (IN) won my 70-79 age class. (Tillman finished 3rd overall.) And oh, yes, you are breathlessly waiting my own score: 32nd of 38. But I was surprised to be awarded the "Spirit Award" by the race committee. (see photo next page)

The starting practices Saturday obviously didn't do me any good; I got miserable starts most races and was blanketed and buffeted by other boats. Clearly the smaller fleet size at Hueston Woods was no preparation for me for the conditions in a crowded big fleet start.

Another takeaway for me was seeing the high physical activity level in the better sailors. Most of them were frequently standing in the boat and the boat movement during their roll tacks was dramatic.

Would I do it again? You bet!

(Many thanks to Ken for supplying this article for the *Acton Action*. On the next page are a few pictures from Gull Lake. Nice job, Ken!)

Gull Lake Sunfish Masters

At right are Chad Coberly and Dan Norton. Norton, who sails out of Devil's Lake in Michigan, won the Gull Lake Sunfish Masters and qualified for the Sunfish World Championships. Coberly finished 2nd. Below is one of the starts in the regatta which featured 38 boats on one starting line. Lower right shows Ken on one of the downwind legs and at the lower left is a picture of Ken receiving his Spirit Award from Gail Turluck of the host club.

