

Winner's Report, Spring Laser Regatta 2011, *Sebago Sailing* by Ted Cremer

I want to lead off and say it's a great honor to be offered the opportunity to write up this report. Past winner Blake Mariner is a good friend from the Cedar Point YC frostbite fleet and to a degree I'm faster now because of what Blake and the folks of CPYC taught me. His write ups are excellent. It was also great to see Mark Foster (another Cedar Point Frostbiter) on the race course once again. To be honest, I didn't think he was in the hunt until the last couple of races. I thought Dave Trinder was the guy to beat, but Mark was hanging in there quietly with no OCS's and just sailing incredibly well.

Tracy, Holly and Jim hosted a great regatta. Conditions were perfect, weather was warm, and we had really consistent breeze out of the west. In all, six races were held, all W & L's (3 or 5 legs) and the racing was tight at the top. I want to thank Dave Trinder for hailing on that first crossing in race one – it really woke me up, and forced me to keep my head out of the boat! Top 3 were Dave Trinder in third, and Cedar Point's Mark Foster and I tied for first with a slight edge going my way with more firsts.

A real change from the last time I sailed here was the bridge construction project which to me was a fascinating display of engineering, The support barges and the crews on board eating lunch and waving as we sailed out was a cool touch... but once in the bay, it was clean water, lots of bird life, horses riding on the beaches and even a glimpse of the Empire State Building when you looked back up to the north!

OK, on to the sailing!!! We had mixed breeze...the puffs were on and off throughout the day. Lasers are fastest when they are sailed flat! FLAT is fast...no matter how flat you think you are, try to flatten the boat out even more. A tight strap and straight leg hiking helps keep your rear end out of the water and helps you get back into the boat in the lulls. When it's really windy, you can lengthen the hiking strap. One good way to tell that the boat is flat is to look at your bow wakes... If there are symmetrical wakes, then you know you are there. The reasoning why you want a flat boat is that the wind generally blows parallel to the water and if the boat is flat, then it hits the sail perpendicularly providing most power to the boat. The same holds true for the blades; you get best lift when they are cutting through the water fast and at a perpendicular angle. When the puffs hit, there is a strong tendency for the boat to want to heal over and when that happens, you start going slower, and you lose any advantage you previously had. It's better to put more vang on when the puffs hit and even sheet out a bit, and keep the boat flat. Remember that you'll want a tighter Cunningham as well to depower the top of the sail and shift the draft forward. When the bigger puffs hit, LET the boat go fast, as opposed to fighting it. Sheet out, hike harder, and put the bow down and let the boat go where it wants to go. You'll actually feel the boat start to go much faster and you can actually extend your position in the puffs, as opposed to losing ground. I don't worry about pointing at that point because I'm going faster and when the boat is flat and fast, the blades will give you lift you need to hold your lane and you'll make windward progress.

The pot luck dinner after sailing was simply awesome with a full on variety of great food, deserts, Brooklyn lagers and sodas. I liked the jalapeño cornbread and the different chilies. It was great hanging out with the members and learning from the club historian about the growth of this great urban jewel. Holly and Jim a great hosts and I cannot stress how much fun this regatta is! I hope to see everyone again next year!