

SPRING SERIES

SHIELDS FLEET 9

A great day on the water, light and variable winds from the south, and we saw the sun. Since the race was abandoned last week we were hoping to get two races in today, although the light winds, thrashed that idea.

Air temperature was in the high 60's at the dock and low 60's on the water. , water temperature getting a little warmer. The sun was out and the wind was from the south southeast 4 to 6 mph. Newport Yacht Club set up their start line between Rose and Goat. We established our starting area, near S. Robin Wallace was PRO with Dan Eardley as driver, timer, David Brown, Betsy Reed and no volunteers from the Shields Fleet. Socrates Vavalotis and I were on Captain Hosea with Socrates as the mark boat driver. Phyllis Detwiler drove Limerock with Alyce Wright as crew and Ross Cann as mentor.

Wind readings from the center of the channel were variable from 165 to 180 between the Fort and Clingstone, more consistent to 180 south of Rose Island. Robin set up the starting line just south of Mark S for a 180 wind direction. The course was set as Y to port, S to port, twice around. The tide was flooding with high tide at 1938.

Once the fleet of 15 boats started, Limerock was sent to Mark 6 for wind readings, Capt. Hosea was sent to Y. Wind was shifting between 180 and 190. Right away a change of course was established by the PRO to Mark 9 to port. The wind was still 5 to 7 knots with a concern that it was going to diminish.

Capt. Hosea crew put up the Charlie Flag with 9 to port on the newly designed course board created by Socrates the inventor. The course board worked as planned prompting an expansion to deploy to Limerock and eventually Ida. The board is lighter, more water resistant and the letters and numbers visually better to the sailors.

As the fleet headed to 9, the wind shifted slightly east causing another course change to Mark Y. Limerock stationed at 9 put up the Charlie Flag with Y on the board and horn signals. Robin announced the course change on 79A as he did with the change to 9 previously.

The finish was set up south of 9, east of 6. The wind was up and down, Robin considered a shortened course with a finish at 9. Once the fleet was halfway to 9 the wind picked up enough so that the fleet rounded 9 and headed to the finish line. 107 got the bang with 181 second and 121 third.

Bill O'Hanley