

Ernesto Rodriguez and Megan Place win North Americans

The 2009 Snipe North American championship was hosted by Erie Yacht Club (www.erieyachtclub.org) 14-17 August. This was the site of the 2006 US National Championship and the 2008 U.S. Sailing Team Racing Championship. 52 boats from 3 countries and 15 United States sailed the event.

So why Erie? The answer is that veteran Snipe sailors Holly and Gavin O'Hare, think the venue is perfect. Holly is biased as it the club where she grew up and ran the junior program for a number of years. Gavin is hooked because he married Holly... and he buys into the benefits of the venue. The recent North American Championship reminded all who attended of why the Erie Yacht Club is great for sailing dinghies:

1. Erie, PA is located centrally where many fleets can travel easily to the venue.
2. The club facility is located on Presque Isle Bay, a freshwater venue 1.5 mile wide by 7 mile long surrounded by a sandy forested peninsula. The race course is a five to ten minute sail from the club so no long tows in or out.
4. The club facility is extremely accommodating, ramps and cranes, plenty of boat park space, onsite camping, social/party tent options.
5. The club staff and their support for dinghy events is top shelf and very reasonably priced.
6. Fantastic volunteers are well schooled in running first class

event.

The 2009 North Americans were held in challenging conditions. The first two days were light, shifty and hot. Principle Race Officer Bill Lasher assisted by SCIRA Rep. Brainard Cooper struggled to complete three races in two days. The morning of Day Three brought a fresh 5-9 knots and two more races to complete the regatta with 5 races - no throughout. Full results can be viewed at: www.snipeus.org

Top two finishers qualified for the 2010 Western Hemisphere and Orient Championship in Canada.

Even though the sailing conditions were not ideal, the club and staff created a very social and friendly environment with parties and wind delays on the grassy lawn in front of the club. 2009 USA Worlds team member, Hal Gilreath, captured some of the flavor of the event with interviews and posted them at: http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=snipe+north+americans&search_type=&aq=f

Special thanks to North Sails, Erie Beer, and Annapolis Performance Sailing for their continued support at this event.

--Gavin O'Hare



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