

Variety is the Spice of Life

Doug Hart Back On Top After 20 Years

Doug Hart has always been near the top of the score sheet but it took 20 years to repeat as North American Champion, having won last in the Bahamas in 1996. Sailing this year with Ryan Hopps they took the 2016 North Americans Birney Mills Trophy by a scant two points over George Szabo and Dianna Waterbury after a close last day. The winner was not known by the competitors until the scores were posted at the club because the variety of conditions over the three day regatta resulted in very inconsistent scores over the eight races sailed. In an unusual turn, the scores posted by Szabo/Waterbury were overall more consistent, but Hart/Hopps despite counting a 17 had four top 3 finishes. Nick Voss/Nicole Popp had been lurking well down the results sheet, but once they were able to drop a 45th from day one, they slid up to third overall. Fourth place team Jensen McTighe/Brendan Feeney counted no finish worse than ninth, a great result just ahead of their departure for the Snipe Western Hemispheres in Brazil. Edgar Diminich/Iberth Constante rounded out the top 5.

Annapolis Snipe Fleet 532 is experiencing its own comeback. Regatta Chairman and Annapolis Fleet 532 Captain Chris Ryan is a relentless promoter of the Snipe Class and had as a goal to get together the largest collection of Snipes seen on the East Coast for a long time. He succeeded attracting 69 registrants and beat the last two NAs held in Annapolis in 1994 (62 boats) and 1985 (68 boats) as well as being the largest regatta in North America since 2009 with boats arriving on single, double, and triple trailers from all over the continent. This was in part due to encouraging sailors with older model boats to participate with a Silver division and arranging many chartered or borrowed boats to insure that every available local boat would make it on the water. A great sign for the continued growth of the class were a significant number of junior sailors at the event, fresh faces from new teams or new crew members, and a re-emergence of less travelled class members. The event created a significant number of class membership renewals as part of the registration process as all skippers, crews, and boats were registered for the event.

Chris along with the rest of the fleet volunteers, the Severn Sailing Association (SSA), PRO Steve Podlich and his handpicked race committee put together a great event despite trying light conditions at the beginning of the regatta. Annapolis typically holds this regatta in the fall when the breeze is freshening as the temperatures drop, but for this edition the NAs was held concurrently with the Colonial Cup, the annual SSA Snipe Spring Invitational. In keeping with the nutty weather the mid-Atlantic has been experiencing this year – the spring felt more like Seattle than Annapolis – with less than a week to go, the forecast was for light easterly breezes and cooler temperatures throughout the weekend. For those who don't know the Chesapeake Bay weather, easterly breezes coupled with cool overcast conditions are almost never a good prognosis.



As boats streamed in on Thursday, fleet members Brett Davis, Steve Pickle and Jon and Happy Anthony with their teams got all boats through measurement and registration. The class approach to streamlining measurement helped speed the process by limiting measurement to boat weight and new sail measurements. It was hoped to run a practice race Thursday afternoon, but the breeze completely turned off after a few boats left the dock for a practice sail: a bad omen. On the social side, the regatta saw the return of a large tent to be used for evening dinners as well as a real beer truck (well trailer, but close enough!), something not seen on the SSA lot for some years: a good omen.

Friday morning started as predicted with a light, but sailable easterly and racing began promptly at 11am. Fortunately, being a weekday the pleasure boat traffic was nonexistent so the 5-7 knot breeze, although tricky, was enough. Starts were very competitive causing multiple recalls and a steady appearance of I and Z flags. The downstream current at the start pushing competitors towards the starting line did not help and contributed to the number of general recalls and affected which side of the course was favored. As the first race progressed the breeze got lighter and lighter, but still a fair test of skill and the first boat finished within several minutes of the 90 minute time limit, but unfortunately a number of boats did not make the time limit window. After a pause, the wind came back up and a second race was run in similar

conditions, with only a few boats not making the time limit window. Hart/Hopps showed their light air prowess with two firsts. Eventually Steve Podlich called it a day and the fleet headed in for the evening's social activities and Taco Bar dinner.

On Saturday, a very patient race committee ran three races. The first was (as expected) sailed in a very light southeast wind. The ebbing current was wreaking even more havoc on the starting line than the day before and the Z



flag (20%) penalties figured prominently on the scoresheet for race 3. It looked like it might be the end of the day after race three with the breeze going down to nearly zero, but wisely Steve Podlich chose to keep us out waiting and eventually the breeze came around to a southerly direction and increased slightly when the clouds began to clear. With the current abated and the wind shift to the south, the second two starts were much more manageable for the competitors (and the race committee) and even got crews and skippers into the hiking straps by the last leg. With more consistent scores and no drop (yet) Szabo/Waterbury finished the day tied with Hart/Hopps. Back on shore the competitors participated in a post-race debrief followed by a crab-themed dinner including MD hard shelled crabs. The "locals" had a lot of fun introducing "out of towners" to the proper technique for "picking crabs" as it is called.

separately within those divisions. The Chuck Loomis Trophy was also awarded to Jensen McTighe as the top placing Junior in the overall score.

This was definitely not a "one setting" regatta and being able to perform consistently in the top three in a wide variety of conditions was the key to success. Variety may be the spice of life, but it is also a great test of skill.



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By Alex Pline
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Once again, Sunday started light with current pushing competitors over the line, the appearance of the Z flag, multiple recalls and a lot of alphabet soup on the score sheet in race 6. But for race 7 the breeze finally increased out the south to the point where skipper and crews were full out hiking and the "Annapolis Washing Machine" was on – at least the medium rinse setting anyway - thanks to the Chesapeake chop and pleasure boat wake. This was the quintessential Annapolis condition that we all know and love and it was great to finally see it given the earlier forecast. Despite the breeze beginning to fade, after race 7 the race committee "leap frogged" the course to start the last race with plenty of time to spare. It was a shorter course, a little less than an hour race to close out the 8 race series, a pleasant surprise the way it looked on Thursday. The fleet blasted in as the breeze increased with the impending approach of a cold front, but thankfully the predicted thunderstorms didn't materialize until after most competitors had packed up.

In addition to the awarding the Birney Mills Trophy to the North American champion, the Kim Thompson Trophy for the top crew and the Colonial Cup Trophy to Hart and Hopps, awards were presented to Fleet 532 members Joe Hidalgo/Ethan Schroud for the Silver division and Jensen McTighe/Brenden Feeney for the Junior division, both scored

	Bow/Sail	Skipper/Crew	Club	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Points
1	20/ 31297	Doug Hart/Ryan Hopps	MBYC	1	1	2	[25]	4	17	6	3	34.00
2	57/ 30337	George Szabo/Dianna Waterbury	San Diego Yacht Club	4	8	7	[11]	3	4	4	6	36.00
3	63/ 28814	Nicholas Voss/Nicole Popp	Coral Reef Yacht Club	3	[45]	5	4	6	12	8	5	43.00
4	36/ 30027	Jensen McTighe/Brenden Feeney	Lauderdale Yacht Club	8	5	[32]	8	9	7	3	8	48.00
5	09/ 31027	Edgar Diminich/Berth Constante	FEVELA/SYC	[70/OC5]	2	10	13	5	2	2	16	50.00
6	49/ 31130	Ernesto Rodriguez/Eduardo Mintzias		7	[22]	9	16	7	11	5	2	51.00
7	08/ 30288	Augie Diaz/Julia Melton	BBYC/CRYC/CGSC	21	6	6	7	1	1	[24]	10	52.00
8	02/ 30473	Arthur Blodgett/Terra Berlinski		9	7	1	3	[27]	3	12	17	52.00
9	34/ 28854	Randy Lake/Nikki Bruno		5	4	12	[19]	2	14	19	1	57.00
10	05/ 30860	Carol Cronin/Kim Couranz	SSA	16	[18]	13	2	11	6	11	4	63.00
11	21/ 29114	David Hernandez/Christine DeSilva	CRYC	6	11	[21]	10	10	15	1	11	64.00
12	16/ 8653	Hal Gilreath/Andre Guaragna	Florida	12	3	17	18	8	5	[22]	9	72.00
13	03/ 31171	Jim Bowers/Julia Rabin	Winchester Boat Club	2	24	[27]	5	17	9	25	12	94.00
14	67/ 29682	Wilson Stout/Byran Stout		15	19	18	1	12	19	[23]	20	104.00
15	47/ 30759	Enrique Quintero/Simon Sanders	Coral Reef Yacht Club	20	[62]	15	12	15	10	9	23	104.00
16	14/ 30903	Cameron Fraser/Elizabeth Gilvinski	Medford Boat Club	22	9	[47]	15	23	18	10	21	118.00
17	45/ 31355	Andrew Pimental/Megan Place	Sail Newport	[29]	27	14	27	14	22/279	7	13	124.00
18	18/ 30904	Lee Griffith/Hillary Noble	Surf City Yacht Club	19	20	4	30	13	22	20	[32]	128.00
19	51/ 31280	Art Rousmaniere/Jessica Bennett	Winchester Boat Club	23	23	9	9	20	27/279	17	[37]	128.00
20	12/ 30552	Christian Filter/Declan Lombard	SSA	18	13	8	28	21	24	[32]	22	134.00

