

Bull Session

News and comment for the El Toro Class

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www.eltoroyra.org

The *2011 North American Championship Series* held in Santa Cruz was a big success. The fear that the little 8' El Toro would be "blown-of-the-water" never materialized. The wind increased every afternoon from 4 knots to 12 knots and held there. It even eased a little bit on the last run home. The sailing was delightful. Morning races were held in flat water and there was a small chop for the two afternoon races. Three races Friday and Saturday and two on Sunday made for a full series.

The fleet was made up of all the best El Toro sailors. Doing well in any race meant finishing in the middle of the fleet. No one ran away with this series. The scoring shows large accumulative score numbers for everyone. Almost everyone in the top five had a double digit finish. Racing was tight, challenging and exhausting. John Pacholski had two first place race finishes and still just held on to finish in 6th place overall.

Because the big-bad strong Westerly wind did not make an appearance the sailing was excellent. The Santa Cruz Yacht Club race committee knows how to position the race course away from the big wind areas. We had 8 long, four leg races with winds from zero to 12. Most of the sailing was done in the 8 to 10 range of wind. It was amassing to go out early, into the flat Pacific Ocean where the rowers and kayakers were having flats water workouts.

Santa Cruz was a turning point for our little sailing boat. This 60 plus year old junior and adult racer/trainer has withstood the test of time. A number of obstacles, over the years, could have derailed participation. But we persevered. The design has successfully been converted from Wood to Fiberglass and has emerged a stronger class even after another trainer invaded San Francisco Bay. The little boats' history of the BullShip and other well established events has kept the racing interesting. A boat for all ages. This year there were two father/son teams. Patrick and father Paul Tara were not far apart in scoring with son Will winning the event with Fred Paxton a little ways back.

Now the modern materials have made a big difference in the way the boats sail. The stiff masts and high tec sail fabrics have increased the power-to-weight ratios. There is now a lot more power generated by the modern rigging. This, the original designers could not have imagined or designed for.

This was the first time the class has held the racing in Santa Cruz, that I can remember. The open Pacific Ocean location was just fine. Next year we go back to flat water,,Pincrest Lake in the Sierra Mountains for the 2012 Nationals. It is a beautiful mountain lake with a beach, camping, RV sites, cabins and a local El Toro fleet . Fred Paxton will make sure the racing is as good as it can get on a Pincrest afternoon.

The Junior and Senior class had a very competitive series with a very deep field of excellent and experienced sailors. The West Marine Fun Regatta was also run at the same time. Over 60 El Toros were on the water, at the same time, Juniors and Seniors. The Junior Season Championship finished with this last of the 2011 regattas. There are three more races for the Senior Season,,Richmond YC "Totally Dinghy" Saturday September 17th, Richmond "Stampede" Sunday October 2 and "Corkscrew" Saturday October 15th.

News almost ready to release!

Start planning,,,we are almost ready to announce that the El Toro Class Championship Series is going to Hawaii. Save air miles,,,tune-up your boat,,,get sun tan lotion and be ready for August of 2013 when the Nationals may be sailed in Kaneohe Bay, Oahu, Hawaii.

Notes from the general membership meeting:

Saturday evening the national meeting was held with five of the six classes officers present. \$ was on the agenda. The class is financially solvent. John Pacholski has taken over the accounting work and provided a very close to almost complete tally of the finances for the class. There is money in the bank and the savings account has not been touched!

The once-a-year print newsletter "The Shovel" will be edited by Buzz Blacket. Please send articles to him,,,

There was a discussion about up-dating the class plans. This will be done this winter.

The web site for the class keeps getting better and better. This because of Kelli Cook. She was praised for her work! She may be adding a little more to her duties because she does everything so well.

Gordie
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