

Two great days of sailing for 19 toro sailors starting with opening ceremonies by the Lake Master Gil Gilluly himself. Reminding all of us of the fine traditions of toro sailing and the 45 years of toros on Pinecrest and keeping it within the 10 minutes allotted by the PRO. Next part of the opening events were the introduction of the two current Junior and Senior national champions Mike Pacholski and Art Lange, and with Art being awarded his 2009 keeper trophy since he and most of the fleet missed the awards dinner at Tahoe this year.

Final part of the very traditional open events is the naming by last year's World Champion (John Pacholski) of the course for the first race, I'm sure John and Mike spent hours reviewing the 14+ choices. Ziggitty was the choice and route that promised many runs and reaches back and forth across the lake.. But with Gil's announcement his retirement from starting the races during the worlds that means we revert to another Pinecrest tradition in that John as last year's winner had to pick the exact window of breeze to start his slow 30 second count down to the start. Fun to watch John sail back and forth looking up the lake trying to time the puff from the weather mark, Gil made it look to easy all those years. John's countdown event included sitting up in the boat and calling out "foomsang" instead of 15 in honor of Gil's wife's favorite number.

Good breeze at the start moved the whole fleet towards the weather mark "Beach" (remember all the marks have names not numbers!) and then to Tunnel and off down the lake to Stump. Thank goodness there was a beat up to the dreaded Tower then another long run to Cove with puffs to 10+ the fleet was flying and places were grudgingly being exchanged on every leg. This race also saw the first of many skirmishes between Hank Easom and Mike Pacholski, and Art managed to pass at least five boats in last two legs to get a second.. This race also had local Gary Winton right in the top part of the fleet most of the race and he finished a very respectable 6th, with long time toro sailor Dennis Silva in 5th, Hank in 4th, John P. in 3rd, Art 2nd, and with the grace of a couple of nice breaks Fred in 1st. All finishes were taken by our own 2005 Toro national race committee chairperson Joyce Andrews who was ambushed on the beach at last minute by r/c chairman with plea to write down finishes, and was assisted by Mary McHugh.

With a noonish start time for first race there was time for lunch break on the beach and now that local toro sailor Jay Copeland has measured the distance of each race (good old Google) and the "average" race is 4.5 miles and a break is needed. We were joined this race by George Morris who recognizes a good thing as he and his wife Mary have moved from the bay area up to Twain Harte. George also has a very civilized idea that he only sails one race a day.. Next race I choose the course Zag Zag with an extra Cross at the end hoping with a few

more windward legs that would help my poor downwind skills. Wow it is hard to pick the breeze to start the fleet, count down from 30 loud enough for the whole fleet with flapping sails to hear you.. and remember “foomsang”... figure out where to start ..oh and keep the boat moving.. I really miss Gil’s countdown..

Art and I each started on opposite ends of the line and a long 5 minutes later meet/bumped at the weather mark “Beach” along with at least 14 other boats.. Oh my by the time that was sorted out and I discovered my skipper had wrong course sheet I was looking at lot of transoms.. Best quote of the weekend from John P. “I think the best thing about the weekend was the close racing all through the fleet. There were always boats crossing front to back. I think the locals have been spending the summer getting ready for us out of towners and it showed. We were much closer from beginning to end than in prior years. Good racing. My best memory was watching Hank and Mike battle it out in every race. Man they were pushing us hard! Youth and Wisdom at our heels.” Zag Zag has a long run from Beach to Cove followed by a tough beat up to Cross... two choices.. short tack up the shore or make a long hitch out to the middle and hope for big lift in clear air.. Hank, Butch Michel, Terry Schmidt, the Pacholski team, and myself hit most the right shifts up the shore with Hank jumping out to an easy 100 yard lead. Long run down to Stump with a tricky beat across the lake up to Tunnel that crosses at least two transition zones (yes and sometimes the whole lake is a transition zone). Good tacking duel between father and son Pacholski gave some of us a chance.. a short run to North Shore. Notable only because that was only time John P. did not pass me on a run... Fleet was stretching out due to a few holes that the first six boats missed. Takes a trip to Tower to make any lead go away, and that is either upwind or down does not matter.. Hank got caught up close to the cliff and I got a small lift and we went around Tower together.. and negotiated a “no fighting until were are in clear air” agreement.. A good beat was had up from Cross to the finish.. Walt Andrews moved up to 6th, Art Lange 5th, Mike P. was 4th, John P. was 3rd, Hank 2nd and Fred 1st. Nice potluck dinner about an hour after races were over, made a pleasant end of the first day.

On Sunday the winner of race #2 lacked any originality and picked same course Zag Zag with extra Cross at the end... The wind was much lighter, puffs to 8 and very light spots in-between, after a short wait for a breeze from Beach the third and final race started.. Very close race to Beach with fading and filling breeze making for a wall of boats sailing down to Cove... Terry Schmidt went way left and John P. was on the far right and the rest of us had the middle.. John, Terry, Art, Mike, and Hank all beat the wall of toros that rounded Cove to Starboard. The rest of us had a great battle up the left side of the lake to Cross and the leaders slowly pulled away. On the run the boats that were left behind on the beat soon were back in the fray for 6th thru 18th. From the 10th or 14th place I can testify that it is just as tough to hold what you have as it is when you are in the top of the fleet. The five leaders left the fleet, and the rest of us had our very own contest. Butch and I were the leaders coming out of tower for the second

half of the fleet and had that wonderful Pinecrest experience of slowing to a crawl and listen to bow waves and laughter as 10 toros sailed right back up to us. Looking over my shoulder all I could see was grins and white bow waves, Butch went low and I scrapped along the rocks searching for clear air on final reach to Cross. We both just beat the bunch of boats to last mark.. Long upwind beat to the finish, with George and Walt Andrews finding the left hand shift first. Have not a clue what those first five boats were up to as they were already finished and sails down, when the rest of us were working the last 10 wind shifts up to the finish. Art, John, and Dennis Silva took the first three spots last race...

Final results were top three boats were tied with 8 points each, 4th had only 10 points.. close results for 3 races with 18 boats. Trophy presentation was had 10 minutes after last boat finished thanks to Joyce and Mary's hard work with getting the results ready. Top 10 places:

10th George Driggs
9th Gary Winton
8th Butch Michel
7th Walt Andrews
6th Mike Pacholski
5th Dennis Silva
4th Hank Easom
3rd John Pacholski
2nd Art Lange
1st Fred Paxton

Ok now next year the Nationals will be at Clear Lake in June and that leaves all of August so I'm setting up the Worlds to be the first weekend in August that is the 7th and 8th so make plans for a fun weekend with great beaches, warm water, friendly natives, and fantastic sailing.

Fred Paxton #11649