



# The *HIGHLANDER*

Volume LXII, No. 3, October 2016

## *2016 Highlander National Champions*

Joyce Spring, Conor  
Ruppen, Carrie Patterson  
at Indian Lake Yacht Club



The *HIGHLANDER*  
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**2016 National Champions**

Conor Ruppen, Skipper

Joyce Spring, Crew

Carrie Patterson, Crew

# President's Perspective

For those of you that don't know me, I'm Chris Hansen, the new president.

During the time leading up to Nationals, life became very busy for me. I was stressed about the possibility I was not going to be able to make it to 2016 Nationals. Then it hit me; Highlander sailing is about having fun and family. If anyone understands that life sometimes gets in the way, it's the Highlander family. So sorry and thanks for understanding.



The fall schedule is before us. The 'HM' Regatta will be held on September 10-11 and is hosted by fleet #10 at Atwood Lake. Governor's Cup will be held on September 17-18 and is hosted by fleet #45 at Eagle Creek. We are planning on winning hosting the third annual Clam Digger September 24-25. As our home regatta we invite you all to come out and enjoy some New England Sailing! All the stories are true! Next is Bluegrass, occurring October 1-2. The final regatta of the season is Pipers at Lake Norman on October 15-16; this is their 50th Annual so we encourage all who can attend to make an effort to do so!

As I learn the ropes to better serve you as President, please let me know what you as a fleet or an individual need from me and the Highlander Board. While I may not have the answer, someone always "knows a guy."

Chris Hansen  
Highlander 542 "Skye"  
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## Mad Plaid: A Hot Affair

*By Bruce Busbey*

The 2016 Mad Plaid regatta was held at Cowan Lake near Wilmington, Ohio as it has been for the last 53 years. Looking from where I sit today, it really is quite an accomplishment for the Cowan Lake Sailing Club and the Highlander class to have such longevity amidst this rapidly changing world. With all of our support and love for this great Sandy Douglass designed boat, I hope that we can keep it going for another 53 years. Truly nothing beats a Highlander!

With that said, the 18 boats in attendance were treated to great winds on both Saturday and Sunday. And as a bonus, those who enjoy living on the equator were treated to smoking hot temperatures on Saturday. But of course as long as there is wind we're good to go.

My wife Debbie and I arrived at the clubhouse on Saturday morning giddy with excitement at the thought of being re-united with our friend and awesome crew Connie Sheets. Connie had sailed with us for 3 previous Nationals but was displaced from the boat last year to accommodate my son Justin who wanted to race. I was so happy that Connie was able to jump back on the boat and pick up where she left off before she was so rudely bumped.

As I said the racing on Saturday was hot and windy with speeds between 10 and 18 mph. We surprised ourselves by winning the first race with Jason Japikse, the Carey brothers and Neal Deaves in hot pursuit. Most of the four races completed on Saturday were very closely contested throughout the fleet and the downwind finishes made for some exciting photo finishes amongst quite a few boats with Jason Japikse and Jay Carey each winning a race. I also want to tip my hat to those hearty 2 person boats who weathered the wind and the heat. Especially the team of Bob and Sue Bauer who were so light that every time there was a wind gust their boat would lift out of the water and fly on the centerboard like the America's Cup boats (man they were fast!).

Saturday evening brought the usual great happy hour and hors d'oeuvres. Believe me if you ever want to go to a regatta just for the happy hour, this one is it. Bud Annenberg who was sailing in probably his 53rd or 54th Mad Plaid along with Dave Aubel made the most deceptively wicked punch (as they do every year) in order to soften up the competition for the Sunday racing. And it never fails to do its job. In addition, by the time you finish snacking you're too full for dinner which of course was no expense spared (really thick steaks)



Debbie, Bruce Busbey, Connie Sheets

followed by almost 1000 different pies and a collapse on the ground like a bloated sea cow.

Once it got dark the skies were open for business as the party goers lined up to take a look through Nick Lloyd's big ass telescope and see the likes of Jupiter, Saturn and Vulcan close up.



Nick Lloyd hosting young astronomers

Sunday brought more pleasant temperatures and more manageable winds as we were able to knock off 3 more races in breezes from 8 to 12 mph. And with the beautiful "typical Cowan" June day the racing was even tighter than on Saturday. Jamey Carey and Doug Fisher each picked up a bullet and others such as Kirk Shultz and Mark Osterbrock really turned on the motors for some more great downwind finishes.

In the end, team Pequod won the event and served a traditional Southern dish called "Payback" to

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Jason Japikse who came down to our house (Western Carolina Sailing Club) for Midwinters and applied a spanking to us Southern folk. We always love coming to Cowan and hope that more of you will join us next year for all this and even more fun!

## Berlin Invitational

By: Rick Myers

It has been a long time since I have raced a Highlander. With one exception, I have not skippered a Highlander Regatta in 18 years. The last time I raced, my crew was my wife, Kris and my brother Bill. For this regatta, my crew was going to be my daughter, Lauren and son, Christian. Shortly before the regatta, Christian was called into work and had to step out of the weekend. Lauren was quickly taken by the Thistle fleet and I stood crewless.

I planned to attend the regatta and assist with race committee. Upon arrival, race organizer, Gary Steinbach, greeted me with a proposition. My good friend Joe Garrett, wanted to race but needed a boat and crew. Recognizing both were important to race, I offered my part; crew. A strong back and a weak mind.

Now let's go find a boat. Gary graciously offered his boat. We now had a boat, a skipper and crew. We have all we needed for the weekend. Because I was headed to Highlander Nationals, Joe asked me to skipper the boat.

The fleet was small with only 4 boats, but rich in talent. Both John Bauer and Karl Felger were on the starting line.

Saturday was a very light air day. Heading out to the race course was a slow process. Once we were there, we watched the race committee chase the wind direction. In true inland lake style, we chased the wind direction for a while, but in the end, the race

committee got a good start. Slowly, Joe and I pulled to the front of the fleet and rounded the first mark with a nice lead. About half way down the first leg, a nice breeze filed in from the top of the course and we watched the entire regatta crash down on us. Fortunately, a gap was left above us and we were able to catch the new breeze early enough not to get trucked by the fleet. We were able to hold on to our lead and cross the finish line first. The breeze died again and we were done for the day.

What is great about this regatta is the Saturday afternoon party. A lot of great food and drink made it pretty easy to fill up and skip dinner. What is even better than the food and beverage is the fellowship. With members of the Thistle and Flying Scot fleet joining in, the evening was great. Mingling with the great sailors from the Sandy Douglas family is always a great evening.

Sunday morning brought better wind. 8 -12 knots is nice for a Sunday morning. The race committee was able to get off a nice series of races for the morning. John Bauer came back to show us why he

is a National Champion with a couple Sunday morning wins. Karl Felger showed us why Quantum Sails wanted him as a loft manager with strong consistent



Awards ceremony at Berlin Invitational.; Joe Garrett, Rick Myers (center)

sailing. Joe Garrett kept me in the thick of it with some good tactics. With multiple lead changes during the day, it was anyone's regatta.

In the end, and much to my pleasant surprise, Joe and I won the regatta. One point behind us was Karl and John in a close third. What started as a family opportunity to sail became a weekend spent with a great friend on the boat and great fellowship off the water. This weekend brought back all the great memories of Highlander Regattas of the past and the reason to look forward to returning to racing. I am looking forward to my opportunities to see everyone again during the fall series.



# 2016 National Championship Results

## Championship Division

### Races 1, 2 & 3

By: *Conor Ruppen*

We set out on a beautiful day one with winds about 8-10 knots. The lake was calm with minimal boat traffic which made for a smooth sail out to the race course. We sailed the race course to get a feel for the numbers and what to expect in the boat that day. The compass suggested a favorable left side and

we noticed some puffs rolling down from the left side. Our starting strategy was to start clean and have a clear lane to get the boat moving. With a clear lane in mind and the favorable left side we started at the pin third. Off the line, we quickly had some boats off our backs so we focused on driving fast to keep a lane to go back on. When we were able to tack, and cross Steve Bauer (925) we found ourselves lifted, just under the layline, with a clear runway ahead. I watched the boats around me to see what they were doing so that I could get *Aunt Ruby* moving as fast as possible. As luck would have it, we were able to hold the lift all the way to the windward mark. We found ourselves in first with Bruce (2005) and Jason (2006) close behind. They taught us a thing or two downwind, sailing much hotter angles than we are used to in the Thistle; they kept us on our toes, but Carrie and Joyce's spinnaker work kept us just out in front at the leeward mark. Heading back up the left side, we played the small shifts, doing our best to stay in front of Bruce. We were able to hold him off for the rest of the race and cross the finish line in first. We were ecstatic, but in disbelief we were able to pull it off.

Race 2 our strategy was "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." The left side still looked favorable. After a general recall where we found ourselves closer to the boat than planned, the fleet got a clean start and again we started near the pin third with a clear lane. We had John Bauer (885) on our hip and when we were able to tack to port we found ourselves slightly over-standing but with a clear lane. After winning our side, we watched Ed (2002) come out of right field to take the

Place	Captain	Boat #	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4	Race 5	Race 6	Race 7	Total Pts
1	Conor Ruppen	1959	1	1	1	(7)	2	3	1	9
2	Ed Spengeman	2002	5	4	5	(5)	1	1	2	18
3	Jason Japikse	2006	3	2	4	6	3	4	(9)	22
4	Bruce Busbey	2007	2	3	2	(8)	7	6	3	23
5	Jon McClean	906	4	7	6	2	4	(9)	8	31
6	Steve Bauer	925	7	5	3	(9)	5	5	6	31
7	Neal Deaves	960	9	8	8	1	6	2	(10)	34
8	Doug Fisher	2005	6	10	10	4	8	(10)	5	43
9	John Bauer	885	8	6	(12)	10	9	7	4	44
10	Jamey Carey	1002	10	9	9	3	10	8	(11)	49
11	Chris Kafsky	874	11	11	7	11	11	(11)	7	58

first mark. We followed with a big pack of tight boats. The ambitious fleet split downwind. We had numerous jibes to keep a clear lane and also to sail towards pressure. Coming into the leeward mark, we were focused on staying in front of Jason (2006) and Bruce (2005) but ended up slipping inside of Ed (2002) in a very tight rounding. After watching Ed make good on the right side, we played that side cautiously and while Bruce looked good far on the left side for a while, we did get breeze from the right that carried us to the windward mark in first. After another nerve racking downwind leg, we were able to maintain our position at the leeward mark and hold our place to the finish. We were still not quite sure how we pulled it off.

The pressure was on for the third race. The breeze built to the biggest of the day as race three was about to begin. We had already had a fantastic day but we wanted to keep it going. After another clean start, we had a narrow lane off the starting line, with a boat on our weather hip, Ed right below us and all the leeward boats slightly punched out ahead. We were able to hold our lane and when the weather boat tacked, we were driving the pack (John, Bruce, Ed, Steve) below us out to the left side. We took it pretty much to the layline to tack and it was a sprint to the mark. Unfortunately, we saw John drop out with a broken jib lead as we continued our fight to the mark. Steve (925) got there first and we were able to work up and round just behind him with Bruce (2005) a close

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Conor Ruppen and crew leading a downwind leg

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third. Somehow, after the downwind, we all came back together again at the leeward mark with another close rounding where we got to hear cheerleader Steve screaming, "Great job girls! Keep it going girls!" as they took the spinnaker down and prepared for the rounding. The second windward leg really tested us as the lead pack of Jason, Steve, Bruce and *Aunt Ruby* stayed tight all going the same direction, often all hipped up. There were plenty of lead changes throughout the leg and I got my workout learning how to drive the main in big breeze. Everyone got their "turn" leading the pack. At one point, with Steve in our window, Joyce remarked, "It sure is nice of Steve to not make his pregnant crew hike!" Leaving the windward mark, we had a little bit of separation in first place. The wind was in a left phase and big breeze so we set the chute and found our downwind rhumb line pointed us at the leeward mark. We thought that life was great even as we watched Bruce and Jason sail far to opposite corners. One of them went so far to the corner, we thought they were stopping on shore for a sandwich. Sure enough, they taught us another lesson and met us quickly at the leeward mark. *Aunt Ruby* was able to slip inside of Bruce and round the windward mark in the lead. We were able to hold them off and finish closer to the boat while Bruce, Steve, and Jason took 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> respectively at the pin. We still couldn't believe that we had done it and knew instantly that we had a day that we would never forget.

## Race 4

By Neal Deaves

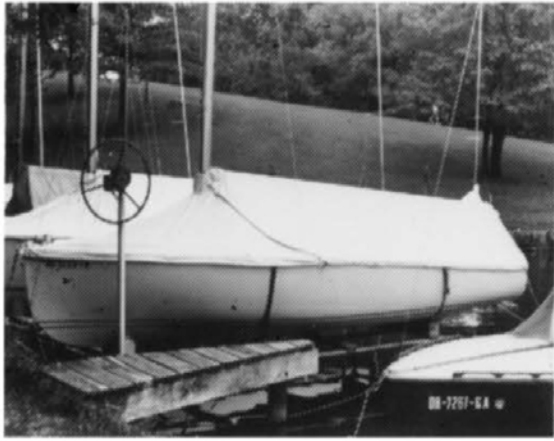
It has been a month and Nationals has come and gone. The memories of winning a race with the level of competition has remained. After starting the regatta with an over early David Bauer and I knew we had to continue to be aggressive. In race four we started 1/3 down the line from the committee boat and a large number of the fleet went left, so not to follow



Neal Deaves and Dave Bauer

them we went right and consolidated half way down to round in a respectable place. The shortest distance between 2 points is a straight line but not always the fastest. We held our own downwind and after rounding stayed right to middle. The second downwind leg most of the fleet went left downwind only to be hit with light air and a big shift favoring the right. Al had been leading all fleets and made it back to the right where we had continued our straight line downwind. In order to keep our line we had several jibes. We rounded the mark behind Al yet first in our division with Bob Bauer and Jon McClean closing. We needed to cover Jon and





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did so to the finish. It was exciting but nerve racking as we kept thinking the fleet was going to coming flying from the left but that never happened much the their disappointment. Thanks to all that made the week enjoyable at Indian Lake and the Cowan crew for all their hard work.

### Races 5 & 6

*By: Ed Spengeman*

This year's nationals was much like last year for us. We spent most of the week pulling average scores and by the end of the week we had made our huge charge up the leader board. I always refer to myself as

or up the first beat. Our boat speed is phenomenal, but our decision making not so much.

It would appear that this affliction may also apply to the week of nationals each year. We start slow with 4's & 5's and once the week is almost over, we spring into action! On Thursday with all of the pressure off we pulled our first bullet. This was also the day that we initiated our crew swap, trading Nate Ireland for his wife Bridget. With the Ireland's being the opposite of tall, we made a last minute switch to have Ben Stock run the pole work and Bridget to handle the kite. I was a little nervous at first, but the combination proved to be magical. Prior to the race we did several wind checks and found the left was looking better. Oddly enough, off the line and up the first beat, I had stuck to the plan! That never happens. It wasn't long before we were looking at the fleet thru the main windy struggling on the right. From that point forward we were able to hold off the fleet and take the bullet.

Race #6 was a rinse and repeat. We nailed the left again to take the victory. Now race #7 was a different story, but I'll let Conor tell that one ;)

### Race 7

*By: Conor Ruppen*

For the last race of the series, we really just wanted to have a fun race. We had watched the compass flip-flop all day. Huge puffs were rolling down from both sides, making the strategy and starts interesting! After one recall, at one point in the day, we noticed a lot of "activity" on the committee boat. I remember Steve later saying something to his crew along the lines of, "guys, Mommy and Daddy aren't happy right now!" It was the kind of day to drive any RC

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Ed Spengeman, Ben Stock and Nate Ireland

a "digger", meaning that I need a long race to dig back out of whatever horrendous mistake I make at the start



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off the boat. As such, we thought we would do our part to start clean for them. We started towards the boat



end, and went right towards the biggest pressure, but soon found we were able to play the shifts, in phase, the whole beat. We were happy to lead at the first weather mark, and enjoyed the fun ride downwind. At some point, RC lengthened the leeward mark which was a great way to end the week in the building breeze. We maintained our lead to the leeward mark. Again, I really enjoyed driving the boat in the breeze while Joyce and Carrie kept me in phase. At the windward mark, Ed closed on us a bit, but it seemed that we had both separated slightly from the rest of the fleet. After another great ride downwind, we rounded comfortably in front of Ed, with a long beat to the finish line. After a couple of tacks, he had closed the gap considerably, and was soon driving out from under us halfway up the beat. I still am not sure what he was doing so differently, and so well, but eventually I was able to pull enough strings, or he ran out of gas, and we were able to hang with him. But as the finish line approached, and he looked ahead by half a boat-length or so, we took a last ditch tack and shot the line. When the gun went off, nobody had any idea who won until Harold pointed. We could not think of a

better way to end the week, a fun, long race in big breeze, laughing back and forth between boats on the final beat, won by a photo finish.

When Rob and Joyce first asked me if I would be interested in Highlander Nationals, I was already excited. I had sailed with Rob some before, so I knew the boat was a lot of fun, and I knew enough people in the class to know that we would have lots of fun. We did not have any expectations, however. We were blown away after Monday, and still could not quite believe it on Thursday. I owe thanks to Rob and Joyce, obviously for the gracious use of Aunt Ruby, but also for getting me up to speed on the boat, for the long trip up to Pymatuning to (try in no breeze) to get some practice. John and Steve Bauer shared how they drive in breeze over drinks and campfires home at Berlin. Jack Finefrock, a Thistler through and through, shared his Highlander experience, some tips, and how much fun he had. Carrie and I came from the Thistle class, but we learned that the

reasons we love the Thistle Class, including the family atmosphere, the friendly competitiveness, and the exciting boat, they are all alive and well in the Highlander Class. We loved camping with all the little kids running around, and we truly felt welcomed. Personally, I learned a ton in a week. We all owe a big thanks to Steve, Gillian, and Erin for running a great Nationals on shore. Harold and Stefanie, called into RC duty at the last minute, did a great job shorthanded in trying conditions. I look forward to representing the Highlander Class in the US Sailing Champions of Champions Regatta, and coming back soon!

## Junior's

By: Ben Spengeman

This July, my parents took us to Highlander Nationals at Indian Lake. This wasn't the first time that I had gone to Nationals, but it was the first time that I had actually raced at Nationals. At first, I wanted my Mom to sail Women's and I would crew for her on the jib, but I was talked into sailing Junior's with my Mom and Dad as my crew. Emma decided that she wanted to play on shore, so the three of us set up the boat and went out to the racecourse. The breeze was pretty light





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and my Dad drove the boat out to the racecourse. I was a little nervous since I had never driven a boat this big, but we practiced a little before the race and I started to feel better. Mom and Dad helped me out by telling me where to go, but I drove the boat while I watched the jib tell tales. We had a pretty good start and then some horns went off and Mom and Dad explained that they were changing the course. When we finally did start a race, I got to the windward mark in about 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> place and started driving downwind. I was a little mad at my parents when everyone else started putting up their spinnakers and they told me

that they didn't even put ours on the boat! How were we going to keep up with the rest of the boats? We went around the course two times and managed to finish ahead of some of the other people racing. When I crossed the finish line, everyone cheered for me- it was pretty cool! The rest of the week was great too. We got to play on the beach, go kayaking, sleep in the tent, go tubing, and even went to McDonald's by boat with Mr. Bruce. It was a great week and I can't wait to do it again next year!

## Women's

*By: Jen Paisley*

It was Saturday of Highlander Nationals and I wanted to sail Women's. I also wanted to have a chance at winning a wooden cutting board; seeing how my husband, Mark, made them. All I needed was a boat, crew and babysitter. Thankfully Steve was game for being my partner in crime, Bob Bauer let me borrow his boat 989, and Mark stayed on shore to watch the kids. It wasn't until we were on our way out to the race course that I told (or Steve realized) I hadn't driven a boat in a while.

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Ben Spengeman with crew; Ed and Erin Spengeman

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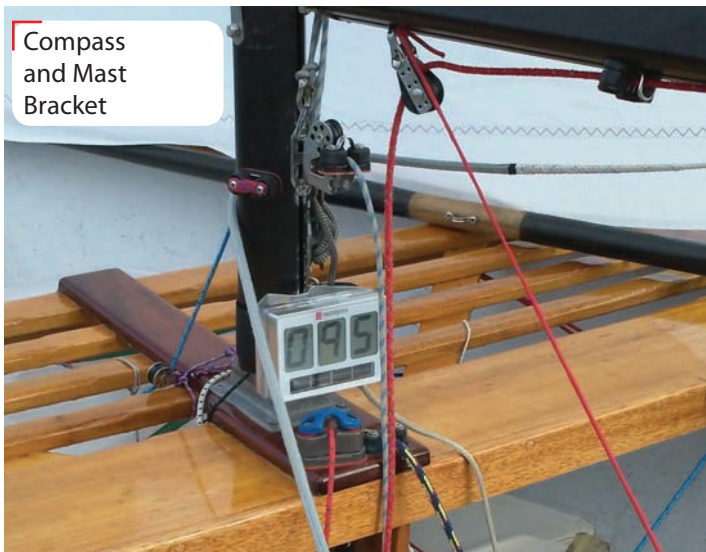
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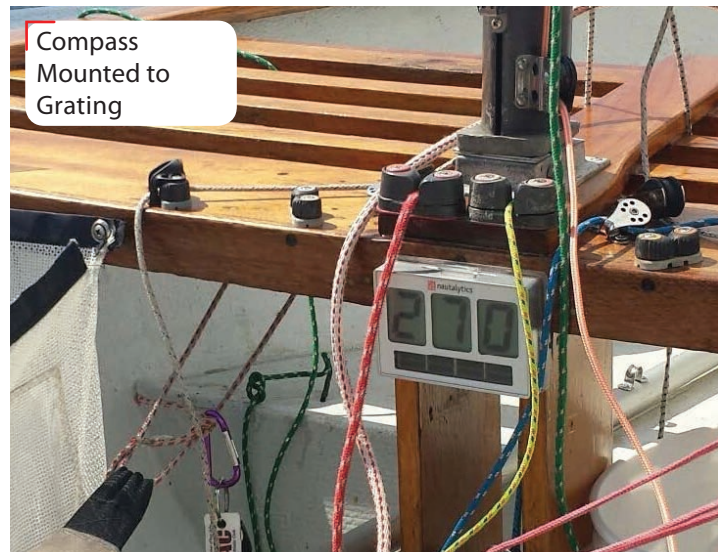
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All three races had some decent wind, but the problem was the chop. There were eleven boats on the line (5 for Womens, 5 for Masters and 1 for Juniors). I was excited to have a decent start for the first race right next to Rob Spring, and happy to hold onto a third place for the race. The second race was a different story. I had an ok start and the wind was picking up a bit making the chop less annoying. Then we found out the spinnaker was twisted and had to be re-rigged on our first down-wind leg. When we rounded the mark, the wind kicked up even more and the tiller extension fell off! Luckily I was able to keep cool and just sail. I fixed the tiller extension with quite a bit of electrical tape and kept sailing with Steve doing the job of two crew members. Not sure how it happened with so many issues- but we won the race! In the final race the wind started to calm



down and the chop really got annoying, but all you could do was your best.

I am proud to hang the traveling trophy on the wall and thrilled to have one of the cutting boards! But what really happened was I got to sail with an old friend and learn a lot about becoming a more confident sailor. I look forward to next year!

## Masters Championship 2016

*By Joyce Spring*

Earlier this summer, as Aunt Ruby was making plans to attend the Nationals, I realized even though Rob would not be sailing during the week, he would be at the club over the weekend. With the Masters Race scheduled for Saturday, we could sail. My suggestion to participate was met with curt reply of "we'll see." A week or so later, again I mention the idea and again received the same reply "we'll see." Then I offered to contact Mike Perakis for crew. This time I was told it was ok to ask Mike but still "we'll see." I wondered: what is this hesitation to sail? We always look for opportunities to sail, especially with Mike. Sometimes milestones creep up without warning. Does Rob actually qualify as a Master?

After checking in the HCIA Bylaws, yes indeed, Rob was now a Master. Guess Rob needed time to admit he had entered the Master Era. So we sailed in the Masters division. There was enough breeze to give us three races. The racing was fun as we crossed tacks with the other Masters sailors Neal Deaves, Jeff Curtain, Craig Rule. As always, we had a fun time together and were fortunate to win the series.

Sailing provides the common interest to bring the Highlander Clan together and the camaraderie on shore brings us back each year. After another eventful week of Nationals everyone gathered the final night for dinner and awards. Rob and Mike were unable to



return for the Masters Trophy, so I accepted in their absence. Here I was with the trophy and the bottle of Jack Daniels that accompanies the Trophy, what's a party girl to do? Why take it home?

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Why not share with the Clan!

I looked for Jamey and Tanya – not hard to find, just listen for some laughter. Then I called Harold over. Soon joined by Mike Shayson, Neal Deaves, Kirk Shultz and Bruce Busbey. Everyone received a shot of whiskey and we began toasting memorable Clansmen, living or deceased who had been special to us. First we toasted Betty and Frank Failing, appropriate for the trophy is so named. Then other names were lifted up with stories, laughter and yes, a few tears. More sailors and more toasts and more stories ensued. Hard to name them all right now. A few included Jack Bauer, Sonny Williams, Kenny Hopkins, Tom Kling, Merle

Spring, Al and Elaine Singer, Buddy and Gloria Annaberg, Crede Calhoun, Fred & Marj Bauer, Jack Keplinger, John and Connie Emmerick, Norris Bourdow, Don Wright. Needless to say, the bottle was soon empty.

This was a most memorable evening and look forward to next year, as we again plan to raise a glass. The tradition is to supply a bottle of Jack for the next year's winner; I told Rob that we will need at least two bottles. His reply was good by me. Thanks to all who joined in on the fun of the toasting circle.

*Here's to us and dem like us, dam few*

## A View From the Top of the Bottom

By: *Mac Cooper*

Jeff Curtin and I left Westerly Rhode Island on Thursday afternoon with a truck full of camping gear and good old Al, #937 in tow. We were looking forward to some vacation time, meeting up with friends and sailing in the Nationals for our eighth year in a row. I know that sounds like small change for some of you guys and gals but we are way ahead of anyone from our area!

We had heard some local knowledge about Indian Lake, something about not sitting on the centerboard trunk due to stumps. To be sure we installed a special wood cutting blade on the centerboard before we left. We decided to sail two up for the first time at nationals with the expectation that July in Russell's Point, Ohio should be pretty light conditions. With our combined crew weight of about 385 lbs. we may have underestimated the potential for wind in Ohio.

When we arrived at the Indian Lake Yacht Club on Friday afternoon we found old friends and the usual awesome Highlander fleet hospitality. Many thanks to

Pete Breidenbach for showing us a lift we could borrow to put the boat on and a beautiful place

## President's Division

Place	Captain	Boat #	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4	Race 5	Race 6	Race 7	Total Pts
1	Mac Cooper	937	2	3	8	1	2	1	2	11
2	Tanner Shultz	1007	5	2	1	3	4	4	3	17
3	Bob Bauer	989	1	5	6	2	7	6	1	21
4	Gary Vinicky	2003	3	1	4	8	1	7	6	22
5	Steve Hesler	1003	4	4	5	4	9	3	7	27
6	Bryan Hollingsworth	876	6	8	3	5	5	5	11	32
7	Barb Dillon	931	7	6	2	9	8	8	5	36
8	Rick Myers	910	11	11	11	6	6	2	4	40
9	Pete Breidenbach	955	9	7	7	7	3	9	8	41
10	Craig Rule	980	8	9	9	10	10	10	9	55

to camp on the island near the center of activity. Thanks also to Steve and Gillian Bauer and all the people that helped pitch in and make this event happen.

Saturday we participated in the Masters series of three races and Sunday we took part in the practice race and had a nice long sail around the lake. We thought we were ready for the main event. As you may remember the first day of racing saw a solid breeze that was building thru the day. With our light crew weight we began to question the wisdom of our decision to sail two up. By midway thru the third race of the day we were totally whooped. The results show that we got 8th place in the President's fleet but in reality we took a tour of the tail end of the entire fleet in that race. Needless to say we were feeling Presidential on the way into the club but we still enjoyed every moment of it!



The next day of racing was on Wednesday after Tuesday's races were postponed due to lack of wind. It did not look very promising but we headed out with the fleet. Perhaps, we thought, the light conditions would better suit us. We realized that we were up against a bunch of life long lake sailors so our enthusiasm was tempered. Before the start we thought the wind looked better along the shore so we wanted to start at the Committee Boat end and go right. This is usually a popular place to start and we expected we might have some trouble. It turned out that we won the boat end with Gary Vinicky in 2003 just ahead and to leeward. We were getting some bad air off his sails so we tacked away onto port right away and headed to shore. We had good pressure and continued to get lifted. When we finally got a header we tacked and Jeff said something like hey, we are looking good! I think it was at this point that he told me, just keep the boat moving and we would do OK for the first time. It wouldn't be the last time I heard that comment during the race. After several tacks, trying to stay in a breeze line we arrived at the windward mark in first place! We put the chute up and congratulated ourselves thinking the lake sailors would now be passing us on a regular basis but didn't we look good at that first mark. Since we were in the president's division all of the top guys gybed away and went off to mess with each other. Jeff said just keep the boat moving and we will be OK so we tried to stay in the breeze and make progress to the leeward mark. After a couple of bottles of water and perhaps a beer we were amazed to arrive at the leeward mark still in first place! Needless to say we congratulated ourselves again and tried to find a wind line toward the weather mark. As before the boats in the championship division ignored us and we slowly worked our way toward the

w e a t h e r  
mark with  
quite a few  
comments  
of "looking  
good" from  
our fellow  
competitors  
who were  
still under  
spinnaker.  
We even  
got a  
thumbs up  
from the  
r a c e  
committee  
a s w e



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passed them. At the weather mark we had even extended our lead some and were starting to think, holy crap we might win this thing. As we approached the area around the starting line we were engulfed in a hole and almost came to a stop. Jeff repeated the mantra, just keep the boat moving and we will be OK. As the wind filled in the boats behind brought the breeze down with them and closed in on us. When we finally got some breeze we were able to round the mark still in the lead. We tacked over and a wind line materialized in front of us leading directly to the pin and gave us the magic carpet ride home. I am sure all of you who were there heard us give a shout when we crossed the line in front of both fleets.

The best part of this story occurred after the race. On the way in, or later on shore someone from every boat came up to us and congratulated us on the win. That is why we keep coming back to race with the Highlander fleet! Every regatta feels like a gathering of friends and family. People are happy to help when you need it and are genuinely pleased to see you do well when you succeed.

While the racing on Thursday was great fun and we eventually moved up to win the Presidents division the stories from Thursday cannot compare to the one race where we finished first in both fleets! Thanks to everyone for a great week at Indian Lake. We hope to see you at our Clamdigger regatta in September and we look forward to seeing you all again next year at Nationals.



## Race 5

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*By: Gary Vinicky*

I usually attend these National championships with the crew I have trained who in some cases are newer skippers who are not yet up to speed with their own boats. This is Chris Chillemi's (No. 977) 2nd Nationals crewing for me. This year I also brought along another new Fleet 14 skipper, Mike Howkins who recently bought my beloved No. 965. I thought it would be great to give them a taste of these intense National Championships so that someday, they will also try the regatta circuit.



Our performance on the first lap was somewhat unremarkable following behind 7 or 8 boats. However when we got to the second windward mark, still behind these 7 or 8 other Highlanders, I noticed that the leaders either did jibe-sets or did a bear-away and then jibed soon after. It seemed they were all clustered together vying for the best position. So, we decided to do a bear-away with little or no traffic following us and see what will happen. It was a good decision since we had relatively clear air. Then the breeze seemed a bit stronger on this starboard jibe. The further we went the stronger the wind seemed to be.

Since we had good pressure on the spin sheet I was able to bear away even further in a strong breeze, sailing even closer to the rhumb line. We were able to get in front of a group that went off on port jibe and then jibed back to us but behind now. We had a few ahead of us who soon tacked onto starboard and went to the left side of the course. As we rounded the leeward mark I had Mike Howkins pull in the main sheet quickly since we had a boat or two on our transom and I needed to close the door at the mark and get on a close hauled course as soon as possible. There certainly some exciting mark roundings with both divisions sailing together.

We sailed off on port for a while and then tacked onto starboard, also going on to the left side of the course following the group ahead of us. Then I noticed something. There were stronger gusts to the right side of the course, above and near the race committee boat. So, we tacked back onto port and went off towards the starboard layline to get into those puffs. We did a couple of tacks working our way up the right side and playing the shifts. The puffs seemed to still be coming down around the committee boat.

As we flopped onto starboard slightly above the layline and about 3 boat lengths from the RC boat and finish line, I noticed that the group of boats that were ahead seemed to be headed a bit as they were trying for a pin end finish. We dipped the transom of the RC boat and luffed up over the finish line and were surprised to get the gun and right in our ear too! That was pretty exciting for these two newer skippers and me too.

## Race 7

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*By: Bob Bauer*

After less than stellar finishes in the first two races on Thursday, we sailed the last race and decided to have a good time doing it. We started at the committee boat in clean air, which helped greatly. Staying on the left side of the course almost to the lay line put us in good position at the first mark.

One of the benefits of starting both divisions at the same time was that all the boats were very close around the course. As had happened in almost every race, the first leeward mark in Race 7 was a jumble of boats trying to round at the same time. Those that got around unscathed were able to do well in the race, and we were one of the fortunate ones.

Mac Cooper led the Presidents Division for the majority of the race, leaving the rest to fight it out. At the last mark before the finish, we noticed that we had gained on Mac to the point that he was in definite



Bob, Sue Bauer, Mark Paisley



reach. About half way up the leg we crossed in front of Mac and began a cover that we hoped to sustain to the finish. About that time, Tanner Shultz had also gained on Mac and us to put him in contention. We kept enough of a cover to stay ahead of both. Since the finish line was rather long, we decided to break from

covering Mac and Tanner and make a run for the finish. Since both held on a little longer on port tack, we were able to beat both by a nose. It sure felt good to finish the series on such a high note. I could not have done it without the help and hard work of my wonderful crew, my wife Sue and Mark Paisley.

# Thank you

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**SPECIAL THANKS** to Gayle Kaufholz for all her time behind the camera at this year's Highlander Nationals! All Nationals photos in the magazine were her work.



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