



The *HIGHLANDER*

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2018 Highlander Nationals Champion **James Taylor**

In This Issue:

BERLIN INVITATIONAL
2018 NATIONALS COVERAGE



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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Reflections on Nationals

By: Neal Deaves

We tried something different with the timing of Nationals and thanks to the Fleet at Lake Norman those attending had a great time. The weather was great for camping and sailing. Only one down day on the water without races but what great air the rest of the week. Two man boats had their hands full yet no capsizes. Congrats to the winners of each race and the championships. All that participated are winners in my book because we had a week of sailing and great fellowship with friends.

My highlight of the week, on the race course, was the last race of the week. We were near the top of the Presidents division and needed boats between us and Kirk Shultz. We started at the committee boat with most of the fleet at the pin end when the right shift came in part way down the first leg. As we approached the windward mark the fleet started closing and we rounded 5th, our best to date. One boat missed the offset making more room for us to clear the mark and start down wind. We started on a port tact reach, then a run back to a reach, then jibe and run only to complete the leg on a port reach. A lot for a two man boat. We went back to the windward mark alternating with several boats but continued good position. The second downwind leg was crazy. We started on port reaches and separated from the boats behind us only to get a starboard run for most of the leg. Amazingly the rest of the boats in front and behind us were on port reaches. This continued until the last 100 yards and we don't know why it was so different for us. At this point we rounded the final mark and looked for boats the help us in the scoring and they did. Since the fleets were combined it was hard to see which boats were in the President's division and as it finished out Kirk held on for a fourth place finish to secure a President's Fleet Championship. Way to go Kirk and family. What a fabulous week of sailing and thanks to all that worked so hard to allow us to sail.

Neal Deaves, HCIA President



PHOTO CREDIT: PETE JAPIKSE



2018 Berlin Regatta

By: Rick Myers

Beautiful sunny days do not often lend themselves to good sailing days and that is the way the weekend started at Berlin Lake. The PRO held the skippers meeting to discuss the forecast of light winds. A decision was made to get the boats out on the lake and hope for the best. The PRO also demonstrated his sense of humor when he discussed the starting order of the boats. The 10 Thistles and 5 Highlanders would start together after the singlehanded boats. "Then I want to start the Flying Scots, the fastest boats, last so we all finish together." Our friend Frank Gerry, a former Highlander sailor now sailing a Scot, questioned the statement but was quick to accept the compliment.

Once we were all on the water, we enjoyed a 1 1/2 hour postponement waiting for wind. Having some time to visit on the water was welcomed by the

competitors in an attempt to keep spirits high. Our patience was well served when a breeze developed and allowed three great races. The breeze was fairly consistent and ranged from 7-11 knots. Starting with all the Thistles made the starts fun and demonstrated how evenly matched the boats can be sailed. It felt more like a 15 boat regatta than a 5 Highlander regatta. I was blessed with great crew of my daughter Lauren and son Christian. Both grew up in the junior sailing program with Lauren sailing Thistles nearly 10 years now. They used all their knowledge, coupled with a new Quatum jib, to keep us in the lead most of the regatta. We finished with a 2-1-1 for the regatta and I accept all the blame for the second place finish. We had Gary Steinbach most of the race, but I got caught under a Scott just before the finish line and Gary capitalized on the opportunity. Gary, Elaine and his grandson were close on my heels the entire day.

After racing, BYC hosted a great cocktail party with enough appetizers to spoil your dinner. Dinner was wonderful followed a great evening of fellowship.

Sunday morning was a return to light air with very limited prospects of a breeze. Unfortunately, we were not able to pull off any racing on Sunday.

What made a fathers' day weekend regatta fun was the number of all family boats. In both the Highlander and Thistle class, the boats awarded trophies were all family boats. Sailing as a family is a great way to spend time with my children and to spend a Father's Day weekend.

THE HIGHLANDER BOARD OF DIRECTORS IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS TO HOST THE 2019 AND 2020 HIGHLANDER NATIONALS. YOU CAN CONTACT ANY BOARD MEMBER. WE WOULD LIKE TO SECURE THE LOCATION PRIOR TO THE 2019 SAILING SEASON AS TO PROMOTE THE DATE EARLY. PLANNING AHEAD MAKES PLANNING EASIER FOR ALL. WE NEED YOUR HELP TO ENSURE PARTICIPATION AT ALL REGATTAS AND CLASS ACTIVITIES.





2018 HIGHLANDER NATIONALS - Race 1

By: Karl Felger

When they announced that the 2018 Highlander Nationals was going to be in October at Lake Norman Yacht Club I was super excited. Lake Norman is a great venue, and I was looking forward to enjoying a warm weather venue and solid breeze... What we ended up with was 3 of 4 days in light air and cool temperatures. Luckily, I was double-handing a boat, crewing for my good friend Ed Spengeman, as we has a great time.

What I remember mostly about Race #1 was our approach. We spent a good part of the weekend talking about rig tune and setup, and how we wanted to approach each race. Our deal was that Ed brought his boat (#2002) and we used Quantum Sails, so I knew our boat would be bulletproof (little did I know!) and our sails would be super fast. Having confidence in our boat speed, we spent our time on the water focusing on a conservative approach on the starting line and up the first beat. Any good team divvies up the important tasks on the boat, and we were no different. Ed focused on making the boat go as fast as possible, and I made sure we weren't pointed backwards.

At the start of Race #1, we found ourselves as the pin end of the starting line with Aunt Ruby (Team Spring) and He Who Shall Not Be

Named (Team Taylor... his boat still needs a name!). The breeze was a little on the light side, so Ed and I felt confident we could sail the boat athletically, using some of the skills we learned growing up sailing Lasers and 420's. This mean we rolled the boat aggressively and worked hard to get an effective squirt, or "skeet" as Ed likes to say, on the flatten. This ensured we had as much boat speed exiting the tack as we did when we entered the tack.

PHOTO CREDIT: HAROLD & STEFANIE BAUER



Up the first beat, we struggled to get back to the center of the race course at times, simply because we were trying to stay in the pressure and the breeze was lingering on the edges of the race course. The three boats that started at the pin and worked the left side rounded in the top three, and fortunately, that included us. The top of the downwind leg was super light, and we stayed super high until we had enough pressure we could press down to the leeward mark (Down in the puffs!). We split with the leaders near the bottom of the leg, and were able to maintain our velocity, rounding the right gate at the same time the top two boats rounded the left gate.

The right hand turn at the bottom gave our team two advantages... (1) we were able to lead the other boats back to the pressure on the left side of the course simply by rounding the mark (vs. rounding the left mark, then tacking onto starboard) and (2) we did not have to sail through any of the spinnaker traffic coming downwind. We maintained this advantage, and nosed into some more pressure ahead of Team



Taylor and Team Spring and as we pulled ahead we were able to tack to port and cross both boats cleanly. As we progressed up the rest of the beat, we focused on staying in phase (tacking on the knocks) while staying in pressure and keeping our boat in between the next mark and our competition.

We rounded the second weather mark in first place, with a large lead on the second place boat and just stayed in the pressure downwind. All in all, it was one of the most complete races I've ever sailed, and it was fun to do it with my friend, Ed. I can say I don't think any boat had more fun than we did on the race course, and I want to thank the regatta organizers and hosts for all their hard work with the event.

Highlander Nationals - Championship Division										
Rank	Sail #	Skipper	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	Total
1st	953	James Taylor	2	3	2	(4)	2	1	1	11
2nd	2006	Bill Fastiggi	(6)	5	1	1	1	5	2	15
3rd	999	Rob Ruhlman	7	1	3	2	4	4	(10)	21
4th	1959	Rob Spring	5	6	(7)	3	3	2	5	24
5th	2002	Ed Epengeman	1	(12)	5	6	7	3	8	30
6th	885	Jason Japikse	3	2	8	(9)	6	7	4	30
7th	925	Steve Bauer	(12)	7	6	5	8	6	11	43
8th	2007	Bruce Busbey	8	(10)	9	8	5	10	9	49
9th	906	Jay Carey	(11)	9	11	10	9	9	3	51
10th	1002	Jamey Carey	10	4	(12)	11	11	8	7	51
11th	2005	Doug Fisher	(13)	8	10	7	10	12	6	53
12th	972	James Mylett	4	(13)	4	13	13	13	13	60
13th	910	Richard Myers	9	11	(13)	12	12	11	12	67

Highlander Nationals - Persident's Division										
Rank	Sail #	Skipper	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	Total
1st	1007	Kirk Shultz	1	2	5	(6)	1	1	4	14
2nd	960	Neal Deaves	4	3	1	(5)	3	3	1	15
3rd	969	Chris Kafsky	2	(5)	2	2	4	5	3	18
4th	861	Bob McCoun	9	(11)	9	1	2	2	8	31
5th	1003	Steve Hesler	(10)	8	4	4	5	8	5	34
6th	22	Robert Bouknight	6	(14) _{RET}	14 _{DNC}	3	6	4	7	40
7th	891	Dick Doyne	3	1	3	(14) _{DNC}	14 _{DNC}	7	14 _{DNC}	42
8th	980	Craig Rule	(13)	9	7	7	7	11	6	47
9th	1004	Al Crusciel	8	4	6	(14) _{DNF}	14 _{DNC}	9	9	50
10th	92	Mac McNeill	11	10	10	(14) _{DNC}	14 _{DNC}	10	2	57
11th	797	Dan Hopkins	12	6	8	(14) _{DNC}	14 _{DNC}	6	11	57
12th	916	Tom Raymond	5	7	11	(14) _{DNF}	14 _{DNC}	14 _{DNF}	10	61
13th	926	Patrick Rykens	7	12	12	(14) _{DNC}	14 _{DNC}	14 _{DNC}	12	71

Race 2

By Rob Ruhlman

Over the years I have met plenty of folks who can remember every click of the main sheet ratchet in every race they've ever sailed, particularly the big ones. I never have been one of those guys.

So it is with the 2018 Highlander Nationals this past October on Lake Norman. What I do remember is that after a 7th place finish in race 1, Abby, Dave Werley and I put that race behind us and began to "not focus" on the next one. We decided on a more relaxed approach having gotten a taste of the "variety" Lake Norman had to offer in terms of breeze. Rather than try to game plan race 2 we decided to not worry about a side or an end of the line, but to simply get a full-speed clean start off the line and "connect the dots" as the race proceeded.

PHOTO CREDIT: PETE JAPIKSE



Giving up the favored end of the line in favor of a big hole in the middle of the line did not initially look like a wise decision, but it did allow us to sail our own race and tack at will up the first leg. Likewise, downwind we had the freedom to maneuver. Abby, Dave and I have raced Lightnings together for quite a while and they were certainly at the top of their game calling breeze. We picked up boats up every leg right to the end. It was one of those races where everything just came together perfectly.

It was our first Highlander Nationals as competitors and we had a fantastic time. Our thanks to everyone for the hospitality and organization of wonderful event. We look forward to hosting

everyone again someday at Pymatuning although, unlike the 2010 Nationals when I was PRO, we'll have to find some other folks because we want to be on the water with all of you!

Race 3/4/5

*By: Bill Fastiggi, Suzy Coburn and Al Baker
(#2006)*

The 2018 Highlander Nationals/Pipers was our first time sailing the Nationals and my first visit to Lake Norman and we really had a great time. We want to thank the Lake Norman YC and local Highlander fleet for rolling out the red carpet. It was amazing how many folks were helping to run the event. Congrats to James Taylor and his team for sailing a great regatta, and to all the participants who made the effort to attend.

My wife Suzy and I were fortunate to enlist our good friend Al Baker to sail with us, and equally important, to share in the driving from Vermont! We learned a lot and met a lot of new friends. I wanted to share a few observations about what we learned:

Starts - no big surprise, but it's a lot easier to get in front of the fleet if you get good starts. We were fortunate enough to win three of the races, and in all three we had a great start - clear air, on the line, and up to full speed. It makes it a lot easier to see the puffs on the water and easier to read the shifts. In the first two races, we were setting up a little too early and a little too close to the line so we weren't able to get the boat up to full speed as easily, and by the time we did, we were struggling to get out of traffic. First lesson - in big competitive fleets, sometime the most important thing is just finding a spot on the line where there isn't a lot of traffic so you can do your own thing and get the boat off the line.

Strategy - We've sailed in a lot of smaller shifty venues over the years and one thing we try to do is be patient and sail the shift that you are in. (Or as Suzy says - "Love the one you're with" - which is why I always try to keep her on my boat) With very few exceptions, upwind in shifty conditions we just try to stay on the lifted tack, mostly ignore the other boats



and don't try to chase around wind. It almost never pays to sail on the headed tack away from the mark looking for more wind. By the time you get there, the shift is gone and you've just sailed out of phase for a costly minute or two. Someone might peg a corner and get lucky once in a while, but in these regattas - consistency pays. Just ask James....

Downwind is where it is trickier and is where I feel the biggest gains can be made (or lost). Upwind most people sail relatively the same angle to the wind, but downwind, there are a lot more options. Some sail higher and faster, some sail lower and slower. Either can work well. In shifty conditions we first identify if it is a gybing leg or not. If there is a big shift or the mark is out of place, it can be a "non-gybing" run, in which case you need to be a little cautious about protecting your wind so the boats from behind don't roll over the top. But in most cases - I always feel like the passing lane is low, because if you are on the headed gybe, you want to get to leeward of your competition so that when the next shift comes, you'll be a lot closer to the mark than your competitors. If the breeze shifts to the opposite side and everyone gybes, you are now inside and on top of your competition. If the wind shifts further in the same direction, the boats inside will get lifted further away from the mark and will have a lot longer to sail out of phase when they gybe. It's a little hard to describe, but we were often able to pass quite a few boats in this manner.

A few other observations that we've made about the Highlander. Because the shrouds are pretty far aft, the boom doesn't go out far enough downwind, so it seems like sailing dead downwind with weather heel isn't as productive as it can be in other types of boats. We preferred sailing a slightly higher angle, heeling slightly to leeward so the main would work more efficiently downwind. Secondly, we seemed to have pretty good speed upwind in the windier races. I



was struggling with depowering the main in the Masters and we were watching James who was working his traveler a lot. We lowered the bridle height to a very low setting, probably just 6" above the tiller, and then played the traveler side to side adjustment to de-power and power up in the puffs and lulls. When I first bought #2006 from Mike Shayeson (sorry Rob Spring - we will come up with a good name!), the side to side control for the traveler had been removed, and I feel as though that is a mistake for heavier air sailing. We also played the vang pretty aggressively - pulling it on quite hard in the puffs and easing when we needed to power up. We adjust both the main and jib sheets with every puff or lull. We almost never adjust the main cunningham or outhaul. The cunningham was pretty much loose all the time. We set the outhaul so the middle of the foot of the main is about 1 or 2" away from the boom and leave it there for the day. There are more important things to worry about - looking for wind, making sure we are on the tack or gybe taking us closest to the mark and making sure we are concentrating on making the boat go fast!

We're really looking forward to the Nationals next year and hope we can get to a few other regattas in between! Congratulations again to James Taylor who won about everything you could win, and to the LNYC for putting on such a great event.





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Race 6/7/Winner of Division

By: James Taylor

2018 Highlander Masters

My Highlander sailing started two years ago when I purchased 953 out of a barn. Most of last 2 years was spent sailing Sundays at Cowan and working on the boat when we were not off lake sailing my Lightning. My crew for the event was George Auer, my long-time Lightning crew, and Brian Bahler who crews on a Lightning for a good friend of mine in Indiana. We sailed together for the first time the weekend before the Nationals in the Cowan Fall-in Lightning Regatta. We gelled right away and won the regatta. As many of you know, Cowan gets out a very competitive Highlander fleet every Sunday. I asked George and Bryan to stay for one race that Sunday afternoon before helping pack up the Highlander. At the start of that race George had several hours in a Highlander and Brian was a first timer. George sailed with me in last year's light air Pipers and The Mad Plaid this year.

This year I turned the dreaded double nickel so the team decided to sail in the Masters for practice. George and I had also sailed in the Lighting Masters earlier that year with my son Carl. It was pretty windy so we decided that we would use the old sails. These sails came from Jamie Carry earlier in the year for sailing on Sundays. Jamie has been a great help through this entire process. The spinnaker came from another boat who was definitely a NAVY or Michigan supporter, with the Blue and Yellow stripes.



**HEADED OUT FOR THE DAY
PHOTO CREDIT: SUSAN TAYLOR**

We went out in the morning and sailed around a bit figuring out the dance (crew work) on a Highlander in wind. On the Lightning the vang is not as big a part of sailing till the wind gets over 20. The Vang is lead to the middle of my Highlander, so



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George was in charge of the vang. Brian sails an E Scow a lot, it is also a vang sensitive boat so Brian and I coached George on how to play the vang up wind before the racing. While racing that entire day, George worked hard to understand what to do with the vang with encouragement from Brian and me. In addition to the vang, I set the traveler up like a Lightning so it could be let out to the aft quarter when the wind was up. In addition to the Vang I played the traveler the whole beat. Most of the time it was all the way out, but on occasion it came up in lighter air.

We started the first race toward the pin end of the line. Bill Fastiggi (2006) ducked me on port and went off to the right while we sailed off to the left. After about 5 minutes we received a knock and tacked with Papa Bauer tacking a little below me at the same time. During this part of the leg George was still learning the vang and Papa Bauer was able to get around the weather mark ahead of us. Papa Bauer crossed on starboard near the weather mark. As a team we were very conservative for the entire week, and this was the first occurrence of our conservative approach. In my Lightning I would have lee bowed him and gone around first. With this boat, we were not sure of how things like that would turn out, so we ducked and tacked behind him for the mark. With

good crew work down the run, we were able to get inside Papa Bauer on the way to the leeward mark. We jibed and were able to round the leeward mark in first, then sailed on to win the first race.

In the second race we were down near the pin again, sailing off to the first shift. We crossed the entire fleet and went on to win the race. One of the things that became evident on this leg was the importance of Brian down wind. Brian was looking back calling wind and where other boats were on the race course. With Brian doing this, George and I could concentrate on going fast.

The race committee sent us in at that point. We had won the Masters regatta. We decided not to sail the afternoon practice race. We took it easy after changing to the good sails that we used for the rest of the week. The Masters did a lot for our crew work. It gelled us together as a crew. At this point George had several hours in a Highlander and Brian had 3. We were ready for the Nationals.



PHOTO CREDIT: SUSAN TAYLOR

We did learn several things by sailing this event. In the first race there was a change of mark for the second windward leg. We were surprised there was not an offset mark. We hadn't read the sailing instructions very well. We also learned that there did not have to be a gate mark. The leeward mark for the Masters was a single mark. After sailing we confirmed these two items in the sailing instructions, we made a mental note for the Nationals. It is Important to read and study the Sailing instructions before sailing, not after.



2018 Pipers

We camped for the event near the shelter house. My lovely wife was shore crew and always had a smile on her face, food for us, and beer ready when we wanted it. We awoke Monday morning to a chill in the air and light wind on the water. We set up the boat with my best set of sails for the day. I was able to purchase some of the first "Dieball" North sails that are "light" weight at a reduced price when I bought the boat with a new Vermont spinnaker purchased at the same time. This entire set had only been used for the light air Pipers last year and the mostly light air Mad Plaid this year. The Highlander spinnaker has the same dimensions as a lightning spinnaker except for the mid seam dimension which makes them smaller than a lightning spinnaker on the foot. George and I really like the Vermont spinnakers on my Lightning and were happy to have them on the Highlander. We washed the bottom of the boat on the way into the water and got ready for the day.

When the committee boat went out, we followed and checked in.



PHOTO CREDIT: SUSAN TAYLOR

From my sailing experience, we always find it advantages to sail out early and get some time in the conditions for the day. We sailed up wind to where the windward mark would probably be, looking the whole time at how the wind was changing and were most of the pressure was. During this time, we felt that the left near a point of land had the most pressure and decided to head that way on the first beat. We also set up the compass for the wind. I sail with a Tack Tick

Race Master on my Lightning and received a ruling from the chief measurer that this is a legal compass before the event. This is a very nice compass, but a little over kill for lake sailing. We popped the kite and sailed downwind watching what the wind was doing.

For the very first start of the race we determined that the line was pretty square and that we wanted to go left. For some reason we had the whole pin quarter of the line to ourselves. At the start we were headed left with the whole fleet over my right shoulder. After a bit the entire fleet fell down to us with a left phase in the wind. We do not know the tacking angles on this boat like the lightning and waited till we had a clear lane to tack. I cannot remember if we were first or second around the mark with Spengeman (2002). Spengeman was sailing with one crew, so in this light wind it was going to be very hard to pass him. Up the next beat we were conservative, covering the fleet instead of trying to get around Spengeman. There were significant shifts during the race, by covering we were always in a good position to take advantage of any shift that occurred. We were very happy to end up second in that race.



PHOTO CREDIT: SUSAN TAYLOR

I do not remember much of the next race, other than the sight of the Ruhlman's (999) way out in front. George and I see the Ruhlman's all out on the Lightning circuit. On the second run the wind went light and Jason (885) jibed for the gate before we did. We did not notice that he was on a close reach and rounded ahead of us. We followed Jason in on a tighter reach to the mark. Jason sailed away to finish second in that race. We were not surprised to see the

Ruhlmans winning, and were very happy with our third in the race.

I cannot remember much about the last race of the day. Bill Fastiggi was way out in front. Bill is an excellent sailor and I was not surprised to see him win that race and more to come. Up the last beat there were boats going in many different directions. We decided to cover the Ruhlmans up the last beat, as they were the closest boat to us in the standings. Luckily, we were able to hold off them and the rest of the pack in the light air.

After all was done, we realized that we had just won the Pipers. I have won many regattas in my life but this one felt a little different. We were leading the Highlander Nationals at this point and this brought a smile to my face. The Pipers was part of the Highlander Nationals this year. With the great team work that was developing and how well we sailed, I knew we had a shot at being a National Champion.

Highlander Nationals

The Pipers was now complete. We were winning the Highlander Nationals. The weather report for Tuesday was not good, light to no air predicted. We awoke to the same chill in the air and light to no wind. We put the boat in the water again that morning and sailed out with the committee boat. We did the same thing as the day before. Checked in, then sailed up wind setting up the compass, looking at the wind, then flying the spinnaker back to the starting area. During this time, it was evident the wind we had was dying and very patchy. The race committee made the right call and sent us in to a postponement on shore.

We spend the next few hours resting and enjoying the beautiful Lake Norman fall weather. After a few hours the Race committee took us back out for a race. The wind was still very patchy and we did the same setup again on the boat. We saw that there was more pressure on the left up the beat and thought that would be the way to go. The race committee started a sequence and we found ourselves near the pin at two minutes to go when at least a 30 degree righty came across the course. We sailed as fast as we could in the light air toward the boat end of the line but were only able to make it about half way there. At the start of the race anyone near the Race Committee boat

was significantly ahead of us. We sailed off on starboard in the lift toward the middle of the lake. We watched as the boats that started near the boat had more pressure and were going to be ahead of us. When we made the decision to tack over to port and take our lumps. My heart jumped when the committee started blowing horns. It was an abandonment. We had just dodged a bullet with a bad race. The fleet sailed in with a lot of grumpy boats, the ones near the boat. And some like me, very happy to be going in.

The next day (Wednesday) we awoke to wind. It was blowing pretty hard. I was very happy that before the regatta I purchase new sailing gloves. I was going to need them. We did the same routine again. Early check in, go up wind.

PHOTO CREDIT: SUSAN TAYLOR



George's work with the vang was going to be put to the test today. As we went up wind, it was clear we were overpowered with the traveler all the way down and the Vang on hard. We set the compass up on this beat, with the shifty breeze it was clear this would be an important tool that day. We sailed up and put the kite up for the sail back to the Race committee. We were surprised to see only a few boats go up wind and even fewer that put the spinnaker up. We talked about the day ahead of us as we



sailed around with main alone before the race. We checked the wind several times and watched it move around. For the entire day we only put the jib up when we needed to. Pulling it up about 5 minutes before the start and dropping it after every race. This kept our relatively light cloth jib from being blown out.

The race committee came over the radio saying that it was blowing around 15 and that they would start on time. I thought it was blowing harder than that, but they had the wind instruments. The first race was tough. We were at the end of our depowering and I was not doing a good job of sailing the boat flat. Bill Fastiggi started near the pin with us and sailed off to a win by a good margin. When we went down wind, we noticed that there was only one leeward mark. In this kind of wind, it was hard to get any advantage, so there was going to be a pile up at the leeward mark. After rounding the mark, it was hard to hold your lanes with everyone on the same tack. It sure would have been nice to have a gate to separate the fleet a little bit. We were slowly ground down by the Ruhlman's and Aunt Ruby (1959). The Ruhlman's passed us on the first run with fantastic boat speed off the air down wind. Aunt Ruby passed us on the short last windward leg with a nice righty. We ended up with a 4th in that race. This would end up being our throw out for the regatta.

After the race we talked together about what just happened. Luckily the wind died down a bit. At the next start Bill Fastiggi and I started down near the pin with very few boats. When the first shift came through it was about a 15-degree lefty. Bill and I tacked on it, crossing the fleet easily. Bill rounded the weather mark first. We followed close behind. I knew Bill had some boat speed on us in the heavier air, so we covered the fleet for the rest of the race, ending up second.

Race number three for the day was the most interesting of the entire regatta. The wind was down a bit more, so the traveler was mid ship most of the race. We were going fast. Off the start, the boat end boats got a jump on us down the line and were ahead. About half way up the beat we were in around 10th and tacked to starboard on a small right shift. A group of 4 or 5 boats tacked a little above us. We were in clean air at this point below that pack of boats in around 12th place. Bill Fastiggi was leading this large pack of boats to the left when a small lefty (knock) came through. Bill could not tack but we

could and went behind that pack of boats. Further up the beat from this point, we were on port tack when we saw Jason Japikse coming at us on starboard. I thought we were close to crossing them but it was going to be close. This is the one time in the regatta we were a little aggressive. Instead of bearing off conservatively like we did the rest of the week, we did an aggressive lee bow tack. This worked great. Jason soon had to tack away, Sorry Jason. The Ruhlman's went around the weather mark in first with us around 6th. That large pack of boats we ducked behind earlier in the beat were behind us now. On the run the four boats behind the Ruhlman's reached up a bit and the Ruhlman's had to go up with them. When we rounded there was a nice gap behind and we bore off sailing straight downwind. Bryan called a fantastic run, jibing on lifts and telling me when to sail low or heat it up to get some pressure. As we approached the leeward mark, we were happy to see a gate set up and found ourselves rounding in first. We rounded the right gate, waited to get around the spinnakers coming down wind, then got a header and tacked.

PHOTO CREDIT: SUSAN TAYLOR



This turned out to be a great header. We sailed on that 15-degree shift until we were about to run aground at a point of land. The area behind the spinnakers in the picture. We tacked. Almost immediately, we got a land shift lift that got us around the mark. We sailed the next leg covering the fleet and won our first race of the Nationals. We watched as boats finished. Making sure we did not affect their wind. Bill Fastiggi was back a bit and we wanted as many boats as possible to beat him. We thought he got a 4th in that race so we knew that the last day of racing would be between the two of us for the title.



It turned out that Bill Fastiggi got a 5th in that race and both of us had 7 points for the day. We had 14 points with a 4 as a throw out. Bill had 17 points with a 6 as a throw out. If there was another race, a throw out would be used. The Ruhlman's were not far behind with 21 points and a 7 as a throw out. We were excited to be winning the regatta with light air predicted for the next day.

Once again, we did the same thing as the last few days. We were one of the first to check in and sailed around looking at the wind. At the start we were midline in a bit of a lift with Bill Fastiggi closer to the boat at the start. During the entire race Bryan fed us information on where Bill was and what he was doing in this light and patchy sailing. We also checked on the Ruhlman's who started near the pin. Aunt Ruby started to leeward of us and after a bit they were a about a boat length ahead and a half boat length to leeward of us. I was fighting to keep the boat up so we could keep our air clean. Then a strange thing occurred, Aunt Ruby boar off in what appeared to be a 5 degree knock and somehow, we went up in what appeared to be a 5-degree lift with pressure. I have never seen anything like this before, Aunt Ruby was in a commanding position and we sailed higher and faster over them. Luck was on our side. The Ruhlman's were now way below us and behind in little air. Bill was forced to go right because of boats around him. We wanted to get right to cover Bill but waited for the next shift to do it. We tacked on the shift and found ourselves with a commanding lead on the fleet. We rounded the weather mark first and lead for the rest of the race. There were some scary points when the wind crapped out. But we stayed between Bill in second place and the next mark for the rest of the race. After the race Bill came up to us and congratulated us, saying, "Do you think they will have two more races?" After doing the math, if there was only one more race the worst score, we could get was fourth (our throw-out) and even if Bill won would have more points than us counting the throw-out (15 to 16). The realization that we had probably just won the Highlander Nationals was starting to set in. It was confirmed soon after when the committee abandoned all racing and we sailed in.

It was a great pleasure to sail with George and Bryan at my First Highlander National Championship. Our teamwork gelled throughout the week. The experience of taking a barn find boat and fixing it up to a National Champion boat in two years was the

culmination of a life time of sailing in multiple different classes. My Highlander is set up a little more like a lightning than most, but that is because I am used to that set up. All the work on the boat and sailing it Sundays in the Cowan fleet paid off this year. Thanks to the entire Cowan fleet for helping me get to this point. From what I am told this is the first time in a while that a Custom Flex Highlander has won the Highlander Nationals.

George, Brian and I would like to thank Lake Norman Yacht Club for all their hospitality. Especially all of the volunteers who made this a fantastic week. We would also like to thank the Highlander Class and all the new and old friends at the event. Hope to see you all out on the water again next year.

PHOTO CREDIT: SUSAN TAYLOR



Highlander Nationals, A 3 Generation Team

By: Tanner Shultz

For the 2018 Highlander Nationals, we discussed which Shultz would skipper this year. After a few rock, paper, scissors sessions it was determined Kirk Shultz would have the helm and Wyatt and I would crew. Our goal for the week was to have fun and sail as fast as possible. We had a new spinnaker from Karl Felger/Quantum sails that fits the James Bond (1007) theme of "Shaken Not Stirred", which we believed would improve our downwind speed from the last Nationals.



PHOTO CREDIT: HAROLD & STEFANIE BAUER

The first three races were sailed in 6-10 kts with some significant shifts and velocity changes which jumbled the fleet. The first 2 races went well with mid-fleet finishes in the combined races however our third race set us back as we were OCS with the one-minute rule in effect. Starting dead last, we sailed back to 18th from 26th which placed us in the President's division. Big learning, don't sail too far to weather without keeping track of time. With our scores converted we started out in second place overall with a 1, 2, 5 behind Dick Doyne (851) a fellow Lake Norman Fleet 27 sailor. Behind us in 3rd was Neil Deaves (960) and fourth was Chris Kafsky (969). The first four boats were only separated by 2 points so don't let someone tell you the President's division is less competitive.

Tuesday provided lots of time to visit with sailing friends, look at rigging options, and relax as there was little raceable wind. While we come to sail, the day was put to good use by all as a vacation day. I love seeing the broad mix of ages. While most the teams sailing are older adults, there were several young sailors competing and even younger kids just having fun. Late in the day, as sailors checked Wednesday's forecast, my Dad just looked up and said, "It'll blow tomorrow, see the high cirrus clouds". I thought his is the only forecast for wind, but he has sailed here 40 years.

Wednesday dawned and the wind was up. Blowing 12-15 kts from the N-NE, we were

going to have a day of hiking and trimming. We start as one fleet then get scored separately so at times it was difficult to tell where we were in relation to our competition. Race 4 was tough on us. My father hadn't helmed the boat since March, his shoes were slipping in the boat and it was blowing so we netted a 6th as we worked to get our rhythm steering upwind. Hindsight, we should have dumped the traveler earlier and used a bit more boom vang to flatten the main and depower the boat. Race 5 we got a great start with clear air and a clear lane to tack on the first shift. We were sailing up in the Championship division boats rounding the weather mark 2nd boat overall. This really

boosted my father's confidence that he could drive the boat well and rely on Wyatt and me to do our jobs. We gave up some positions to Championship division boats but scored another 1st. Race 6 saw another good start with Kirk setting us up for another good race. We sailed fast both up and down wind finishing 1st. Solid day that put us in 1st overall for Wednesday.

PHOTO CREDIT: HAROLD & STEFANIE BAUER



Race 7 on Thursday was a light wind challenge that put a focus on staying in the breeze. Angle to the mark took a back seat to keeping the boat moving. We struggled with boat set up and tactically as the wind continued to lighten as the race progressed. We had loosely done the math on what we needed but I kept making wrong picks tactically. Deaves (960) and MacNeill (92) were in the wind the whole race and ran away. We were in a sailing brawl



with Kafsky (969), Hesler (1003), and Rule (980). On the last weather leg, we worked hard to get leverage on Kafsky on our right and protect from Hesler and Rule on the left side. Finishing 4th gave us the win by one point after seven races. The first 3 boats were covered by 4 points.

Discovering sailing as three generations; 1. Sailing is one of the few sports offering the opportunity to compete and be competitive for three generations, 2. The Highlander is a great boat as the cockpit, sail controls and layout make the boat easy to control, 3. Comfort- while we were a little sore after a week of sailing, the boat is easier on the sailor than most boats I've sailed. Additional observations, I spent time

talking with the 2018 Thistle National Champion Brad Russell who crewed for Rick Myers (910). He shared some insights from his experience which we applied to our Nationals. Sailing flat and keeping the boat rolling through the water gives the centerboard lift upwind and downwind you can sail from puff to puff for more speed. Upwind we could see a difference in our speed and lift from other boats by sailing flatter. I trimmed the main and spinnaker, my son called the compass, trimmed the jib and jibed the spinnaker pole. Dividing the labor makes sailing easier on everyone. It encourages better communication and connection. This was a Nationals to remember for the Shultz boys to sail and grow as family.





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