

Code Flag “V” Flies at Southern Chesapeake Bay Leukemia Cup Regatta

By Rich Payne

All seven boats in Fleet 15 registered for the Leukemia Cup Regatta, although only six made it to the line. Faced with an unseasonable 25 knot south wind on the fourth and fifth of July, new member Eddie Hornick was forced to cancel his two-day trip south from Annapolis for the regatta, but by Friday, the sixth, things were much more seasonable. Traveling north from Hampton, Rich Payne was forced to motor for about 15 of the 35 nautical mile trip, and the “Down the Hatch” ventilation device didn’t have much to work with during Friday night at the marina. Day 1 of the regatta (Saturday) dawned with the promise of more of the Chesapeake Bay midsummer doldrums.

Promptly at 11 AM on Day 1, the Race Committee on the Regatta’s East Course hoisted the Postponement flag, since there wasn’t enough wind to post a course, and the racers settled into the familiar ritual of waiting for the sea breeze to fill in. Swimming, water cannon battles, and even the Fleet 15 Semi-Annual Meeting occupied the hour or so that it took to get things started. With the sea breeze settled in out of the northeast at an anemic 5 or 6 knots, the Race Committee set the course and began the “A Fleet” start sequence, with the J/105 one-design start following immediately afterwards. Even with the light air conditions, the Race 1 start was something of a historic event, since it was the first-ever sanctioned one-design J/105 start in the Southern Chesapeake Bay.



Photo by Mike Hollsten (aboard “Flying Colors”)

The J/105s were one of only four sanctioned classes in the regatta (together with PHRF A, PHRF B/C and non-spinnaker), and thus attracted a lot of local attention. With the weak but steady sea breeze, the fleet completed the two-lap, four-mile Race 1 by early afternoon, and the Race Committee elected to set a shorter one-lap Race 2 in order to get the racers off the course in time for the gala Leukemia/Lymphoma Society dinner Saturday night.

Day 2 dawned with the promise of more of the light air conditions, and many racers expected that the 10 o'clock start would result in a two-hour postponement instead of only one. Always filled with surprises, Mother Nature came up with a nice southerly breeze, which enabled Race 3 to get off in 7-8 knots of breeze by 1030. Surprisingly, the breeze continued to build as the day wore on, so that race 4 began with the J/105s fully powered up in 12 knots of breeze. By 2 o'clock, two two-lap, four-mile races had been completed, and the racers headed for the barn.

Regatta results are posted on the Fleet 15 Results page. Brad Davis's string of bullets was interrupted in Race 2 when the strong flood current sucked him into the windward mark and he was forced to take a penalty turn, but he still emerged the overall winner. New J/105 co-owner Mike Karn was a strong second, with a first and three seconds, and Strother Scott took third, with a second and three thirds. Combined with Southern Bay Race Week results, the Fleet 15 series has Fleet Captain David Clark holding onto first place, with a three-way tie for second among Brad Davis, Mike Karn, and Rich Payne. Look for the "rubber match" at the Stingray Point Regatta Labor Day Weekend. In the meantime, David, Brad, and Mike all plan to show the Region IV flag at the Screwpile Regatta in Solomons later this month.