

The CRAM Racing Season has Begun!

The 2008 CRAM racing season started the weekend of May 3rd at Alum Creek State Park, just North of Columbus, Ohio. The Ohio Catamaran Racing Association and Alum Creek Sailing Association along with Alum Creek State Park sponsored their annual Alum Creek Spring Regatta. This was the first CRAM points regatta of the year and also the first of 6 F17 Gold Cup Events for the 2008 Sailing season.

Friday afternoon saw the arrival of several sailors who began setting up their boats on the grass at the state park beach. For those who haven't attended before, there is a great expanse of thick lawn that is great for rigging boats. The wind was starting to come up, steady 15-20mph gusting 25-30 mph, giving the sailors a taste of what Saturday would bring.

Mike Teets was the only person to sail Friday and was sailing downwind under spinnaker as a series of huge gusts came down the lake. He was doing well staying ahead of them until a monster gust capsized and launched him from the boat. The National Weather Service recorded a gust of 38mph about the time Mike went over at the Columbus Airport. After some swimming, he was rescued by a monohull sailed by Jim Lubinsky, another ACSA member, that had been sailing that afternoon. Enroute back to Mike's boat they ran aground and had to be pulled off by Jamie Diamond's RIB, which was the second mark boat for the regatta. Mike finally swam to shore and was reunited with his boat that miraculously had come to rest in one of the few reed beds on the lake. The only damage was to his wind indicator on the spin pole. This is a good reminder to carry whistles, radios, and a GPS while out sailing alone, especially in the Great Lakes. If you get knocked off your boat, it will often get pushed faster than you can swim.



Saturday morning had the sailors rigging and tuning their boats in the rain and winds of 6-12mph and gusts of 12-23mph. Registration was moved from the traditional location by Jamie Diamond's RV to the shelter of the bathhouse. At the skippers meeting it was decided to cancel racing for the day, even though the RC had already sent the committee boat and two mark boats out on the water and had set an "A-C" course with a gate. None of the sailors were eager to sail right away and they decided that with the expectation that the wind would continue to build as storms came through they wanted to cancel rather than wait around all day for a break in the weather. The sailors voted to extend racing until 2pm on Sunday to get a couple extra races in. It was announced that the evening party would begin at 11am at the home of Jamie Diamond, who coordinated the race and was on race committee for the weekend. A few of the F17 sailors did manage to



get out on the water late afternoon between a couple storm fronts, including Eric Kennedy, returning to racing after a four year hiatus. After the boats hit the beach, one of the resident kite surfers made the comment that if the F17s were done sailing for the day



already, then Bill Gillespie's boat "Racer X" should be re-named "Daysailor X". A nickname that will probably haunt him for some time to come.

Saturday evening the festivities continued at the home of Jamie and Judy Diamond in Columbus. A big thanks to them for opening their home and hosting all of the racers. We had a great time catching up and telling stories over pizza and refreshments.

Sunday morning everyone was ready to race. Winds were light, only about 6 out of the North. First warning was to be promptly at 9am All of the racers were on the lake and ready, with no sign of the RC. A few minutes before 9am the mark boat headed out from the sailing association with the RC boat a few minutes later. It turns out that Jamie's RIB had lost air in one of the chambers during the storms on Saturday night and had partially sunk, including the Honda outboard. Jamie ended up spending all Sunday afternoon and evening reconditioning the motor and getting the water out of the gas, carburetor, oil, etc. He reports that the motor should be in good shape at his point. Once the "C" mark and starting line had been set, the first warning was sounded at 9:17. The wind promptly died to dead calm. The Portsmouth fleet started first, consisting of two Hobie 16s, one Hobie 17, one Hobie 18 and a Nacra 18square. By the time the F17 fleet, consisting of



seven boats, started a few of the Portsmouth boats hadn't cleared the starting line yet. It was a sign of things to come. The racing was interesting. The little wind that did come through came in small shifting waves. Coupled with the steady North to South Current in the Alum Creek Reservoir, the patchy wind made the "A" mark roundings very treacherous. More than a few sailors thought they had enough room to clear the mark, only to drift back into it due to the current and light air. There were times that the entire



fleet would be stationary, or just those unlucky enough to blow a tack or find a hole in the light breeze. If you lost flow over the sail, you have to wait for the next bit of wind to come through to get moving again. Three races were held, with only 1 minute between the first race and two minutes in between the next races. They were all course 1 with lengths of about 1/8th of a mile, but still only amounted to completing 3 races by noon, when racing was officially called off for the day. A big

thanks to Jamie and everyone else on RC that kept things moving and getting the races off one after another in the challenging conditions.

Jamie Diamond presented the regatta awards as follows:

Portsmouth Fleet:

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| 1. Don Fecher | Hobie 16 1up | 3 points |
| 2. Charlie Buchert | Hobie 16 1up | 4 points |
| 3. George Fecher | Hobie 17 | 4 points |

F17 Fleet

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| 1. Joe Buchert | F17U | 2 points |
| 2. Bill Gillespie | F17U | 4 points |
| 3. Chad Schwall | F17U | 5 points |

[Complete Results can be found on the OCRA Website.](#)

Following the regatta awards, Eric Kennedy F17 Fleet Captain presented the Gold Cup prizes. New for this year, an anonymous donor has donated prize money to the F17 Gold Cup Events. The rules are 7 or more class members on F17s have to be sailing in the event (not just registered) The racers will get their finishing order number thrown into a hat, or a cardboard box in this instance. Judy Diamond pulled out the numbers of Chad Schwall for \$25, Mike Teets for \$50, and the big winner of the day, Joe Buchert, for \$100. Thanks Anonymous Donor!



Thanks again to Jamie Diamond, OCRA, ACSA, Alum Creek State Park, the race committee, Judy Diamond at registration, and everyone else who helped make this regatta happen.

The Next CRAM event is the Higgins Lake Regatta, May 17-18, located at beautiful South Higgins Lake State Park. Camping reservations are available at the [Michigan DNR Website](#). Also online regatta registration and payment is available through the [CRAM Website](#). We are looking to expand the numbers in the F17 fleet and see the other fleets come join the fun.

Andy Kursch - F17 129 with special thanks to Jamie Diamond for filling in some of the details and to Angie (of Chad and Angie) for taking the pictures.