

The El Toro Gift . . . Generational Competition, A Father's Perspective

Contributed by John Pacholski



Patrick Tara
2010 Sr. North American Champion

Two SCYC father-son teams, John and Michael Pacholski, and Paul and Patrick Tara traveled to Clear Lake for the El Toro Senior North American Championship held June 18, 19, 20. El Toro sailors are considered juniors until they reach their 15th birthday when they become eligible to race in the senior fleet. Sixteen year old, three times Junior North American Champion Patrick Tara wasted no time in serving notice on the senior fleet. Sailing a nearly flawless seven race series, he posted finishes of 1, 1, 2, 4, 2, 1, 1 to capture the title from the defending champion, Fremont Sailing Club's Art Lange, who finished second. . "Old timers', John Pacholski and Paul Tara, finished third and sixth respectively, with Richmond Yacht Club's Gordie Nash fourth. . Current Junior North American Champ Mike Pacholski sailed unofficially as a senior to finish ninth.

The passage of an upper level trough brought windier conditions than usual for the first two days of the regatta, accompanied by a difficult chop. The final day saw a return to lighter, more typical breeze. None of this however, seemed to affect the eventual winner, who almost effortlessly shifted gears to meet the conditions. Nor did it seem to affect his single minded concentration. On Sunday, he tacked directly in front of his Dad, Paul Tara, on the starboard tack lay line to the weather mark. When Paul exclaimed, "Hey, it's Father's Day," he replied, "I have only one gift - bad air."