



2017 Flight of the Bulls

The RC had a direct line to the wind god for this year's event. The 20+ winds that were prevalent the day before and even in the early morning of race day died off to a pleasant 9 knots at precisely 11am last Saturday for the start of the Flight of the Bulls. Winds built gradually during the race, but all participants were safely off the course by 3pm, when the winds broke back into the high teens. It sure is nice when nature cooperates.

Thirteen sailors participated in this year's event, four juniors and nine seniors. There were many position changes up and down the fleet through a good portion of the race. The race was run on the "reverse" course i.e. we went to Central Lagoon first and saved the east channel for last. Light air at the start gave John P. to snatch an early lead which was unwillingly relinquished to Art Lange soon after the mark rounding at Cloud Park (southernmost mark after Chevy's channel run) Art, Fred Paxton and Gordie Nash duked it out all the way up Chevy's channel, across the bottom of Central Lagoon, through the start/finish line and up the eastern channel. Art got a great puff rounding the last mark and was able to fight off multiple attacks by Fred Paxton down the last run to the finish line. Art repeated with 1st place, Fred closely following in 2nd. On the last run, after two+ hours of racing, as is weirdly typical for this lengthy race, Vaughn Seifers, Gordie Nash and John P. were dead even on the run. Gordie picked the right line and slipped into a well earned third place. John P. got a lucky puff that let him slip by Vaughn to capture fourth, with Vaughn right on his tail in fifth. After rangling with both Vaughn and John P. on the Chevy's leg, Paul Zander sailed to a sixth place finish. In seventh, our youngest senior, Owen Lahr showed that he can sail with the big dogs. Watch out for Owen next year! Eighth place and First Junior went to Wesley Seifers. Enjoy the rootbeer Wes. At one point during this year's race Vaughn was offering Wes some kindly boat handling advice to Wes, at which point Wes pointed out that he was leading Vaughn in the race. No doubt that came back to haunt Wes on the ride home. Junior Nate Holden sailed a great race placing 9th. In 10th Chase Englehart at 90 pounds earned his stripes as the winds were pretty stiff by the time Chase hit shore. The other half of Team Holden, dad Mike, finished 11th. In 12th, from Steven's Creek sailing, Dave Groechel. And junior Elsa Simenstad from RYC completed this rigorous course and took First Bullette honors for this year. All sailors finished in good spirits after a quick and moderately challenging 2017 Flight of the Bulls. PRO Kurt Lahr had the honor of congratulating and handing trophies to this year's top finishers. All then adjourned to the home of Kurt and Kelly Lahr for a delightful treat of hotdog's, chili and watermelon. Yum. Thanks Lahrs!!! A big thanks to Kurt Lahr for setting the marks and providing and manning the safety boat this year. And thanks to Chris Simenstad for backing up Kurt on the start and recording finishes.

Next year's Flight of the Bulls will be held Saturday, May 12th, always the Saturday before Mother's Day. See you there!





