

Wisconsin or Bust!

or, Greg and Diane go to the 2009 Flying Scot NACs
by Diane Kampf

Greg and I recently visited Door County in the upper peninsula of Wisconsin on Green Bay to participate in the 2009 Flying Scot North American Championship. We were amazed to see that about half way up the peninsula, the communities were devoid of McDonald's, CVS, Target or any of our chain stores we have come to know. The small towns truly had your typical Mom and Pop stores, restaurants and personal art galleries. This was a refreshing change from the every day craziness we are so used to. We ate a few meals (those few that were not provided by the regatta) at the local restaurants, including Wilson's Ice Cream parlor, where I had to go back 3 more times to make sure it was really good ice cream!

On the way, on Thursday, July 30th, our friends Hank Sykes and Randy Williams led the way, and were about 2 hours ahead of us scouting out hotels to stay at for the night and restaurants that were worthy of taking our money. We took Interstate 90 most of the way to Wisconsin, passing through Albany, NY, Erie, PA, Toledo, OH, South Bend, IN, then turned north through Chicago, IL and Milwaukee, WI, before settling in Ephraim, WI for the week. When we arrived on Saturday, August 1, Hank and Randy were in what we thought was the extended lobby of the lodge, but it turned out to be our apartment for the week that we shared with Hank and Randy and Bill & Melanie Dunham. It was a 2-story lodge with bedrooms upstairs and an open living room, dining room and kitchen, all glassed in, overlooking the Ephraim Yacht Club where our boats were and Eagle Harbor, where we sailed. Hank scouted that out for us a year ago! One night, he invited 1/2 the regatta participants to our place for dinner. We had spaghetti and meatballs, so it worked out great!

The organization was superb. The Ephraim Yacht Club has a concrete dock where they put ~50 of the 74 boats, each diagonally on a trailer, with boats on both sides of the dock. There were 2 hoists and boats could choose either one depending on the wind direction. With the youth from the Club working all week to help, everyone cooperated taking turns getting boats in and out. And for the boats that were not on the dock, there is a ramp down the street where the rest of the boats were dorysailed, with similar cooperation from all.

There were the obligatory FSSA meetings for me, Executive Committee, Fleet Captains, and District Governor's meetings. We shared lots of good information with the Fleet Captains, and we had some pretty hard work to do with the Executive Committee and the District Governors to work within the decreased budget we have with less income this past year. We also had the Annual Meeting where we gave out Special awards. Fleet 76 got the Most Contributions to Scot n' Water and New England District got the most contributions by a district to Scots n' Water. I gave out Fleet Growth awards to several fleets that had continued to grow during 2009. I came out of the Annual Meeting as the First Vice President of FSSA and I am getting my arms around what that means. The biggest thing it means is that I will most likely be President in 2 years so I have a lot to learn in those 2 years! This is usually a 6-year ladder, but somehow for me it is 3 years. Well, we all got through all the work and the rest of the week was lots of fun.

The hospitality and food were very good too. The Commodore's welcome party included lots of finger foods and hors d'oeuvres and sweets. The Brat party was great with corn on the cob and hamburgers for those who did not want the bratwurst. The Pig Roast was delicious with lots of fixings. All of these were held at member's homes under huge tents in case it rained - it didn't! And the Annual banquet was really nice as well, held at a local Country Club. And there was always enough beer and water after the races under the "beer tent". You see, Ephraim is a dry town, and the only place you could have the beer was under the "Beer tent" that was set up on the town green. There were people walking down the street with t-shirts around their cups - kind of like college days!

The Women and Junior NACs were sailed on Sunday, and Greta Mittman, Southwest District Governor won the Women's event, with 5 boats sailing. Stewart Drahiem won the Junior event with 10 boats sailing. He was awarded the Fleet 76 Award, which was donated by Greg and me since the original Junior NAC trophy had been missing since 2002. It felt pretty good to see such a fine sailor get the award.

The sailing for us was great. What a wonderful sight seeing 74 Flying Scots on the Harbor. After a qualifying round of 3 races, there would be 37 boats in the Championship Division and 37 in Challenger. We split up into 4 groups A, B, C and D for the qualifiers. In race 1, group A sailed group B, while group C sailed group D; then in race 2, A sailed C, while B sailed D; and in race 3, A sailed D while B sailed C. So everyone sails everyone else at least once. The most memorable for me was when we started the first race and rounded the Windward mark 1st ahead of everyone. I was not sure what to do with the spinnaker because there was no one ahead of us to follow!!! Only 4 of the 36 other boats caught us and we ended up 5th in that race feeling pretty good about the whole thing. After 2 days, we found ourselves in 14th place of 74 boats, right up there in the Championship Division. Who knew?

In the finals, we were fairing pretty well, and were 15th after 2 days, only 9 points out of the trophy realm. On the last day, we sailed 2 races and just could not get the boat moving. We ended up in 30th place overall but feeling pretty good that we had sailed our hearts out and finished all the races upright. We think we made MYC pretty proud. We will continue to try to go to the NAC and see if we can work our way up near the top some day!

Our ride home was pretty smooth, except for Chicago - that's never fun, but the rest was smooth sailing, er, driving. We made a side trip to Saratoga because we promised them we would, but there was not wind and we never launched the boat there. We were able to see Peter and Ann Seidman and everyone else who came. Jim Cavanagh won the 2009 Saratoga Invitational sailing with Dave Jacobsen Jr. We sure hope to be sailing again at Saratoga next year!

We made it home from Wisconsin with cheeseheads for the grandchildren, and gifts for their parents and my mother. There was no time to waste, back to work on Monday, and then getting ready for the Mallory/Adams Area A Eliminations and the MYC Fall Regatta, after just finishing up the Flying Scot Wife-Husbands. Yikes, I can hardly wait for the 2010 season!