

2009 Etchells Long Island Sound Championship

June 13-14 2009

Shelter Island YC, Shelter Island, NY

The International Etchells Long Island Sound Championship was graciously hosted by the Shelter Island Yacht Club over the weekend of June 13th and 14th. Twenty-one boats including many of the top names in the class took the opportunity to return to this wonderful sailing venue where the on and off the water organization and competitor hospitality is always first-class.

Competitors arrived in Noyack Bay on Saturday morning with a 5-10 Knot NE gradient that was forecast to move right and turn into a light SE Sea breeze. By the 11am start time, the thermal activity had already created a race course full of snakes and ladders that would make consistency in the first two races a very challenging concept to realize.

The leaders in Race one started at the pin end of the line and worked the middle left of the track. The challenge for these boats was that the middle right was also paying nicely. Steve Schram sailing with Ian and Sam Evans and Keith Longson and the Weld brothers showed their smarts early on the left while team Barry Allardice/Tim Hotchkiss, Team Chuck Poindexter and Jay Mills and family led the right. At the top of the cone, Hank Lammens, Steve Girling and Chris Johannessen pulled off a Lazarus like recovery to sneak ahead of Ched Proctor, Chip Whipple and Jim Miller to round 4th behind Mills, Schram and Poindexter. The run and second beat were equally challenging and with no clear leader it was still anyone's race, but on the second downwind to the finish, Lammens flipped onto Starboard on layline for the pin, forcing Longson to cross behind, while Mills squeaked in ahead for the win by half a length. Proctor was 4th, Poindexter 5th and Schram 6th.

Race 2 was more flakey. Off the line, the 4 pin-favored boats had the pack to the right, but didn't choose to cross. With 2 kts more right pressure up the track, the right pack was looking good, with Longson, Hitchcock/Keyworth and Proctor all smiles! Lammens, Schram and Poindexter had some major work to do, but with more right and even less pressure on subsequent legs, there were few opportunities for a recovery. Longson stole the race on the line from Hitchcock/Keyworth (3,1 so far). Proctor posted a 3rd for a 4,3 so far. Brothers and Dad Mills had a 4th for 1,4 so far.

Race 3 started with clear right pressure on the beach and was abandoned with Team Lammens leading by a minute having started at the boat and moving right to reap the rewards. The good news here was that a nice SSE breeze of 7-11 kts was on the way in, so the RC re-set and 30 mins later the action started once again.

The Race 3 re-start saw Allardice/Hotchkiss win the pin, with Hitchcock/Keyworth, Poindexter and Lammens stacked to weather. Pre-start, there was clearly pressure coming down the track middle-left and as this arrived, these guys had the aces! However, only Lammens took the first shift with pressure, easily crossing the rest of the fleet to the right. The others continued left and sacrificed their early gains and a good result by doing so. Lammens worked the shifts up the middle right and had a healthy lead at the top mark. Schram, Proctor, Kaufman and Carroll rounded out the top 5. A safe run set up a tricky second beat. Lammens sailed conservatively, using some of his lead, but got exposed up near the starboard layline as two boats 50 yards astern and two lengths to weather got some magical right pressure. This put Kaufman around the top mark in first with Lammens and Proctor hot on his heels and Schram just behind. Lammens executed the better set and rolled over Kaufman, forcing him to gybe away, but with Schram also having a good set, Kaufman took his stern too and was effectively out of contention. The next band of pressure was a rightie (looking upwind) and Lammens and Schram both gybed, soon followed by

Proctor. Schram made the best of the gains, getting most of the 7 knot breeze first, but Lammens managed the balance between being in the pressure and giving away too much distance to Schram nicely and took the win. Schram worked the last 100 yards beautifully to slide in ahead of Proctor for second. Kaufman was 4th.

Race 4 had a similar set up, but with a little boat bias for the first time in the regatta. Lammens came off the boat end with Hitchcock/Keyworth a few boats to leeward and both were able to flip onto port with the first shift. Lammens sailed another nice beat up the middle right and near the top mark, doubled his lead on Hitchcock/Keyworth in a lovely fanning band of right pressure. Peter Carroll and team were having a great race neck and neck for 2nd. Lammens extended on the next lap by staying in the pressure to take another bullet and the overnight lead from Mills and Proctor who were tied two points back. With the best total score and the biggest discard, Lammens, Girling and Johannessen were looking good. Ten points separated the next 5 boats.

Sunday brought more light NE/E gradients to Noyack Bay. Two races were scheduled.

Race 5 had a 10 degree boat bias with some pressure, but the fleet was spread out down the line. Although the early leaders, including Lammens and Mills got a jump from the right, the left got back into the game very quickly. Fleet 15 captain, Don Shillingburg made a charge for the front, taking the strongest left pressure of the day into a commanding lead at the top mark, followed by Hitchcock/Keyworth and Lammens with a tight pack hot on their heels. Shillingburg looked untouchable, but gave up some of his lead by gybing early on the first and second runs. Hitchcock/Keyworth generally stayed to the favored side and took big gains but ultimately, it was not enough and Shillingburg took the win. Team Lammens played the good shepherd role well and managed the tight pack around them carefully for a steady third with Allardice/Hotchkiss posting a solid 4th and Proctor 5th. Team Mills was not able to make the move that they were hoping for and finished 7th behind Poindexter.

In the final Race 6, Lammens just needed a solid result inside the top ten while Mills had to beat Proctor to win second. Lammens sailed a nice beat up the middle to round first with Mills and Proctor right on his transom. Down the first run and back up the second beat it was flakey, but the leaders had a nice jump and continued to extend on the pack. It was still close at the top mark with Lammens sailing through Mills slam dunk before the windward mark to round bow forward. Team Mills had a great set and slid down inside Lammens. 2 mins later, this set up a gybe onto port into a relative increase in pressure and a four length lead. Lammens and Proctor had it back to 2 lengths at the port gate but had no option but to follow Mills around. Lammens was the first to flip onto starboard and made some gains on Mills in the first few down speed tacks before tracking (albeit to windward) Mills and Proctor towards the 'favored for now' right side. With all three back on starboard and Proctor still to the right, the three leaders played their final cards on the approach to the finish. Lammens was just ahead of Proctor but was struggling to cross Mills as another fanning right puff rolled through. Lammens tacked to leeward and utilized the full benefit of the fan to exploit a better angle and more breeze than Mills.

Two tacks later, Lammens and team had the clamps on and it was game over. Significantly, Mills now had Proctor in control by two lengths. They finished in that order at the favored pin end. Lammens, Girling and Johannessen won the Championship by ten points, counting a 1,1,1,2,3 and were also crowned King of the Bays (a Shelter Island YC perpetual Trophy for Etchells Champions). Mills sailed a great regatta, winning the count-back over Proctor. Hitchcock/Keyworth and Longson/Weld(s) rounded out the top five.

The Etchells class North East circuit moves on to Newport, Marblehead and Buzzards Bay for the summer before the North American Championships at the Royal Canadian YC in Toronto in September.

- Steve Girling

Jun. 14, '09

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Final Results

Series Summary

Pl	Bow#	Skipper	1	2	3	4	5	6	Tot
1	6	Hank Lammens	2	(11)	1	1	3	1	8
2	1	Jamie Mills	1	4	(8)	4	7	2	18
3	2	Ched Proctor	4	3	3	(7)	5	3	18
4	11	Tim Keyworth	10	2	(11)	3	2	8	25
5	13	Keith Longson	3	1	6	(13)	8	9	27
6	8	Barry Allardice	7	7	9	(14)	4	6	33
7	17	Chuck Poindexter	5	9	7	8	6	(12)	35
8	5	Peter Carroll	12	14	5	2	9	(16)	42
9	18	John Amendola	(16)	10	12	5	11	4	42
10	14	John Stitzer	9	12	14	6	(15)	5	46
11	15	Steve Schram	6	15	2	(17)	13	13	49
12	19	Ray Harrington	11	(16)	10	11	10	10	52
13	12	Andrew Wolf	(13)	5	13	12	12	11	53
14	10	Don Shillingburg	15	8	15	15	1	(19)	54
15	4	Greg Hodkinson	8	6	16	10	14	(17)	54
16	16	Scott Kaufman	(21)	17	4	9	19	7	56
17	9	John McConnell	14	13	18	(19)	17	15	77
18	7	Will Ricketson	19	(20)	20	16	18	14	87
19	3	J.D. Pribor	18	(21)	19	18	16	18	89
20	21	Martin O'Neill	17	18	17	(20)	20\DNS	20\DNS	92
21	20	Christian Langendal	20	19	(21)	21	20\DNF	20\DNS	100