

Snipe Southwestern Regatta 2024...By Steve Luko

Snipe sailors from as far away as Florida made their way to the Corinthian Sailing Club in Dallas, Texas to compete in the 88th Southwestern Championship Regatta hosted by Snipe Fleet 101. Conditions on White Rock Lake were near perfect at 10-15 mph at the start of the first race Saturday morning. Amanda Kremer and Maya Woeger (Union Sailing Club, Rocky Mountain Snipe Fleet 210) edged out Gene Soltero and Laura O'Leary (Corinthian Sailing Club, Snipe Fleet 1) in the first three races. In the two afternoon races the top two finishers from the morning reversed places with Soltero/O'Leary taking advantage of breezier conditions to win both races, with Kremer/Woeger taking second in both.

An extra race was held Saturday in anticipation that conditions would be even breezier on Sunday, with gusts up to 30 mph predicted. As forecast, conditions did get windier Sunday. The course was set, two boats didn't leave the docks and a third retired prior to the scheduled start after experiencing wind shifts in addition to the strong breezes. Noting the evolving conditions, the Race Committee sagely postponed the start of the race and called for competitors to return to shore with all boats returning safely. Based on the forecast of even breezier conditions the rest of the day the competitors overwhelmingly voted to abandon races for the day. A veteran of many Snipe races over many years later noted it was the worst conditions they had ever attempted to start a regatta in.

Doug Day and Karen Hawkins (Jacamo Sailing Club, Snipe Fleet 49) sailed consistently well for an overall third place, with Adam Field and Allana Fernandez (Union Sailing Club, Rocky Mountain Snipe Fleet 210) also sailing consistently well for an overall fourth place. Jeff Ubanski and Lily Guthrie finished a respectable fifth in a fleet of twelve, a great finish for the sailing newcomer as crew and a skipper getting back into the groove of competitive racing after some time away. They competed in "Bombshell" (#19888), a 1972 Chubasco that was refitted in 2006 with air tanks and wooden deck and stern...and was donated last year to Dallas Snipe Fleet 001 by James Bland, a long-time Finn sailor from Austin, Texas.

In the words of the Regatta Chair, Laura O'Leary, "(the) Regatta was awesome. Weather forecasts are unreliable. Snipe sailors are the best. Corinthian sailors (Race Committee) are also spectacular." Snipe Fleet 1 provided loaner boats to encourage participation from out-of-town guests, and despite the challenging conditions, none of the loaners or other boats withdrew due to rigging or boat issues, attesting to the boats being well maintained.

Snipe Fleet 1 thanks all the competitors and spectators and looks forward to hosting another exciting and competitive regatta October 12-13, 2024, the Texas State Championship. As we say here in Texas, "Come and take it".