

## HIGH WINDS POUND THE DEEPHAVEN CENTENNIAL REGATTA

The 2008 Twin Cities Youth Sailing opening regatta, the Deephaven Centennial, was forced to cancel Optimist Green and 420 classes due to high winds. Only the Optimist Red, White and Blue classes completed three races. Ian Solum and Eddie Cox tied on points, but Ian won the overall championship tie breaker by virtue of having won races. Rosie Hust won in Opti White and Isabella Loosbrock finished first in the Opti Blue Division.

At the 10pm skippers meeting the racing was postponed to 11:00. Several Optimist sailors practiced in the high winds averaging 18-22mph. At 11:00 it was decided to postpone until after lunch. Two high wind racing clinics were conducted by Gordy Bowers with help from coaches Dan Thompson, Zach Hester and Dan Morris for all Optimist and 420 sailors.

After lunch races were cancelled for Opti Green and 420. The keys to success on the Opti course were sound strategy, boat speed and toughness. The best sailors tacked only on the big shifts upwind. Downwind the best strategy was to round the weather mark, sail low on starboard and jibe once in a light spot further down the run.

Good boat speed upwind and down usually determines the winners. Upwind, the best Opti skippers sailed with their centerboards up 6 to 10 inches to reduce weather helm. They kept their boats sailing flat by quickly easing the mainsheet in the heavy gusts and sailing for speed over the waves. Down wind it was important to sit aft to keep the bow from diving in the heavy puffs. Once planning the Opti sails best flat with very little heel to windward.

Lastly, all the finishers needed to be both mentally and physically tough for the races. All the finishers showed courage, focus and intensity on the race course. As a result sailing the next heavy air race will be easier. They all are to be congratulated.

The Lake Minnetonka Sailing School wishes to thank all the volunteers who make the Deephaven Centennial a success in spite of the high winds.