

Miami Olympic Classes Regatta Report

Hello everyone! Sorry this has taken so long, it has been a hectic time for both of us getting settled back into the school life in Halifax. We returned from Miami on January 30th, right after competing in the Olympic Classes Regatta. For us, the event was a huge success and big confidence boost. It was our first event in the 470 class, our first event



together and our first time competing at an Olympic level event. We both feel that it was the hardest sailing either of us have done so far. The fleet was extremely competitive and all the races were very close, and we were very happy with our sailing and our finishes. 8 of the top 10 and the majority of the top 30 ranked teams in the world were at this event, which was a really great experience for us.

Because it was our first event in this boat, we did not set a performance goal, as there is no way we could evaluate where a good finish would be for us. Instead, we set several simple but challenging goals to focus on throughout the event. These goals were accelerating early and aggressively to ensure a clean lane off the start, solid and brief communication during the race, staying in clear lanes on the first upwind and not getting caught tacking through the middle and clean mark roundings with no fouls or big losses of boats. By focusing on these (seemingly) simple goals we were able to make lots of progress throughout the week, improving every day. Mastering these basics in this competitive fleet is the first step toward consistently finishing in the top.

Halfway through the regatta we were top Canadian boat by a fairly large margin, even though we had an OCS (meaning we were early on a start, and were penalized with extra points). This was really exciting for us, as we were ahead of Canada's representative in the 470 class at the 2008 Olympics in Beijing, as well as a team from BC who have been sailing 470 for almost 4 years. Unfortunately, due to a ripped spinnaker, we did not finish within the time limit for the 6th race. This gave us additional points, which put us into 3rd of 5 Canadian boats. On the final day we sailed 3 races, but couldn't quite get the 2nd Canadian spot. There were 41 boats competing, and we finished 34th in the end with an OCS and TLE, of which we could only drop one. We felt very good about the regatta as a whole, with our top race being a 23rd. We were top Canadian in 4 of 9 races, which was more often than any other team. Although our goal is still the 2016 Olympics, we've now realized that we are not as far from the 2012 Games as we thought.

Full results are here:

<http://www.ussailing.org/Rolex/2011/470m/470m.html>

It's unfortunate that we had the OCS and TLE, as they hurt our results fairly substantially. However, the goal of this event was not result based and we felt that we achieved and improved on all aspects of our goals throughout the week. On the final day of the regatta we rounded the first windward mark in 5th place! We were working very hard and were able to keep up with Olympic and World Champions for the next couple legs of the course! With more time in the boat and at events, we will minimize the mistakes that cost us results, and we feel confident that we will see great improvements.

We couldn't have had these experiences and successes without the continued support of so many people. Having our new boat and the proper funding to set it up well, hire the right coaches, purchase new sails among many other things have really made our success at this event possible. Without the support for flights and accommodations, we really couldn't have had as much time in the boat in Miami pre OCR, which made a huge difference in our performance throughout the event. We want to thank everyone for making this possible!

We're looking forward to another great season this year! After meeting with several coaches and mentors, we have developed a schedule for the upcoming season, which involves 3 events in Europe. The first is the Delta Lloyd Regatta in Medemblik, Holland in May. The next is the Skandia Sail For Gold Regatta in Weymouth, England and after that we'll be competing in the 470 Junior World Championships, which are also in Medemblik.

Before leaving Miami, we prepared the boat for shipping to Holland and will split a container with some other Canadian sailors. By shipping our new boat over, we will save lots of money on charter fees throughout the summer (give or take 1,500 Euros per event). We will also save money by not bringing the boat into Canada yet, as import duties on New Zealand made boats are a staggering 26%! Having our new boat in Europe will mean that when we travel to regattas we'll always have a fast boat ready for us, and it will save us money in the long run. Thanks again for everything! Can't wait for another great season! Stay tuned for the upcoming 2011 schedule and budget.

Regards,

Graeme and Jacob Chaplin-Saunders
Team Saunders

(902) 279-0599 (902) 980-1470

www.saunders470.com

6135 Pepperell St.
Halifax, NS
B3H 2P1

