

America's Cup of Landsailing 2010 Review

March 20th to 27th, 2010
Ivanpah Dry Lake, California

This event had a little of everything and it was a good year for racing with all wind conditions represented.

Sunday was the first day of racing but the wind didn't appear. We sat all day in the sun and waited. At 3:00 the bikini models arrived and started their photo shoot. This caused quite a stir in camp and gave everybody something to do. Then at 4:58 racing was called for the day as it was getting too late to get the races started by 5:30. At 4:59 the wind started to blow and everybody got some really great sailing in until dark. Sunday night was the catered dinner and a surprise 50th birthday party for Hans Werner Eickstadt. Much to his surprise, Marilyn Monroe showed up to sing happy birthday to him. Everybody had a great time eating cake and drinking champagne. Hans' wife Nadia was in tears because she was laughing so hard. Marilyn stayed for some photos with the crowd and then disappeared back into Las Vegas.

Monday morning was more of the same: no wind. At 12:30 it started to come up and we were racing by 1:00. We raced until 5:30, in a breeze of around 15 knots and got two complete rounds of racing in. That night the daily first party was hosted by the MOOSE club of Montana. They served up a great meal with a Mexican theme including elk burritos and authentic Moose Drool beer.

Tuesday morning the wind was blowing 30+ knots and the racing was postponed. The wind calmed down to 25 to 30 knots by 1:30 and we were racing at 2:00. The direction of the wind was not favorable, causing us to have a power reaching leg from the leeward mark to the finish line. As most of

our boats are now powered up to sail in the lighter winds and windward leeward courses, they have become a little unruly on these power reaching legs. This day was no exception. Laurie Mackenzie and John Eisenlohr in their ST 49 wing boats had one of the most exciting finishes ever. They were separated by only a few feet and I think they only had three of their six tires on the ground. John won by mere inches. SASSASS was the host for the daily first party. Fresh fish tacos and tequila tasting, it doesn't get much better. People have told me that I had a great time, but I don't really remember....

Wednesday morning it was back to no wind and the weather report was pretty bleak. But again the report was wrong and we got the racing started at 10:30. It was a light breeze 5 to 12 knots and seemed to be dying. We got off one complete round of racing before it really lightened up. At 1:15 we started a 20 minute Manta Twin race and Carl Eberly was way out in the lead. To be considered a valid race somebody has to finish one lap in 20 minutes. When nobody finished in the time allotment it was black flagged, Carl crossed the line in 21:20, so close. We tried one more race with the sportsman class but it was also black flagged when everybody was out pushing their boats before the first mark. The Wind Wizards were the hosts for the daily first party and served up bacon wrapped hot dogs. In my book if it's got bacon in, it's a winner.

Thursday morning the wind was already pushing 30 knots so the racing started right at 10:00. Once again the wind was not from a favorable direction and the power reach was back. Numerous boats found this leg difficult. Bill Dale had the biggest hike of the

day and had to make a precision move to avoid any major problems. In contrast, big Walt Oliveri in his Manta Twin was having no problems, winning both races of the day. At 12:30 the wind was well over 30 knots and we were forced to call off the sportsman class race after only one lap for safety reasons. The wind peaked at 43 knots (49mph) around 3:00. At 4:55 there was a slight drop in the wind speed. The R/C was quick to act and decided to hold a Manta Single race. All of the boats were put away and the R/C decided the Manta Singles were the quickest to set up. The race started at 5:23 just seven minutes inside the time limit. It was a no host (just some left over beer) daily first party which was short because it was still blowing 30+ and nobody really wanted to hang out in the tent.

Friday morning was the nicest weather of all the days. The wind was 15 to 20 knots from a good direction and steady. Friday is a short day of racing so we started right at 10:00. The R/C started eleven races which was the most for any one day with the last race starting at 1:50 which is ten minutes from the cutoff time. the only causality of the day was my rear wheel spindle. It is made of 1" titanium and it just snapped off clean at the leeward mark. Lance Hossack came to get me with my truck and we loaded my boat on the racks.

Then we went to get my rear tire, which was a half mile down the lake. All the big boat guys came to my assistance and I was able to use my spare axle and wheels to get back out for the next start and not miss a race. After racing, many people jumped in to help and the race course and trailer were cleaned up quickly and we were ready for the trip back to Carson City. Keith Leigler and Curtis Obi got the results done on time and the trophy ceremony went off on time at 4:00. Terry Fulbright made some unique trophies that everybody loved.

In the end I think it was a great event. Lots of tight racing action. After eight to nine races per class, the Manta Twin and Manta Single classes were decided by less the two points. Mark Harris won the Manta Twin class without winning a race and Walter Oliveri won three of eight but finished out of the top five, go figure. John Eisenlohr, Dave Gluek and Terry Fulbright dominated Class 5, Fisly 5 and Mini boats respectively. Alan Wirtanen and Phil Rothrock had quite the battle going in classes 3 and 4. Alan took top honors with his soft sail over the wing, twelve wins to five. This battle between wing and sail has been brewing for quite some time and it will keep going. In International Class 2 it was a match race between myself and Lester Robertson. The standings say I won but the races were very close, with me spending a lot of time looking over my shoulder.

After the trophies were presented, I sat down to have a beer and I was thinking....beer for the week, \$150, gas to drive to Ivanpah and back, \$400, 16 races, chapped lips, sun burnt face, bruised body and bleeding from both hands, priceless..... I love this sport.

Now it's time to begin to prepare for the World Championships in October in Belgium. The team is shaping up and It looks like we will have around fifteen pilots going, it should be a fun and different experience for all. I would like to thank everybody that helped put on the event and for all the kind words about the event. I hope to see you all and more ? next year.

See you in the dirt or on the beach,

Dennis US 8