

New Trier Sweeps Spring Qualifiers With MISSA Baker Champs Win

The weekend of May 1-2, Chicago Yacht Club's Belmont Station hosted the Midwest Team Race Championship. The top six high school teams from the Midwest Fleet Racing Championship, which was sailed previous weekend at Grosse Pointe, MI, competed for the opportunity to represent MISSA at the 2009 High School National Team Racing Championship.

In "team racing", two high school teams compete in a three-boat on three-boat match race format. To determine the winner of the match, the scores of each team's three boat finishes are combined. The chief umpire for the event was Chicago's Betsy Altman, winner of US SAILING's 2007 U.S. Women's Sailing Championship and Adams Cup. She was assisted by US SAILING senior judge Fred Hagedorn and a team of former college All-American sailors including JB Turney of Georgetown and Mark Teborek of Boston College (see the results for a full list of umpires).

Over the course of the weekend, the race committee completed seventy five races, each team competing in twenty five races. The weather conditions were perfect for team racing with good winds and warm temperatures. On Saturday, the New Trier won their thirteen races before experiencing their first loss to the two time defending champion, Lake Forest. The Trevians closed out the day with a win over Loyola Academy for a two point lead. Lake Forest trailed in second place at 12-3, followed by Loyola, Grosse Pointe North, Minnetonka, and Grosse Pointe South.

On Sunday, the umpires provided the competitors with a team racing de-brief during which they shared their on the water observations. At 10 am, the PRO, Dick Schweers, started the first of thirty more races to be sailed in the added rounds four and five. Based on their Saturday experiences, the sailors increased the level of competition over the previous day. Grosse Pointe North, Grosse Pointe South, and Minnetonka each upset teams to whom they had lost on the first day. The Scouts of Lake Forest also continued their strong team racing against New Trier, but were upset by Loyola and Minnetonka in round four. This provided New Trier with a comfortable cushion and an opportunity to substitute crews.

Overall, New Trier won the title with a 21-4 record. With the win, the Trevians advance to the 2009 ISSA High School Team Racing Championship for the Toby Baker Trophy which will be sailed in California over Memorial Day Weekend. Defending champion Lake Forest finished second followed by Loyola, Grosse Pointe North, Minnetonka, and Grosse Pointe South. By placing in the top four, Lake Forest, Loyola, and Grosse Pointe North each qualified to compete in the Atlantic Coast Team Race Challenge which will be held in Rochester, NY over Memorial Day weekend.

New Trier, which had not won this championship since 2005, consisted of skippers **Michael Cornew (Sr)**, **Mark Gargula (Jr)**, **Stephanie Hudson (Sr)** & **Drew Shea (Jr)** and their crews **Scott Bartuska (Jr)**, **Amy Baxter (Sr)**, **Kim Johnson (Jr)**, **Cole Rice (So)** & **Hannah Wittleder (So)**.

Following the competition, Loyola's **Tommy Holmberg** was awarded with the High School Sportsmanship Award by the Junior Activities Committee of Chicago Yacht Club, in recognition of outstanding sportsmanship over the course of the High School sailing season.

Next weekend, the crews of both New Trier and Loyola will compete in St Petersburg, Florida at the ISSA National Fleet Racing Championship for the Mallory Trophy.