

Everyone Cannot Be First/Your Time Will Come

By Steve Sherman As printed in Optinews Summer issue 2005

At the Annapolis Team Trials skippers meeting this year, John Lambert, Chair of the Regatta Committee for the USODA brought home some excellent points in an eloquent way.

At the initial Skipper's meeting, he introduced Annie Haeger, Eliza Richartz, Sam Williams, Emily Dellenbaugh, Stephanie Roble, and Marshall Crawford as a few of the top United States Optimists skippers and briefly reviewed some of their accomplishments in the Opti class. John went on to say that in this year's event, "One of you will finish first and one of you will finish last, and that for some this regatta will be a very happy occasion and that for others there will be some disappointment." Noting that he had the permission of each sailor he had introduced, to cite their past performances, he reviewed the results of these sailors as well as those of Emily Lambert and Austin Anderson who had just left the class. Each of these sailors had finished 100 or higher in the 121 fleet that sailed at the 2002 Team Trials in Corpus Christi.

John used these sailors and their results to illustrate the point that how a competitor finished at this year's Team Trials said nothing about the competitor's future in sailing. The sailors introduced were living examples of a sailors who had had a poor result and gone on to achieve a fair measure of success in the class. He encouraged everyone to remember these examples and even to talk to these sailors if someone was discouraged. John expressed the hope that by keeping these individuals in mind, the competitors would be better able to focus on the real point of Team Trials - to have fun.

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