

HCMAX HILLMAN FOCUSED ADVANTAGE FUND J24 ECC 2013

The 35th annual Hillman Focused Advantage Fund J24 East Coast Championship was held on November 1-3, 2013 in Annapolis MD and hosted by Fleet 8 Annapolis and Severn Sailing Association. The three day event saw an unpredictable forecast, breezes between 5 and 20 knots, 30 degree shifts and tricky conditions that left most of the 31 boat fleet scratching their heads. But in the end it was Tony Parker's Bangor Packet with a daily score of 2, 2, and 1 on the last day for a total of 17 points that won the regatta and anointed him as the 2013 Hillman Focused Advantage Fund J24 East Coast Champion. Tony has sailed all 35 J24 East Coasts and it is his third win. Tony also won Top Amateur for the event, beating out many top names in the class.



Tony Parker and his Bangor Packet crew leading the pack at the windward mark (Photo courtesy of Sara Proctor)

Will Welles on Cougar took second place with a total of 24 points. Travis Odenbach on Honey Badger finished in third with 39 points. Mike Ingham on USA 5443 finished in fourth with 43 points and Ron Medlin Jr. on Bash had a very nice event rounding out the top five with 47 points.

Day 1 began with 40 kts of breeze from the west and a driving rain which forced an hour and a half on-shore postponement. The weather pushed thru and the 31 boats headed out on water to what was to be a predicted 25 kts breeze. The fleet however was met with 10 kts of breeze from the south and a strong tide flood up the bay. Race 1 had sailors deciding whether to go right for tide relief or left for more pressure. With a split fleet, it was the left that won out. Downwind was tricky with a dying breeze but it was John Wilsey on Panceta Doble working the left on both beats that won the first race. Race 2 saw the wind die even more. 5 kts wind, with a 1 kt current made it for another tricky first beat where getting out to the right and out of adverse current seemed to be the key. However a big left shift change that strategy. By the end of the first run, the wind had died to just a few knots and once rounding the crowded gate, everyone could barely

make progress against the tide. But sailing fast and consistent through all that was Al Constance in Blitz taking the win. Principal Race Officer Juliet Thompson wisely sent everyone back to the docks where sailors were met by the two-time National Oyster Shucking Champion George Hastings and his fresh Virginia blue point oysters, along with homemade Maryland crab soup made by Bill, and Pat Fitzgerald and the crew of Rush Hour and a wide variety of fresh beers on tap.

Day 2 saw another decent forecast of 15 kts from the north never materialize and leaving no wind and no races. The thermal which tried to make its way filled in too little too late. Fortunately there was a Dark and Stormy Rum party with homebrewed ginger beer and a buffet dinner of pork loin, Jamaican jerk chicken and Cuban black beans and rice catered by SSA's own John Miller and Real Food, LLC. Dinner was accompanied by the previous day's daily awards and the raffle featuring a J24 skirted deck cover sponsored by North Sails One Design.



Bangor Packet increasing its lead on its way to the finish (Photo courtesy of Sara Proctor)

Day 3 was met with a complete lack of trust in the forecast but the skepticism was soon dismissed with rustling leaves blowing thru Eastport and a cool brisk NW breeze. The 20 kts puffs, lulls, and shifts off the shore between the antennas and the bay bridge on the way out to the course did not disappoint. Race 1 was tricky for the RC to set a course and a line with wind shifts of 20 degrees or more. By the start all 31 boats with a blade, saw a considerably favored committee end but left would turn out to pay out big with a left shift and flatter water. Will Welles and Tony Parker were a good deal ahead of the fleet from wire to wire with Welles taking the gun. Race 2 was still shifty, but the wind had dropped. Some boats switched to the genoa but the genoa/jib trade off was about equal with the lulls and puffs on the course. The left shift from Race 1 was hardly existent and did not pay off on the left corner this time. Tony Parker again finishes 2nd behind Will Welles. Race 3 saw the wind drop to 15 kts and the fleet switched to the genoa. The wind had gone right a little more, and through that leg, shifted approximately 30

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degrees right. There was no recovery from the left. Big shifts and holes made for huge gains and losses! The final race is taken by Tony Parker along with the crown. Teams were met on land with a BBQ of burgers and brats put on by Jay McGinnis and his crew aboard SWAG with the Daily and Final awards ceremony for the top 5 boats. The mid fleet award sponsored by Atlantis Weathergear was awarded to Pat Fitzgerald and his crew on Rush Hour.

The event organizers would like to give a special thank you to Mark Hillman from Hillman Capital Management and the Hillman Focused Advantaged Fund for once again being the title sponsor for the 2013 Hillman Focused Advantaged Fund J24 East Coast Championship. Hillman Focused Advantaged Fund has once again put on an amazing event and it couldn't have been done without them. <http://www.hillmancapital.com/>

Another special thank you is in order to Will Welles and Tim Healy from North Sails One Design for donating our raffle Grand Prize of a J24 Skirted Deck Cover valued over \$1225. <http://www.onedesign.com/>

Sara Proctor is the official photographer for the event and pictures have been uploaded to her page at <http://saraproctor.smugmug.com/>. Check out all of the weekend's action on and off the water.

Thank you to Bary Gately and Quantum Sails for providing the free on and off the water coaching throughout the event.

Thank you to Mike Ingham and Sail1Design for doing the daily blog and for his major contribution to this regatta report.

And, one last thank you to all the volunteers, Race Committee, PRO Juliet Thompson, our gracious hosts Severn Sailing Association and Fleet 8 Annapolis, all our sponsors listed below and to the sailors who came to Annapolis to race. We couldn't have done it without you and look forward to seeing you again next year.

Mark Rivera, Chairman 2013 Hillman Focused Advantaged Fund J24 East Coast Championship

