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A NEWSLETTER FROM HAARSTICK SAILMAKERS

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In this issue:

- **Fall Discounts – New terms, see below. Last Chance to SAVE BIG.**

 - **A Note From The Buffalo Rep**

 - **J24 East Coast Championship Regatta – Write Up**
 -by Dave Sliom – Haarstick, Chesapeake Bay Area Rep.

 - **Thistle Chute Helps Dominate Oyster Bay Regatta – Nice Job Don Stehle**
-

DISCOUNTS ARE HERE for one more month, UP TO 20% OFF

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FREIGHT AND NYS TAX EXTRA WHERE APPLICABLE

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For above Discounts payment terms are as follows:

50% deposit with balance due on completion prior to shipment, or pick up OR within 30 days of invoice if stored at our loft for the spring. Storage for new sails is free.

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A Note From The Buffalo Rep.

I would like to thank all the new and old Buffalo and WNY Sailors for your very nice comments, and for the support that I have received from our rapidly growing number of Haarstick Sailmakers' customers.

When I started working at Haarstick Sailmakers two years ago, I really had no clue to the amount of me, care, dedication and complexity that surround making racing and cruising sails. Having grown up

sailing, I had really taken for granted what a sail was, and just assumed that a sail was a triangular piece of cloth with reinforcement in the corners and a rudimentary shape that was designed by some engineer toiling away in front of a 3 dimensional model on a computer screen in a back office. It only took a few minutes on that first day at the loft to prove that mental image wrong and made for some anxious moments, leaving myself thinking that I bit off more than I could chew. Fortunately the staff at Haarstick has been as helpful to me as they are to their customers and have given me the training, knowledge and confidence that it takes to become a confident and knowledgeable sailmaker.

With the growing support in the WNY Market, I would like to assure my customers, both present and future, that we will be pleased to assist with all your sailing related needs. Thanks again for your support, and I am looking forward to the 2007 sailing season.

Eric Christensen

WNY Sales/Service Rep.

J24 East Coast Championship Regatta

-by Dave Sliom – Haarstick, Chesapeake Bay Area Rep.

The Haarstick J24 Mainsail, Genoa and Spinnaker arrived in time for us to get out the weekend before the East Coasts to practice and check out mast tune. The sails looked fantastic, we all agreed that the genoa was about the best J24 genoa any of us had ever seen. The leech is absolutely perfect, and the sail will simply be fast. The spinnaker also looked great. We all feel we should be able to sail much deeper angles with attached flow over the spinnaker than any other J24 spinnaker could do.

The next few days I spent finalizing the rig tune and getting the boat all ready (new main halyard, topping lift, etc.). We finally got out with the full crew on the Thursday afternoon before the Regatta start on Friday. It became obvious rather quickly that our lack of experience as a crew sailing J24s was going to hurt us, especially changing gears and turning the boat. We worked hard on our kinetics, and were actually very happy with our roll jibes, but our tacks and changing gears upwind still left a lot to be desired, but enthusiasm was certainly not lacking on the crew.

Friday's racing called for around 5-10 knots of breeze and overcast skies giving way to rain in the afternoon. We got out early and felt comfortable to move on. This was my first time driving a J24 and starting in a large fleet (45 boats) in about 20 years, and the time away showed as I was schooled on the first start and only was able to get away in the 2nd row. We worked hard to climb back into contention and into the top half of the fleet and managed to finish 20th out of 45. Bottom line is whenever we dialed up against a competitor, we simply had better straight line speed over everyone, again, we lost out with our gear changes, but straight line speed and point was better than everyone. Whenever we had someone on our windward hip, we were able to work out over them and force them away. Our tacks were poor, as we lost several leebow opportunities by not accelerating out of the tack fast enough. Our downwind performance was simply fantastic as we passed boats on every downwind leg, easy to do when you can sail as fast or faster and much deeper.

The second race on Friday, I made a vow never to be schooled on the start line like I was in the first start, and luckily, we had three general recalls to practice our starting. We were front row and moving out in each recall, and when we finally got a start in, we found our marshmallow, held our hole to leeward and blasted out front row in the start. It was nice watching all but three boats having to bail out and tack underneath us. We rounded the weather mark in 7th place, and held on with the leaders through the downwind leg, start working back upwind. We had to duck a starboard tacker, and as we were ducking him, the boat on his leeward hip decides to tack onto port, and forced us up into the stern rail of the starboard tacker we were trying to duck. Minor contact, and we took a yellow flag penalty, protested the other boat and were hoping for redress for the penalty after the meetings. This incident allowed several boats through us, and we ended up in the teens but with a penalty pending.

The third race of the day, we once again got an excellent start and were in the top 10 at the weather mark (8th). We were sailing with the regatta leaders. We passed one boat downwind, chose the left turn around the port gate because we were seeing persistent clocking shifts and therefore wanted to protect the right. A lot of the top boats went there with us, and unfortunately we got a huge left shift on that leg that we had not seen all day. The fleet was turned inside out as we found ourselves sailing with good boats in the thirties. We were able to pass a few of the top boats downwind by simply sailing deeper, jibing inside them. Unfortunately we were deep, around 30th in that race due to the unanticipated left hand shift.

Since we did poorly in the last race on Friday, we decided to just eat our penalty and not spend the time in the protest room.

Saturday is when things got interesting. Forecast calling for 15-20 knots from the south, dying some around 1 p.m. then clocking to the west and starting to blow 30-35 with gusts to 40. The PRO was hoping to get the races in and the boats back home before things got crazy. We sailed out, hoisted the genoa to tune and practice and within 30 seconds of going upwind, the knot in the main halyard gave way (I don't know how this happened, but I do know who tied the knot, and it was not me <grin>). Main came down with the halyard at the top of the mast. We had to sail in with just the genoa, got one of the guys with the forklift at the boatyard to help us recover the halyard, hoisted again and headed out to try to make the second start.

We got out just in time, and the wind was starting to increase. We decided to go with the jib, but unfortunately we did not have a Haarstick jib, and had to use the only jib that we had to use. Unfortunately, the jib was way too deep to be effective in these conditions (how I wish we had a Haarstick jib), and we just could not get it to look satisfactory to us. Once again got good starts, but we had 3 more general recalls. The tactician wanted the right side to protect against the big right hand shift that was expected. We started about three boats from the committee boat, which was a mistake as we were called over on a Z flag general recall. The RC said that there were at least 20 boats over the line, but only Z flagged 8 they could see and we were one of them. Unfortunately the penalty carried over to the good start, on which we got another great start, started heading upwind and then the winds came, huge gusts up over 30 knots, with lulls around 15. The puffs were all shifts, either headers or lifts, which made it really hard to drive upwind. We were top ten coming to the weather mark when one of the boats took out the eventual regatta winner while they were on port, then hit another boat while still on port, and we saw all this because we were on their weather hip. These guys still didn't retire even though both boats they hit had to retire, go home and were granted redress. Then they were taught a lesson, about 3 boatlengths from the weather mark, they were hit with a lifting puff to around 35, they ragged the main to keep the boat on her feet, but because

the puff was a lift, it drove their bow down and main filled and they capsized (not broached) keel out of the water, they had to put a guy on the keel to get it back up and finally they decided it was time to go home. I can't remember ever seeing a J24 capsize upwind before. We rounded in the top 10 (don't know exactly where because it was too windy to count boats. Then we had a wonderful downwind leg, spinnaker up, planing the entire downwind leg, and watching boats wiping it left and right. We saw lots of carnage, capsizes and shredded spinnakers. We doused early, made a good rounding while one of the leaders flagged his spinnaker, he let both sheets go and the spinnaker flagged out and then went over the top of his mast. That was ugly and we could think of no good way that could turn out for them. We went upwind, but the jib was killing us because it was so deep. We lost several boats there, and started downwind without the spinnaker. We were once again able to hop on a plane and hold it for the leg, passing several boats to end up around 10th, but then had to take a Z flag penalty.

The wind died just a bit after the 2nd race, and the PRO gets on the radio to tell us that we have seen the worst and he would set another race, this time 1 1/2 mile legs and 5 legs (damn sadist). Half way up the first leg, the forecasts all came true, right around 2 p.m. , wind shifted hard right to 270 degrees and really started blowing (30 to 35 knots with gusts to 40). It was horrible trying to keep the boat on her feet with that deep jib, but we tried really hard. On the second upwind leg, the turning block for the main halyard blew out, so we had to slow to hoist the mainsail back up and cleat on the mast without going to the turning block and back up. We were holding on upwind, and screaming downwind (even carried a spinnaker on one downwind). On the second downwind leg, we were coming into the left gate on port with a starboard tacker going to the same gate. As he tried to jibe for the gate, he rounded up badly, and I had no time to react other than to turn the boat hard to starboard to avoid t-boning him, we avoided the initial contact with this move, but next thing we jibe hard over, the boom takes out two of my crewmembers, one in the back, the other with a cut on his head, the boom then hits me in the head and smacks my head into the other boat (luckily I have a very hard head after many years of playing rugby). We were able to make sure that the boats did not hook up (thank goodness), managed to tack away and make the gate while the other boat retired. We start heading upwind to the finish, and about halfway up the last leg, the back of the batten pockets for the number 2 and 4 battens gave way and the battens flew out. There

was no way to sail with the mainsail without two battens as we were just going to rag the leech completely out. We decided to drop the mainsail (seemed to take an eternity) and then finished with just the jib. We still managed a 22 in that race even with all the mayhem. We got back in and were happy and proud that we were one of the few boats that kept our keel wet the whole time. But unfortunately we now had two missing

battens, two batten pockets needing repair and a little tear in the leech which I am sure happened as we were dousing the mainsail. We also had one crew with a cut on his head and another with a very bad deep bruise on his hip. We decided that it was probably best if we just did not go out on Sunday since we already had missed a race and did not perform up to our hopes. Also Sunday's forecast was calling for more 25-30 knot winds with gusts to 40 which the fleet did see on Sunday, so I think that our cautious approach on the last day was probably safest (even if those downwind planes were fun as hell).

Bottom line is the sails are super fast, except for that jib which was not a Haarstick sail. We had great straight line speed, excellent point, and deeper and faster downwind. Our weakness was our inexperience sailing J24s and every time we had to turn the boat we lost, except jibes. Other than this weakness, I was very happy with the boat's performance. We made good tactical calls, had great starts (except for one), and kept the boat on her feet through the worst of the conditions. I have no doubt that with more time on the boat we will be challenging the leaders of this great competitive fleet.

Congratulations to Don Stehle and Crew for cleaning house at the Oyster Roast Regatta at Severn Sailing Association in Annapolis . Don is a local Thistle Sailor on Irondiquoit Bay and in the longer season is Frostbiting with his Interclub, with the rest of the yahoo's, on the Genesee River.

The Haarstick Spinnaker was used to take help take the 2-1-2 , giving Don a 16 point lead on his closest competitor and first out of 31 boats. . The Haarstick Chute is like a secret weapon in this class. Only a handful of Thistle sailors are using them, and the chutes always seem to be at the top of regatta's.

Click on the following link for the Regatta Results:

<http://www.thistleclass.com/results/2006/oyster.pdf>

Newsletter information:

For all of our newsletters please follow the link:

<http://www.haarsticksailmakers.com/Newsletter/Newsletter.html>

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