



## **2008 Ensign National Champions**

2008 Ensign Season Recap:

I knew it was going to be a busy summer as I wanted to get to Long Island and upper Michigan for 2 of the 4 regional regatta's and then get 856 packed up for the 2008 Nationals in CT. I wasn't sure how it would all work out, but it did, and couldn't have been better.

2008 Region I - 1st Place

2008 Region IV - \*1st Place

2008 Region V - \*1st Place, 3rd Place

**2008 ENSIGN NATIONALS - 1st PLACE**

2007 ENSIGN NATIONALS - 2nd PLACE

2006 ENSIGN NATIONALS - 1st and 3rd PLACE

2005 ENSIGN NATIONALS - 1st and 3rd PLACE

### **Region I Championship, Long Island Sound hosted by Fleet 7: 1st PLACE**

I sailed with Brian Simkins on #329 "Jim Dandy" along with his long time crew Rob Windsor. Brian co-owns this boat with Jim Kelly and spent some time updating the boat. What a beauty she is. I have wanted to sail with Brian for quite awhile. He has had a lot to do with our ever increasing acceptance of our Ensign sails, well beyond his local fleet. Brian has won numerous Regional Championships and the 2006 Ensign Nationals. It was great to sail with him and learn a few more tricks. Brian and Rob made it easy to fit in on the boat and made me feel at home off the water, Thanks guys.

I also had the opportunity to get out sailing with quite a few other boats, 6 to be exact. I went down a day early and set up tentative appointments with about 5-7 other customers from Fleet 7 as there are about 18 boats there with at least one of our sails on. It couldn't have worked out better as I hopped from boat to boat and was able to look at sail trim and set up and give advice where I could. The key advice on most boats was to ease the halyard, wrinkles on luff, to help get more point.

Full Report is at: Loft Lines July (click for link below)

[http://www.haarsticksailmakers.com/documents/08jul\\_nl.pdf](http://www.haarsticksailmakers.com/documents/08jul_nl.pdf)

### **Region V Championships, Lake Huron hosted by Fleet 31: \*1st, and 3rd Place**

This regatta couldn't have worked out better. I was nervous as the date was approaching because the boat I was hoping to race with didn't work out. About 2 weeks before the regatta Zeke Durica, of Ensign Spars, called and asked if I could sail with him on the newest Ensign built, hull #2025. I said that I would love to, but we would have to use a full

Haarstick Inventory. He said that would be fine and he even bought a spinnaker to use for the event. Besides losing a halyard and a man overboard, everything worked out great. The sails and the new boat proved to be fast and we were consistently in the top of the fleet of 30 boats. Tom Labelle was using a Haarstick Spinnaker and took first for the regatta and we ended up third. I need to say that these new boat are beautiful. It was an absolute pleasure to sail on a brand new Ensign and an experience I won't soon forget. Thanks to Zeke Durica and Elizabeth Brincklow for letting me join the crew, and thanks to Bob Mampe (owner of 2025) for having me aboard and being such a gracious host.

Since the regatta Zeke has purchased a Mainsail and plans to complete his sail inventory with all Haarstick Sails.

Full Report at: LOFT LINES August:

[http://www.haarsticksailmakers.com/documents/08aug\\_nl.pdf](http://www.haarsticksailmakers.com/documents/08aug_nl.pdf)

### **Region IV in Dillon CO: \*1st place**

*Zeke and Elizabeth did this regatta on a borrowed boat. They were using a Haarstick Mainsail and Spinnaker and Zeke had this to say about the Region V and IV regattas:*

"I'd been thinking of trying out Haarstick sails for a while and finally had an opportunity to try them at this years Region IV and Region V regattas. I called Doug Burtner of Haarstick and asked him if I could get some sails and if he would like to crew at Region V with us and he agreed. First I was impressed with the enthusiastic customer service and the speed in which the order was received. The workmanship and construction of the sails is excellent. Then on the race course I was impressed with the way the spinnaker set and how it trimmed in all conditions. I also like the lighting bolt panels. The boat's speed was balanced both upwind and down. In the past we've been fast upwind but pay for it downwind and vice versa. We placed a very respectable Third in this regional event in a borrowed brand new Ensign Classic "gotawana" hull No. 2025.

We then sailed in the Region IV Regional Championships in Dillon, Colorado and stayed to participate in the Dillon Open. We tried a slightly different approach with using a combination of the Haarstick Spinnaker and Main with our (other sailmakers) older like new Genoa. We also changed the rig and trim of the sails slightly and were very pleased with the results. We placed first in both regattas in a borrowed boat Tarmagan 1498!

Zeke Durica  
Ensign Spars Inc  
Builder of the Ensign Classic  
[www.ensignspars.com](http://www.ensignspars.com)"

### **2008 ENSIGN NATIONALS, Niantic CT: 1st Place**

This was a momentous national's for me. The 2008 Nationals was my tenth national regatta in a row, and it was at the same venue as my first. I have done every National's over these ten years on Ensign #856, "The White Lady of Irondequoit" (eh-ron-deh-coit if you're wondering...most do). I started out on the foredeck when I was 20 years old, and for the past 4 years I have been in charge of boat tuning and sail trim.

About 4 years ago, Greg Eiffert (National Champion: 1992, 2005, 2008), bought the boat from previous owner, Dr. Henry Rohrer. I had never met Greg before but was anxious to sail with a

past national champion. Over the past 4 years I have come to realize what a talented driver he is. Greg has also had great results in the very competitive J/24 class, finishing in the top 5 multiple times at the J24 North Americans in the 1990's. I have sailed with many people over the course of my sailing career, and can't think of anyone that can get off the starting line as consistently as Greg can. He is the most naturally talented driver I know and it is an absolute gift to be able to sail with him.

Going into this regatta we would have the same crew as last year. With Greg and myself, Greg's roommate from URI Mike Frankovich, and #554 Ensign owner Alex Crerand on the bow. Last year in NJ we started out the first three races with a 11-11-16 and found ourselves deeper than we had hoped after getting first and third in the last 2 nationals ('05,'06). We did end up coming back to 2nd place after multiple 1st and 2nd place finishes in the remaining races. Bottom line is we needed to start off more consistently and that is what ended up happening.

The first day the wind was coming from a direction that the locals were not used to and I feel that helped keep the playing field a little more even. Greg got the boat off the line nicely in the three races we had that day and we played the shifty conditions coming off the land from the NW. Staying "in phase" the whole time, we tacked on headers and held on the lifters to finish the day with a 1-2-1. What a great feeling after the poor start the year before. In 2nd was previous national champion, Dick Torpey, on "Irish Mist", and we knew we had to keep our eye on him.

The basic game plan for the rest of the regatta was to stay between "Irish Mist", and the next mark as often as we could, while keeping our eye on the results and trying not to let anyone else sneak up on us. Greg kept getting us off the line in clear air and with speed, and Mike kept making good tactical calls, so it made it easier to accomplish our goal.

We had varying conditions throughout the week. Current and shifts off land played a big role in the races and sometimes the local experience had an edge. So we tried to keep our eye on some of the local boats, like Ward Woodruff, Gary Woodruff and Robin Durrschmidt, to see what they were up to, but not taking our attention off "Irish Mist".

We ended up with very consistent finishes and it was enough to win the 2008 Nationals.

Thanks to John Brousseau and Ward Woodruff for putting on a great event and all of the volunteers of Fleet 73/34. The boat launching and hauling ran smoothly and everyone couldn't have been easier to work with. A huge THANK YOU to Louise Woodruff (and Ward) for your hospitality and your behind the scenes work on the regatta. You are awesome and I hope I can make it up to you sometime.

Final Results at Ensign Website: <http://www.ensignclass.com/2008NationalsFiles/Results.html>  
(courtesy of Walter Pratt)

**Toms River NJ Visit:** (Seasons not over yet)

Later this month I will be going down to NJ to visit with Family. On my way down I will be stopping in Toms River NJ (Fleet 63) for a day to get out with three new customers. I usually can't make a special 6 hour trip for service calls, but this worked out great and I look forward to getting out with our new customers in NJ. I plan to go over rig tuning on each boat

and going over sail control set up. Then we will go out for a sail to look at sail trim and the differences between trimming for speed and trimming for point.

**Conclusion:**

Over the course of this season I have met many new Ensign Sailors and sailed with many friends and customers. I have seen more and more interest grow in our sails. From the builder of the Ensign Classic, Zeke Durica, to a few other top national competitors in Niantic, CT and Toms River, NJ our sails continue to grow in popularity across the national fleet and I have all of you to thank for that.

I will continue to help all of you in any way I can and look forward to continuing my efforts to help the class. For those that don't know I am also on the Ensign Rules Committee and recently was granted the title of Ensign Webmaster, that means I maintain and update the Ensign Class Website: [www.ensignclass.com](http://www.ensignclass.com) (keep your eyes peeled for a new look in the coming months).

I am only a phone call or e-mail away with any questions or comments. I look forward to hearing from you with interest in new sails, questions or comments on current sails, or just to say "hi". Thanks again for choosing Haarstick Sailmakers for your Ensign.

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\* indicates partial inventory