

TN SAILS

The monthly newsletter of Tamil Nadu Sailing Association



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Al Bareh International Regatta 2009

The 17th edition of the Al Bareh International Regatta was conducted in the waters off Al Jezayer beach in Bahrain from 22nd to 29th June. The hosts of the event, Bahrain Maritime Sailing Association, appreciative of India and TNSA's Gold winning performance in the Regatta last year extended a warm invitation to Indian sailors to participate in the event. Thus once again this June, five of our sailors alighted on the northern shores of our neighbouring continent across the Arabian Sea to showcase their sailing skill. Though we couldn't send as large a contingent as last year, some of our top sailors, Praveen Prabhakar, Rufus and Varsha in the Optimist category, Varun in the Laser 4.7 and Mrinalini in the Laser Radial went off to participate in the event that attracted participants from 10 countries. While the ticketing and visa arrangements were taken care of by Bala and Deepa Gautham, Patrick accompanied the sailors as lone official - manager, coach, parent and country representative all rolled in one. With much experience in handling children in earlier events, gentle Pat took such good care of the young sailors they all seem to have gained a few 'shavarma' laden kilos!



Indian team with the officials

The team reached Bahrain on the 20th ahead of all other countries and stepped out of the airport to be greeted by hot desert climes that had daytime temperatures hovering at 48 degrees C! Sizzling in the heat, the team dove straight into the pool after an hour long scenic drive to the Bahrain Sailing Club where they were put up. The next day the team was allotted their boats and the day was spent in checking them out and rigging them.

Sailors from other countries also arrived on the 21st, so none of the visiting sailors really had a chance to practice in these waters before the races started.



Casting off

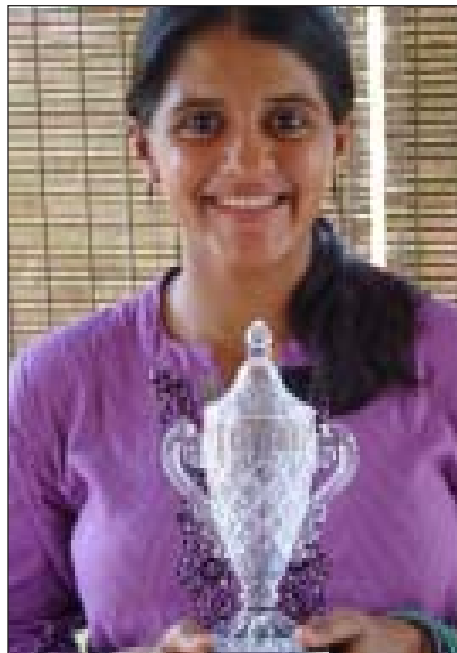
On the 22nd, the registration formalities were completed and a practice race was held after a brief opening ceremony which went unnoticed by most of the sailors who were busy rigging. Sailing in light winds of less than 10 knots, TNSA sailors did pretty well in the practice race with Praveen taking the gun, Rufus and Varsha finishing 4th and 8th respectively in the Optimists. Varun took the gun in the 4.7 class but Mrinalini had to retire due to a defective rudder. All in all, the mood in the Indian camp was upbeat.

On the 23rd, conditions remained more or less similar and the first 3 races of the regatta were held in each class. Unfortunately practice race results could not be duplicated though all the sailors put in their best efforts. Praveen and Rufus finished among the top ten and the others finished mid-fleet. The next day 4 races were held with lunch served to the sailors on the water. The day started with about 12 knot winds, though it dropped later in the day. Rufus had a very good day with guns in 2 of the races and a 2nd in one, but along with the wind dropping his finishes too dropped to 9th in the 7th race.



Praveen with the other Opti winners

Praveen's day was a mixed bag with a 9, 11, 3 and 5 finishes. As he says, "I messed up the first 2 races trying to get the guys ahead of me, but realised my mistake and concentrated on my race which helped me do well in the other 2 races", it is evident that it is most important to focus on one's own sailing than worry too much about others on the water. Varsha did very well to finish 5th in one of the races, this only being her second international outing, but otherwise continued to remain mid fleet. Varun improved his position with 6 and 5 in two of the races while finishing 10th and 11th in the other two. Mrinalini continued to hold her position in the fleet.



A beaming Mrinalini with her trophy

On the 25th, the winds were very light at only about 5 to 6 knots so only 2 races in the Optimist class could be finished while Lasers completed 3 races. Praveen sailed steadily for an 8th and 4th position to climb to 3rd position overall while Rufus who is heavier found it difficult to move well in the light wind conditions and had finishes of 10 and 12. Varun sailed the first 2 races well to finish 6th and 4th but slipped to 13th in the last race of the day. Mrinalini and Varsha both held their positions in the main fleet, while holding third positions among the radial girls and Optimist under-12 respectively.



Oops, Praveen has turned into a pretty princess in pink!

The races scheduled for the 26th and 27th were abandoned as winds died down completely. This wasn't new to our sailors as last year also 2 days' races were abandoned. However it was a definite improvement on last year as only 6 races were sailed last year while 9 races were sailed in the Optimist and 10 in the laser out of the scheduled 13 this year. Makes one reflect how fortunate TNSA has been that the conditions have favoured us so well that we have held the full complement of races in every one of the Nationals we have held in the last 5 years.



The Rogues Gallery!

As Rufus who finished 5th says, "we were improving each day and I'm sure I could have improved on my position had the winds held and all races completed". But then again the sailors who already were in a good position were happy that they could hold their positions. In a typically mid-eastern colourful ceremony, Shaikh Fawaz bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, president of the Bahrain Maritime Sports Association presented trophies to the winners. As the sand settled down on the desert night on 27th, Indian sailors had won 3 bronzes: Praveen Prabhakar in the Optimist overall, Varsha

Neighbourhood Regatta

The 420 Nationals were conducted in mid June by our neighbouring club, RMYC. There were 18 entries and we understand the Wind Gods smiled right through the Championship. At the end of it, Sandeep Jain and S R Rout, two 470 sailors from AYN sailed away with the trophy; predictably. But this story is not about the top stars from the west coast, the winners get written about all the time. This is the untold story of the gutsy performance put up by two young girls, one from TNSA and one from RBYC, a story that has gone unnoticed, a story that deserves to be told.

Aishwarya Nedunchezian from TNSA and Ayesha Lobo from RBYC got together as a team to participate in the 420 Championship held near the sunken ship off Chennai harbour. Neither of them had sailed as a team before, neither had sailed a 420 before nor did they get much chance to practice before the races. They had no idea how a spinnaker worked, had never been on a trapeze but then to a sailor none of the above reasons are good enough to miss racing in any event. So they went with a lot of enthusiasm and guts but with little experience and started the first day of the races with a rather poor result.

But by the end of the first day, they had gelled as a team and figured out the boat, both laser sailors otherwise.



The Double A team

With the might of the combined weight of less than 100 kilos the 18 year old Ayesha and 13 year old Aishwarya took on the army and navy sailors. Their performance improved from the second day and they handled winds which was mostly 12 to 15 knots

that at times touched 18 knots. The green team finished a very creditable 8th overall out of 18 entries, 2nd among the 4 "women" entries just 3 places behind the much-experienced team of Rohini Rau and Pallavi who finished 5th overall and 1st among the Girls (youth), ahead of the NSS Girls Team. Out of the 4 Youth entries, they finished 2nd overall with Aman Vyasa and Sarad Singa from NSS taking the first among the Youth. If that was a stellar performance, what followed was even more noteworthy.



A proud dad with the winners

On the last day of the races with just one race to go, as some of us rigged our boats at TNSA we saw an improbable sight on the timber pond. Big orange marks! Even as I brushed off a wild thought that the last race was being conducted in the timber pond, it occurred to me that it was perhaps a photo shoot with a few Page 3 people. But soon it was apparent that a match racing event was in progress, two boats racing and a rib with jury following closely. We later learned that an impromptu match racing event was held after the finish of the championship, with Farokh Tarapore on the jury boat. And our young girls, showing scant respect for others' expectations, upset the appellation of all the star sailors and beat the champion team of Jain-Rout to win the match-racing event! It has mystified us sport enthusiasts, who followed reports of the regatta in the press, why there was no mention of the match racing and no congratulatory words to the gritty young winners. Kudos to you Aishwarya and Ayesha, may you girls win many more!

...Al Barez International Regatta 2009

Gautham in the Under-12 category and Mrinalini in the Laser Radial Girls. Rufus Patrick finished a creditable 5th given the light wind conditions and Varun 9th in a fleet that saw fierce competition.

The experience has enriched the sailors and lessons were learnt. Says Praveen, "I've learnt that there are times when the whole fleet makes mistakes and you have to look out for those and correct them yourself. I also learnt that you have to protest when you should and if you miss the chance you might lose your position".



Pat receives a memento from Shaikh Al Khalifa

The sailors have been able to achieve this result thanks to the commitment of the members at TNSA who coach them and the parents who have not hesitated to spend their own money so that these young sailors were able to go participate in the regatta.



Under-12 Champ Varsha with the boys she beat

As Varsha puts it, "It was a great experience sailing in these conditions and also because we met a lot of kids from other countries. End result was 3 bronzes. Bigger result - a big hole in our parents' pocket".

Laser Inland Nationals

The Laser Inland Nationals will be conducted from 12th to 18th of July this year and TNSA will be fielding 6 entries. Those who have had a taste of the Hussain Sagar water in the furious winds during the month of August, which is the time these Championships have been held in the last few years, are hoping for a slightly more benign treatment from the Wind Gods. Cold dips notwithstanding, this is an event that all the Laser sailors of the country look forward to and participate in huge numbers. Last year saw 104 entries in the 3 categories, Standard, Radial and 4.7 and one can expect similar kind of numbers this year too. Being conducted on the lake with the racing area just a couple of minutes away unlike Chennai, 4 races will be held in a day with the races for the radials at a different time of the day from the Standard and 4.7. This offers the opportunity for some of the sailors to share hulls or participate in more than one category, thus boosting the number of entries as well. TNSA wishes fair winds and good luck to the participating sailors.

Sailing Calendar

The official Measurer and Handicapper Mr. Ashish Mehta is in the process of putting finishing touches to a quarterly sailing Calendar, which will see TNSA conducting regular club level races for the various classes of boats. The calendar will soon be ready and an electronic version will be mailed to the members. Members are requested to make sure they participate in the Sunday races in enthusiastic numbers.

AGM 2009

TNSA's Annual General Meeting for this year will be held on the 26th of September and the notice for the same will be sent out in due course. With the current committee completing the 2 year term, elections for a new committee for the forthcoming 2 years are on the cards. All members are requested to attend the AGM and take active part in the proceedings. If any member wishes to participate in the management of the Association by joining the TNSA Committee, do file your nominations in advance.

A request to our members

Most of you who are part of the TNSA's yahoo group are probably aware of the request that Mr. Ajit Diaz has made by email. To help curb irregularities on port entry if they should happen, the TNSA committee would like to request you to make your plans well in advance and have your port entry passes ready at the gate when you come in to sail. There have been instances of members making a last minute decision on coming to the Port and requesting our manager Mr. Antony to assist in their entry. However this is not only a liability but also a technical illegality that brooks no further lenience and this fact has been brought to the attention of our treasure Mr. Diaz. Also there are persons from other organisations within the port premises who are said to be using the name of TNSA and walking in and out of the Port without a valid pass. Some of these persons were recently apprehended and charge sheeted.

TNSA would like to request you to desist from entering the port without a valid pass. Please plan your visit to the TNSA well in advance especially when you bring guests. You can call Mr. Joseph on 25382253 and give him the details. For Sunday passes the cut-off time is Friday 12.00 noon. Mr. Ajit Diaz is the authorised signatory for the issuance of the passes and he has given instructions to Mr. Antony NOT to entertain anyone or help anyone enter the port without a valid pass.

Your cooperation in this regard is kindly solicited.

Bonne Bouche



Penguin Delivery

A bus driver on his route sees a van from the zoo stranded on the side of the road. The zoo worker offers the bus driver \$100 to help him deliver two dozen penguins. The bus driver agrees and loads the penguins on the bus.

An hour later, the zoo worker gets his van fixed and heads to the zoo. On the road, he sees the bus driver and the penguins driving in the opposite direction. He catches up to the bus and pulls them over.

The zoo worker yells, "I gave you a \$100 to take the penguins to the zoo for me. Why are you still driving them around?"

"Calm down," the bus driver says, "I took the penguins to the zoo. We had change left over, so now I'm taking them to the movies."

Rest assured...

"Doctor, are you sure I'm suffering from pneumonia? I've heard once about a doctor treating someone with pneumonia and finally he died of typhus."

"Don't worry, it won't happen to me. If I treat someone with pneumonia he will die of pneumonia."

A SHORT HISTORY OF MEDICINE:

"Doctor, I have an ear ache."

2000 B.C. - "Here, eat this root."

1000 B.C. - "That root is heathen, say this prayer."

1850 A.D. - "That prayer is superstition, drink this potion."

1940 A.D. - "That potion is snake oil, swallow this pill."

1985 A.D. - "That pill is ineffective, take this antibiotic."

2000 A.D. - "That antibiotic is artificial. Here, eat this root!"