

THANKS, ELMIRA LAKE FOR THE WOMEN'S SAILING TROPHY

To promote women sailing, Elmira instituted the Lake Trophy a few years back and on Sunday, August 26, a good bunch took to the Bay in three boats under winds as pleasant as one could ask, perhaps a little too light at first, but light air sailing is a better test of ability sometimes than heavy stuff.

The Calhoun's Lightning sure is slick. What a racer! Expect more of that boat in the future. Emilie Calhoun's confidence was not put off by the boat's control lines or reputation for exhilaration, so she loaded it for pirates with Nancy Froham, and Dorcy Brownback. We've seen the Club boat perform before, and that scruffy appearance shouldn't be underestimated, so Rebecca Norwick, crew Susan Medina and Marty Norwick, took one Scot, the other Scot was skippered by Janet Kirby, Katie Gundlach and Janet's daughter, Ellie.

"It is a real tribute to his teaching that the three skippers, plus two crew members have taken his adult sailing classes," Susan Medina said of Emile Kempf, who along with Loren Daunell ran this regatta.

There are a number of exciting moments in racing: a spinnaker run when the boat is pulling forward so fast spray flies; a tacking duel; a burdened boat skirting a little too close; tactfully and politely exchanging the finer rules at rounding marks; trying as hard as possible to cross the finish line ahead of the nearest competitor. We don't know about those for this race, but the excitement of the launch and jockey for start was there, Sunday. It was contagious. Emile and Loren signaled the starting sequence from the Club boat and the usual scramble to get off the dock left the cheering section to their binoculars.

Emile and Loren set marks at the usual points, and though the race wasn't a screamer, a drifter can be a challenge. Janet Kirby has done some sailing before; put two and two together and the result showed because slowly their Scot pulled ahead further and further. Again, making a boat cooperate requires know-how in light air, requires thinking about what is going on and what is needed, rather than so much so fast it's just reacting. Congratulations to Janet Kirby for a first, to Emilie Calhoun for second and to Rebecca Norwich for a third.

Said Susan, "We all had a lot of fun in spite of the light winds. It was a great experience sailing with a group of ladies, no yelling 😊." (Off the record, they must not have met at the rounding marks.)

And the smiling out on the water wasn't entirely from the racers. We saw Peter Ackley single-handing with shortened main, up and down the bay in his Scot, a rare treat, one which made him stay out and stay out, way past dinner time.