

**August 2, 2012**

**IOM US National Championship  
Mission Bay Park  
San Diego, CA**

Great weather has graced the first day of the 15th running of "the nationals" hosted by the San Diego Argonauts. A fleet of 46 boats rounded out a near record turnout.

Racing got underway following the seeding race at 12 noon in 5 knot sea breeze on Mission Bay Model Pond which slowly built to 7 knots by 2pm allowing 3 races to be completed followed by a double protest hearing which was heard immediately following the third race A heat. Results have been mixed in the shiftier than normal conditions with more than one past champion struggling to stay in A fleet.

After 4 races, Jon Elmaleh sailing his own design IE3 has the top spot with 8pts. Followed closely in second place is Peter Van Rossem's Topiko with 10pts and Dennis Astbury's Britpop in third with 11pts.

The new designs haven't shown much if any speed advantage over the old tried and true finer ended Pikantos, Topikos in the light and smooth and if anything are promising interesting results in the next two days.

New boats for this event include (10) Britpop's, (2) Cheinz, (3) Lintels. But the venerable Topikos, Pikantos, still are the most popular SoCal choice. However, it's Jon Elmaleh's IE3 that is consistently fast in these conditions.

**Filed by Jake Leo  
August 3, 2012 07:00 PST**

**IOM US National Championship  
Mission Bay Park, San Diego, CA**

The second day (Aug 3) of the US Nationals was much the same weather as the first day, but much more frustrating for many. The ever present morning Marine Layer stayed with us until well after the starting time of 10am providing the fleet with a wild variety of shifts that would leave the best shaking their heads in disbelief.

But the sun finally made it to the party warming things up, shortly after the third race and the wind settled into a more westerly direction allowing a square first beat.

Among the strongest performers were Roy Langbord, Zach Aleya, and Jon Elmaleh posting low single digit finishes to set the pace. Starts were critical as usual and coupled with the courage to stick to your game plan made the difference.

Roy Langbord and his new BG Britpop seemed to be where he needed to be at the right time posting a 1st and 3rd place finish when the boats ahead of him took a dive.

Jon Elmaleh seemed to have lost his previous days focus racking up a 14th and a 15th in race seven and ten, slipping to 3rd. place by the end of the day.

Zach Aleya finally was able to shake of a 20th and 21st early in the day and closing the day out with 2 bullets in race nine and ten, vaulting him into second place with a game plan worthy of note.

Close behind, Tony Gonsalves was quietly stalking the fleet posting solid single digit finishes throughout the afternoon without any big mistakes moving from 9th to 4th 4pts behind Elmaleh.

Brazilian Britpop builder Dennis Astbury seemed to struggle in the later part of the day with double digit finishes after wrestling with a short stint with the B fleet. I expect we will see him back in the hunt as his focus returns.

Tonight all skippers will gather at Brazil by the Bay for dinner followed by the first USA NCA Annual General Meeting to discuss the future. This reporter is looking forward to it.

**Filed by Jake Leo**  
**August 4, 2012 11:00 PST**

**August 5, 2012**

**IOM US National Championship**  
**Mission Bay Park**  
**San Diego, CA**

**The closer!**

If your one of those who thought IOM radio sailing was a goat rodeo, you didn't catch the final race of the US IOM National Championship Sunday afternoon at Mission Bay Park.

The day was much the same as the previous 3 or any other day here in Dago (as the Ed, calls it).

Light in the morning, a little breeze during the day and getting lighter in the afternoon and the sheep were nervous. The heavies had a lot to lose and it was still anyone's event to claim. Their biggest fear being, the unpredictable back row nose-picker getting lucky and running the table before anyone could put a stop to it.

Race 16, heat C kicked off the day at 10:30 with the usual shifty, unsettled morning breeze without incident then rolling smoothly into heat B.

Now, for those who aren't familiar with heat racing; the fleet is divided into heats of 20 boats (A,B & C...etc) and run in reverse order with the top and bottom 6 boats promoted up or relegated down, and what makes it interesting is it gives the unlucky a chance to redeem themselves by moving up to the next level as a reward for being one of the top 6 boats to finish that heat. This also makes the next heat players wary because it injects the unpredictable element of slower traffic. If you belong there, no problem...if you don't you'd better have respect for the players.

Bahamian Stan Wallace came from way back starting from C heat who won the race but it was George Pedrick who managed a 2nd to move into 3rd overall and the wildcard spot.

Race 17; Craig Mackey won and claimed 4th overall vacated by Pedrick as he moved up was now the new wild card in 4th. Tony Gonsalves and Zack Alyea sat in the rocking chair (still 1st & 2nd overall) played it cool staying out of trouble with a 6th and 7th respectively.

Race 18; Canadian Peter Van Rossem (4 time US Champion) won this race which didn't change things much. However, Tony was 2nd adding more pressure to Zack's situation with Pedrick still 3<sup>rd</sup> overall breathing down their necks with a 6th place finish.

Racing was suspended for a back row protest hearing which didn't amount to much with a dismissal, (but that's the way things are handled w/MHS), allowing the leaders a short break to reflect and plan their moves in the upcoming last race.

Race 19; The gallery was on its feet as the A heat boats went in the water and you could hear a squirrel fart it was so quiet. Tony had an 8pt. cushion over Zack with Pedrick 2pts. behind him sitting in 3rd. and it wouldn't take much for Tony or Zack to screw the pooch opening the door for Pedrick to waltz through as the breeze dropped below 4kts.

The timer starts.....boats mill about the line....3,2,1....Bong-General recall!

Now, if you've been reading your previous days SA homework assignments you have a pretty good idea of what's next when the Brazilian born PRO Freddie Rocha turns to a bunch of jiggy skippers and says "the lack flag is up". No "I" flag, straight to the black flag. Unusual, but perfectly legal and proper.

Timer starts again.....Tony on the leeward end and Zack in the middle somewhere and is hard to see in the slow moving starters...3,2,1...Bong.. All clear. Tony is clear and rolling left and Zack is nosing clear with a slight header but can't get onto port. Tony reaches the left side of the course and calls for water and tacks clear with a nice lift to cross the slower boats, and heads back to the middle. At the first cross, Zack is slightly behind and continues left. Tony tacks to slap a loose cover on him and starts scanning the fleet for Pedrick.....no Pedrick...where the hell is he? Tony's first priority was to cover Zack then worry about

Pedrick.....but Pedrick got away and is one of the 8 boats that rounded the weather mark before Tony.

OK then, back to covering Zack.....Tony rounds the weather mark in 8th. Zack is 10th. Down the run, boats fan out 8 abreast in the lead group and 12 in the following.....gonna be a busy gate. Tony picks up two and rounds the starboard side of the gate and tacks back to the center to stay in touch with Zack who faded a little and rounded the port side of the gate and is looking for the big one on the left that never comes. But Tony who is well centered, is in perfect position to catch the 10 degree pressure righty and rockets up the middle nearly laying the weather mark, rounds forth.

On the run again and Zack is staying in touch. Tony rounds the right side of the gate again and picks up Pedrick rounding the port side who quickly tacks onto port to get as far to the right side as he can to minimize the damage Tony is about to inflict on the entire fleet. The righty comes again and he passes the remaining 5 boats to win the race and his second US IOM National title. 13pts. over Zack and 16pts. over Pedrick.

The close. The winners are truly a different breed.

Special kudos to PRO Freddie Rocha for a job even Luigi would approve of along with the staff and leadership of the San Diego Argonauts for hosting a classy event.

PS. The Jungle drums say the Ed is about spring for Britpop....I sure hope so.

**Filed by Jake Leo**  
**August 6, 2012 11:00 PST**





