

Saturday April 21, 2018 was an ideal day for the 5th Annual UConn Spring Sunfish Regatta. Every year, this event serves as an opportunity for current UConn Sailing Team members to meet alumni and spend a day casually racing Sunfish. This year, fifteen alumni arrived at Coventry Lake hoping for a chance to show ten current students how it's done. Despite each sailor having experience from many different fleets and conditions, the combination of the quirky Sunfish and lake sailing always makes for an unpredictable event.

The format of the regatta is simple. With twenty-five sailors but only eleven boats, the competition is divided into Silver and Gold divisions, decided in the morning by two sets of qualifying races. The top five competitors from each qualifying set are automatically entered into the Gold Fleet. The last spot in the Gold Fleet is granted to the champion of the Silver Fleet races. To make the regatta fair, sailors rotated into a different boat each race.

The competitors could not have asked for better weather, with warm temperatures and a steady 9 mph breeze to start off the day. As the day progressed, gusts building to 16 mph provided challenging conditions for some of the lighter sailors. Of course, these conditions made for exciting spectating, with multiple dramatic capsizes. It was great to see smaller skippers Jessie Imbro (2018) and Cat Stavola (2014) handle the boats so well in the breeze.

The morning racing was intense. With only three quick qualifying races, every maneuver could make or break a finish. Prevailing in the top spot from each qualifying set were Will Kresic (2015) with 3 points and John Giuliano (2011) with 5. Laura Crowley (2018) surprised the alumni with her skill and qualified with 11 points, despite her unfamiliarity with a sunfish.

The afternoon began with a hard fought Silver division. Using her Sunfish racing experience, Marta Chlus (2014) emerged triumphant with 4 points, qualifying to compete in the Gold Fleet. Martin Hooker (2018) took second with 9 points, and was given a spot in the Gold Fleet when a sailor dropped out early. Melissa Conway (2016) clinched third place with 12 points.

In the Gold division, excitement was found in an intense battle for second place heading into the last race. Second and fourth place were separated by a mere two points. With a solid finish, Mike Rottier (2015), the two-time defending champion from Charleston S.C. took second place overall, followed closely by Jamie Fales (2013) and Pete Giuliano (2010). Enoc Escobar (2020) sailed a fantastic regatta and was the top current team member, placing fifth in the Gold Division. On top, with 5 points in 4 races, was Will Kresic (2015), coasting to his first ever victory at this event.

Big thank you to Chris Baker (2016) and Heather Lewis (2021) for running race committee, as well as Martin Hooker (2018) for providing the venue. Thank you to the current UConn Sailing Team for allowing a Sunfish invasion once a semester (team racing every fall!) and I hope to see everyone out on the race course soon. A big thank you to all the alumni who provided boats! Finally, I would like to welcome Charlie Zizza (2017) as the newest member of our UConn Sunfish fleet.

Sail Fast,

Will Kresic