

Larchmont Yacht Club (USA 2) arrived in Valencia, Spain on Saturday the 22nd in anticipation of the 2007 ISAF Team Race World Championship. The team began the trip by checking out the America's Cup harbor and village. We traveled around town; where there was some remaining AC boats and looked at the stunning venue for the America's Cup. We stopped for lunch and then headed south about an hour to Gandia (pronounced Gahndeeya), where our event would take place. Emily Whipple and her mother, Lynne (Team Mom), found a great house for us to stay in during the event. The house was very close to the sailing venue and helped us unite as a team.

Sunday 23rd

We arrived at the club to take care of registration and sign up for practice times to help us prepare in boats that we were unfamiliar with. We sailed in International 420's, which are very different than the Club 420 that we sail here in the States. The tiller extensions are as long as a laser extension, the boats are so light that one person can lift a boat out of the water, and the boats load up much quicker than a club 420 would. We selected a practice time late in the afternoon to get the best breeze of the day.

Monday 24th

We set a practice time for 3:30pm so when we came in from practice there would be enough time to get ready for the opening ceremonies later that evening. At the ceremonies all the teams were lined up by country and escorted to our seats in front of all the spectators. Each team had team jackets, shirts and bags. The ceremony had a global feel. Many different speakers spoke before us welcoming the competitors to the area and the championship. The ISAF flag was raised at the end of the ceremony commemorating the beginning of the Championship. One of the challenges was getting acquainted with the time zone change. You can imagine that we were waking up around 3am EST.

Tuesday 25th

We arrived to the club to find out that the opening round would be split into two evenly matched groups. So instead of sailing 16 races to find out which teams move onto the gold fleet, the top 4 teams from each group would move on to the gold fleet and the rest to the silver. We were placed in a group of 8 with other notable teams including NZL 1, GBR 1, and AUS 2. The conditions when racing started were fairly light. We were pretty excited that the regatta finally was getting started. We were confident that we were one of the best teams there and would get off to a good start. All

of our races on the day were won fairly easily except for our race with GBR 1, where we had a the umpires working hard with the amount of red flags that were flown. The race went back and forth many times and was decided at the leeward mark when Danny rounded and started positioning himself for the upwind leg and got lost in all the action and missed the last offset mark when he was in second place and Caleb was flagged for a very questionable foul. This allowed the GBR team to round in a 1-2 combo and we could not catch them in time before the finish. This was our only loss of the day, which put us in a tie for the number 1 seed.

Wednesday 26th

The format was posted when we showed up in the morning to sail a gold round robin for the day. The conditions were a little strange for the venue because of the wind direction, which forced the RC to set the racecourse in a very small area. The starting area was very close to the 30-foot high seawall on the far side of the harbor, which made strategies a

little bit different. Our line-up of teams that we faced got harder as the day went on. The first loss of the day came against GBR 2 where Danny and Emily had some bad luck with an umpire boat during the pre-start and got all tangled up and Cardwell/Lilly were called over the starting line early. Danny and Emily filed for redress for umpire interference but were denied for the situation that occurred because it is not outlined in the rulebook so the loss stood. The next race we sailed was against GBR 1. As we approached the windward mark Caleb and Cardwell were in a 2-3 while Danny was trying to hang on to the 5.

The windward mark was set about 25ft off of the dock, which made for some exciting sailing for the spectators as well as the sailors. Caleb and Cardwell pushed the first place boat around the racecourse while Danny was in an obstruction battle with two of the GBR 1 boats still at the windward mark. Once the sixth place boat knew that he didn't have many options he started sailing on a beam reach straight for the dock. Danny followed from behind and prematurely the GBR 1 boat gybed onto port yelling obstruction where he clearly could have headed up to avoid the dock and Danny was on a starboard/port collision course with the GBR boat. Last minute with still time to gybe, Danny headed up and tacked around to avoid putting massive damage upon the GBR boat. Protest flags were flying, but the umpires were convinced that there was no incident. By this time we were in a 2-3-6 combo around the offset mark. It stayed this way until the last beat of the race where Caleb and Cardwell slowed down the 4th place boat but because of a wind shift the 5th place boat covering Danny was able to tack around the mark and almost lay the finish line. By the time we realized this no one was able to get to him quick enough and GBR 1 sailed to a 1-2 finish. Our last race of the Day was against our friends USA 1. As a team we were a little down on ourselves because of the two straight losses that we just had and wanted to turn things around because in the back of all of our heads we felt that the regatta could be over for us if we got another loss or two. As the race began we were already at a disadvantage. We lost two pairs off the line and never got back into the race. We didn't have the day we wanted and were glad the day had come to an end. At the end of the round we were seeded 4th.

Thursday 27th

We checked the notice board that morning to find another format change with the regatta. After each gold round bonus points (wins) we be awarded to the top three teams in the round and will carry over into the following round and previous scores will be erased. This means that each day we start from scratch other than the bonus wins that were awarded at the completion of the previous round. This was good news for us because it meant that we were not three losses behind USA 1, rather we were only 1.5

race wins behind. It felt good knowing that we could move on from the day before and put it all behind us like it never happened. Our second race of the day was against USA 1. Both teams started the race very aggressive where pairs kept changing as well as places. As we approached the windward mark we were in a very close 2-3-5. Danny was coming in on the Starboard lay line with Pete Levesque trailing behind. Danny needed to slow a bit at the mark to assure that Caleb and Cardwell could round ahead. In the process, Danny got caught down speed and lost steerage and ended up fouling. As the group of boats sailed downwind USA 1 was in control but it was not clear what places everyone was in until Clay Bischoff who was winning the race executed a mark trap that sprung USA 1 into a solid 1-2-3 combination. We had our first loss of the day and did not want another. The rest of the afternoon we won all our races fairly comfortably until our last race of the day. We were set to sail GBR 1 and they were our least favorite team to sail against because of their "protest happy." Up the first beat of the race it looked pretty even until Cardwell got picked off by a starboard boat and after a few down speed tacks ended up rail locked with the yelling Brits. After many flags were flown, the umpire gave the penalty to Cardwell. We rounded the windward mark with a 2-3-6 where Caleb and Danny chased down the 1st place boat and passed him by the leeward mark. We rounded the mark in a 1-3-5 headed to the offset. The British sailor hailed protest at the leeward mark - a desperation move- he claimed that he was not obligated to sail his proper course and that he had to avoid a collision because of a windward boat. Caleb/Caroline were red flagged at the leeward mark and Danny/Emily were left with a tough 1-4-6 combo to convert. At the same time as Caleb was spinning Danny was caught down speed and got passed before the offset mark. Starting the last beat of the race we were in a 2-4-6 with not much time before the finish. Quickly we were able to balance back to a 2-3 then Danny split off to defend the left side of the course with the fourth place boat, while Caleb/Caroline sailed through the 5th place boat with raw speed. Caleb/Caroline were then in a position to win the race for the team, but they failed to execute a final pass back. Both British teams won their races against USA 1.

After round two GBR 2 had one loss, USA 1 had two

losses, and we (USA 2) had two losses. Because of the bonus wins system USA 1 was seeded 1st, GBR 2 2nd, and USA 2 3rd.

Friday 28th

Starting the day we knew we needed to go undefeated to have a chance at moving on to the semifinals because only one team per country is allowed to move on to the semi-finals. The most important race for us was against USA 1 who we needed to lose against us and one other team for us to move on. We sailed them in our second race, which was a fight from the beginning to the end. USA 1 ended up winning across the finish line securing their spot in the semi-finals. USA 1 wrote a full race recap on scuttlebutt and gave out the play-by-play. We were closer and closer to beating USA 1 with each race. Our last race we had a 2-3-5 around most of the course. On the last beat Danny/Emily heroically held up Pete Levesque and it came down to a two vs. two battle on the other side of the course. The race would be decided by the team that executed first. Unfortunately, they squeaked out a pass back nanoseconds before we could. We were down on ourselves after the race knowing we could not reach our goal, but we sailed a good race. We stuck to our plan though and wanted to leave the regatta with our heads up and be able to tell everyone that we are the second best team, so we did. We won both of our races against the British teams. We out sailed them with speed, tactics and command of the rules. We finished out the round with USA 1 as our only loss and finished 2nd in the Open Team Racing Worlds portion.

Saturday 29th

The regatta ended with a day of no breeze. We were prepared to rout on our fellow countrymen, including LYC member Clay Bischoff, however there were no races on the final day. The awards ceremony began late in the evening. Teams from all countries were friends at this point. The Japanese, Irish, Spaniards, Kiwis, were all shaking hands and laughing about the fun regatta. This was an amazing opportunity for all of us and we are grateful to everyone who helped make this possible.

Team LYC:

Danny Pletsch, Cardwell Potts, Caleb Silsby, Emily Whipple, Lilly Beck, and Caroline Hall