

Shooting for Bronze

Qingdao, China - August 15, 2008 - Tomorrow is the Medal Race for the Yngling Class and we'll be shooting to finish our Olympic campaign with a podium place and a Bronze Medal. Our high hopes for a Gold medal evaporated today, along with Qingdao's notoriously unpredictable winds, which delivered breeze for only one race instead of the three scheduled.

In the only race we sailed today we finished 10th. This left Team 7 in fourth place overall, just one point out of third place, with 43 points overall. The top two boats in the class have 22 points and 23 points respectively which means Gold and Silver are now beyond our grasp. Things might have been different with a strong finish in today's race, plus the lost opportunity to advance in the other two scheduled races but that wasn't to be as they were cancelled due to the lack of wind and time.

We were ready and eager for the first start at noon today. There was some breeze in the morning but then nothing. Wind finally came back with a bang around 3:30 pm, filling in as a strong northerly. It hadn't looked promising for a long while. It was really dismal and we were beginning to wonder if we'd race at all. Then the sky cleared and the breeze came over the mountaintops. It was a very nice, sharp, 8-12 knot breeze, offshore and very shifty.

We liked the look of conditions on the left-hand side of the course before the gun and went for a start near the pin end. It turned out to be a bummer. We couldn't execute our game plan at all because we found ourselves sharing the spot we wanted with another boat and were forced to tack away onto port before the start. Our excursion out to the right side of the course didn't pay off. We should have cut our losses and gone back onto the starboard tack but we didn't. We were looking for something on the right that wasn't there. However, in boat speed terms we sailed an OK beat and pulled up into 9th place at the weather mark.

On the run we worked away from the fleet, along with the boat that ultimately finished third. It was looking promising until we went for the middle of the course and the other boat sailed around us on the outside and got into a streak of pressure that lifted them from 11th to 4th. We rounded the bottom mark still in ninth after gaining and losing a few boats. The beginning of the next beat, the breeze went soft. This time we did get a chance to work the left and sailed into some good pressure and started flying into the top mark. However the breeze quickly reached the rest of the fleet too and we got to the mark in tenth place. There were no place changes on the run and we finished 10th.

Tomorrow our Olympic quest peaks with the Medal Race. We are ready to deliver our best performance and come home proud that we were provided this wonderful opportunity to represent our country and especially appreciative of all of our wonderful supporters over the last five years. Stay tuned for one final push.

Until the Olympics are over, the format of our reports is changing a little in order to comply with International Olympic Committee requirements for all athletes. The IOC wants to protect the commercial interests of its sponsors and thus we're not permitted to post photos of sailing action or provide you directly with official results. However, we have all the links to official photos, results, and other items of interest on our special Team 7 Qingdao Olympic Blog page. If you want to tell your friends and family about our reports, they can find them at <http://www.team7sailing.com/content/blogcategory/20/36/>.

There is a slide show at the US Sailing site. You can also watch a slideshow of the eight photographs in the archive from

Day One and Day Two. Go to <http://www.sailing.org/olympics/news/24681.php>.

For results go to <http://www.sailing.org/olympics/resultscentre.php> and click on Yngling Women in the left-hand column. This site will also let you follow leg-by-leg results during each race.

Carrie Howe

for Team Seven Sailing -

- Sally Barkow, Debbie Capozzi, Carrie Howe