

Down the Chester River by Adam Wilcox

I am Adam, a thirteen-year-old boy who hasn't sailed much since I live near the fast flowing Ohio River at Cincinnati. So on Friday morning I woke up at the Rock Hall Yacht Club camping area and headed to The Chestertown Sailing Club to sail in the Annual Downriver Race. We unloaded and before I knew it I was on the water. I didn't have much experience sailing so Captain Jim (Jim Heffernan) quickly walked me through the basics of sailing. Pretty soon I was working the jib sail and knew what to do on a tack and a jibe. I practiced for a few more minutes and the race had started.

We had a good start and we were ahead of the other three Wayfarers. We just cruised for a while as the multihull boats soared ahead. We sailed on, pulling away from the pack with a Windmill hot on our trail. We went into shallow water and the wind stopped blowing. The Windmill moved right around us and pulled away. I then took the helm and was the captain of the boat for a good 45 minutes. We took some strong gusts and we had to hike hard to stay balanced in this straightaway.

This is where Captain Jim taught me the other way to steer the boat telling me that the key is balance. He moved and the boat did make small turns depending on where he moved. After a half an hour we finished the race behind the Windmill we were chasing. I got off the boat and went in to the Rock Hall Yacht Club. I ended up finishing the day with catching an American eel right in the Rock Hall waters.



Adam Wilcox with an American eel caught at the Rock Hall dock