

2018 NATIONAL ONE-DESIGN AWARD WINNERS RECOGNIZED AT NSPS

Posted on January 31, 2019 at 9:49 PM by [Colin Rupp](#)



2018 Lightning Women's, Junior and Master North American Championship hosted by the Pontiac Yacht Club – National One-Design Regatta Award

The 2018 Lightning Women's, Junior and Master North American Championship was the largest regatta in class history, with 67 boats. Its goal was to build one-design racing by recruiting new junior and women participants. Pontiac Yacht Club (PYC) recruited a highly professional race management team to ensure top-notch racing. To maximize participation, it provided free lodging, competitive charter boats, a crew brokering service and much more.

The Pontiac Yacht Club sits on tiny Cass Lake in southeast Michigan and boasts the largest Lightning fleet in the world. The founders of the club understood that having multiple fleets of one-design boats, each with marginal participation, was not a winning formula, so they declared that PYC would race only Lightnings.

Compared to typical yacht clubs, PYC is a bare-bones operation. It has no paid staff, kitchen or dining facilities and no bar. Approximately 100 family members run all aspects of the club. It is this kind of outstanding effort that contributes so much to one-design racing.

Kevin Morin and Doug Wake – National One-Design Creativity Award

Kevin Morin and Doug Wake used creativity to turn a problem into an opportunity. They are the inventors of the MarkSetBot, a revolutionary new race committee tool that

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increases the accuracy and efficiency of mark setting. MarkSetBot is a self-propelled robotic mark controlled by a mobile device that uses GPS technology to find and hold a location.

Used at the aforementioned Lightning Championships, the battery-powered marks move quickly to their location, directed by a mobile app. They hold position and relocate with incredible ease and the marks are easy to see and handle. The MarkSetBot is described by top race managers as a true game-changer in one-design racing.

Cedar Point Yacht Club – National One-Design Club Award

In addition to running weekly racing for eight strong one-design fleets, the Cedar Point Yacht Club (CPYC) supports the development of new classes like the Aero and Waszp. In challenging times for one-design fleet growth, its Flying Scot and V15 fleets have experienced a resurgence.

In 2018, the club hosted eight separate regattas, including a multi-class one-design regatta with 560 sailors, the 66-boat Thistle Nationals and the annual Connecticut Special Olympics. Regatta festivities included a bagpiper for the opening ceremonies, live bands, a lip sync competition, a corn hole tournament, the “Mafia on the Beach” blender party and a lobster clambake.

The club also supports youth sailing. Last year it hosted the 142-boat JSA of Long Island Sound Race Week and a 78-boat Opti Area C Championship.

Donald Hackbarth – National One-Design Service Award

The 2018 Service Award goes to Don Hackbarth for his efforts to serve to the Snipe Class. A past Leadership Award winner for his fleet-building successes, Hackbarth has served in nearly every position in the class at the local, regional, national and international levels.

Starting in 1984, he served as Treasurer, Vice Fleet Captain and Fleet Captain of the Atlanta Yacht Club Snipe fleet. In the 1990s, he rose through the ranks of Snipe District 4 and became a member of the U.S. SCIRA Board, where he served as secretary for six years and Secretary-General of the Western Hemisphere and Orient for 12 years.

During this time, he was an active racer, winning the U.S. Masters twice. He participated in the Snipe Winter Circuit for 17 consecutive years.

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On the local level, he has built the largest Snipe fleet in the U.S. at the Atlanta Yacht Club. Nationally, he has established a U.S. marketing and promotion program for the Snipe Class. On the international front, he has built a strong financial structure for the class while revitalizing fleets in Puerto Rico, Venezuela and Colombia as the Western Hemisphere General Secretary.

Victor “Pete” Bethge – National One-Design Leadership Award

Described as a “Shangri-La” for Sunfish sailors, the Menantic Yacht Club (MYC) on Shelter Island was commissioned in the 1930s. There are no dues, no dock, no clubhouse—in fact, no facilities at all. What the club has is Pete Bethge, the Commodore for the past 52 years and the driving force behind the club’s success.

The MYC Sunday races, consisting mostly of summer vacationers, have peaked and waned through the years. In 2005, the numbers dropped, and that is when Bethge sprang into action to rebuild the fleet and get new people involved.

He began by assembling a fleet of Sunfish to lend to people. He bought boats, found abandoned boats and accepted donated boats from people who no longer wanted them. He bought new parts, repaired the boats and built a 13-boat fleet, which he made available to anyone interested in sailboat racing. If they had no experience, he gave them lessons and followed them around the harbor, making sure that they were safe.

Each week, people would call him to reserve a boat for Sunday racing. They would show up at his famous “Red House.” Pete would pull all the parts out of his basement, take the sailor to the beach, help rig the boat and send them off to the races. Within three years, the fleet increased to 10–15 boats nearly every Sunday. In 2018, MYC averaged 18 boats on the starting line weekly. Pete still pays for all the boats, parts, sails and repairs himself.

Without his Herculean efforts, MYC would have struggled to stay in business. Today, it is a vibrant growing fleet consisting of experienced and new sailors alike, all enjoying the best that sailing has to offer—great racing and camaraderie and the joy of being out on the water with family and friends.

His extraordinary legacy of sharing his passions of sailing and family is celebrated by all his admirers and emulated by all his sailors. If ever a person exemplified initiative, enthusiasm, organization and leadership skills in creating an outstanding one-design fleet, it is Pete Bethge.

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