

The Officers, Directors and Members of
US SAILING
are pleased to present the
ARTHUR B. HANSON RESCUE MEDAL
to the crew of

J#30

for the rescue as follows:

On March 31, 2002 during an Advanced Spinnaker and Performance Course on San Francisco Bay, Berkeley, CA, Rail to Rail, a J/24, set a spinnaker in 15 knots of wind, then was struck by a gust estimated at 25+ knots and broached to windward, capsizing in one motion. The air temperature was 65-degrees and the water a brisk 57-degrees, with 2-3 foot seas. Six crew were aboard.

All were in contact with the capsized boat initially, but two became separated from the boat early in the process of attempting to right her. As she came up, a third crew released his grip. The boat lost her captain, trimmer and foredeck crew who were all wearing PFDs.

Ray Wichmann, teaching another course in the same area with students Ron Schlupp, Arne Nelson, and Andrea Nassisi, observed the entire sequence of events. They immediately set course with one student acting as spotter for the two groups in the water, another calling to notify the United States Coast Guard.

Upon arrival at the scene, they proceeded to rescue the first victim, using the macho lift method. On arriving to the second group, they successfully lifted the other two aboard together. The victims were mildly hypothermic after being in the water for five minutes. They got the victims below, out of the wind and helped them out of their wet gear.

By this time, Rail to Rail was righted and the rest of the crew were sorting things out. Captain Wichmann counted heads, communicated with the instructor on Rail to Rail to ensure that all crew were safely accounted for. The Coast Guard was called to stop their sortie.

To Captain Ray Wichmann, Ron Schlupp, Arne Nelson, and Andrea Nassisi of the J#30, to keep track of separated victims in the water, effectively get to those sites and make rescue, attending to the medical needs of the victims, confirming that all victims were accounted for, and calling off the Coast Guard when all was well, US SAILING is pleased to present the Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Medal.

Ronald C. Trossbach
Chairman, Safety at Sea Committee
By Direction

The Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Medal was presented to Skip Allan on July 28, 2002 in Kaneohe, Hawaii during the West Marine Pacific Cup Awards Ceremony by Chuck Hawley, US SAILING Safety at Sea Committee Advisor.

Left to Right, Amy Slater, Captain Ray Wichmann receiving medal

Left to Right, Amy Slater, Captain Ray Wichmann.
Ken Signorello, Photographer

DETAILS:

Rail to Rail, a J24 sailing in conditions that were up and down all day, was setting the spinnaker in an advanced race preparation course in the Berkeley Circle, on San Francisco Bay. Immediately after setting the spinnaker in approximately 15 knots of wind, Rail to Rail was struck by a gust estimated at 25+ knots and broached to windward, capsizing in one motion. Six crew were on board, an instructor, instructor auditing and four students.

Two members of the crew stayed on board after the broach. All were in contact with the capsized boat initially, but two became separated from the boat early in the process of attempting to right her. As she came up, a third crew released his grip.

Ray Wichmann, teaching another course in the same area, saw the hoist and subsequent capsize. He immediately set course for Rail to Rail, calling OCSC to report the capsize and have them call the Coast Guard. He proceeded to the capsize. He recognized the efforts of the crew to right the vessel and hove to 50 feet away standing by to provide assistance as needed.

The efforts to right the vessel increased her rate of drift and three crew became detached from the vessel as a result. Captain Ray Wichmann, a US SAILING certified Instructor Trainer and member of the National Faculty, proceeded to rescue first one crew, then, on a second pass, the other two at one time. They were cold and tired but otherwise unhurt. He got them below, out of the wind and had his students help them with their wet gear.

By this time, Rail to Rail was righted and the rest of the crew were on board and sorting things out. Captain Wichmann counted heads, communicated with the instructor on Rail to Rail to ensure that all crew were safely accounted for.

The rescue whaler arrived on the scene, called the Coast Guard to give them the "ALL IS WELL".

Captain Wichmann returned his crew to the Berkeley Marina and turned them over to OCSC staff, who treated their hypothermia with dry clothes, heater, warm drinks and sleeping bags as a precaution.

Nominators Name: Richard Jepsen
Event Name: Advanced Spinnaker and Performance Course
Sponsoring Yacht Club: OCSC San Francisco Bay
Date of Event: 3/30-31/02
Event City: Berkeley
Event State: CA
Date of Incident: 3/31/02
Body of Water: San Francisco Bay
Rescuing Skipper 1: Ray Wichmann
Rescuing1 Boat Make Model: J24
Rescuing1 Boat Name: J# 30
Rescuing1 Boat Length: 24
What was the nature of this incident: Capsize under spinnaker
Did a Mayday call go out: No
Was any injury sustained by the victim: N
Can your story be published: Y
Can you provide articles about this event: N
Was a PFD worn: Y

What type: Inflatable
What type1: Inflatable
What type2: Type 3
What type3: Inflatable
What position was the victim working before they went in: Driver, trimmer, Foredeck
Was this day or night: Daytime
Wind speed: 15-25
Wave height: 2-3 ft
Water temperature: 57
Air temperature: 65
How much time did the victim spend in the water: five minutes on average
What recovery method was used: Reach method
Did the victims boat lose site of the victim: NO
What search pattern was used: Not needed
Was electronic MOB function used to locate the victim: N
Was a rescue swimmer put in the water: N
Did the victim have a strobe light or whistle: Whistle
What color clothes were visible above the water: Yellow Foulie tops
Was the victim able to help in the recovery: Y in all cases
Was a Lifesling aboard: N
Was it used: N
Was the race sailed under ISAF regulations: N/A
Rescuing Crews Names:
Ron Schlupp
Arne Nelson
Andrea Nassisi
What happened: See above narrative

What type hypothermia included:
Very mild hypothermia in three cases, led to muscle weakness. No disorientation, slurred speech.

How did victim help himself back onboard:
Each victim was able to assist the rescue crew in being hoisted aboard the rescue boat. They used their legs and hands while being pulled by their PFDs, arms and foulie clothing

How did the victim get hoisted onto the deck:
see above- no hoisting tackle was needed.