

The Officers, Directors and Members of

US SAILING

are pleased to present the

ARTHUR B. HANSON RESCUE MEDAL

to

BOB SHEAR

FOR THE RESCUE AS FOLLOWS:

US SAILING PRESS RELEASE:

Bob Shear was awarded the US SAILING Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Medal on March 3, 1996 at the CCA's Newport to Bermuda Race Safety at Sea Seminar for his successful rescue of a victim off a racing boat in the Doyle-Sacony IMS Regatta. The medal was presented by John Bonds, Chairman of the US SAILING Safety at Sea Committee and Chip Barber, member of the US SAILING Safety at Sea Committee. Shear was racing his J/44 *Urania* in 22-27 knots of wind when his bow crew shouted "man overboard!" Since there were several crewmembers on the bow at the time, trying to retrieve the spinnaker, Shear assumed that it was one of his crew and looked astern for the man in the water; he was not there.

Shear performed a crash tack and spotted the victim in the water, Ace Miller (not wearing a PFD), bowman off the 12 meter yacht Valiant, which does not carry lifelines, sailing 30 yards ahead. Jib trimmer, Doug Zern, threw the horseshoe at Miller and then a PFD (personal flotation device), both were within 6 to 9 feet of Ace Miller but neither of which were close enough for him to reach in the high seas and wearing full foul-weather gear.

Meanwhile, the crash tack had allowed the crew to get the spinnaker turtle out of the water and enabled Shear to bear away, deploy the Lifesling and jibe around, trailing the line behind Miller. At this point, Miller, a strong swimmer, was struggling to keep his head above water and trying in vain to reach the horseshoe. The crew instructed him to stop swimming and look behind him, where the Lifesling line floated. The line caught him, as *Urania* moved into position and luffed into the wind, drifting closer to Miller. Deciding it would be more prudent to use manpower to bring Miller aboard, five crewmembers dragged him over the leeward side. Miller was taken back to port, examined by EMT's and released unharmed.

Shear credits the rescue to the Lifesling and the ability to grab Miller on the first try -an act facilitated by annual MOB practice.

The seas were 5 feet, water temperature was 51F, the air temperature was 65F, visibility was 5 miles at roughly 5 miles east of Marblehead, MA.

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**by John Bonds, Chairman of the US SAILING Safety at Sea Committee and
Chip Barber, member of the US SAILING Safety at Sea Committee.**