

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

Ketch Ya Later

**for the rescue as follows:**

On May 25, 2000, a Pearson 424 named Ketch Ya Later, was enroute nonstop from Florida to Connecticut, taking advantage of the lift of the Gulf Stream with three onboard. While 45 miles off of Cape Hatteras, NC, the wind calm and seas rolling at 2-feet, 80-degrees air temperature, 75-degree water temperature and running under motor, something looked startling up ahead.

With waterspout warnings heard a short time before on the radio, they had kept a sharp eye out, and saw something that looked like a waterspout. Upon closer investigation, they realized it was smoke from a burning boat. Next, across the VHF radio they heard "Mayday. Mayday."

A Polish father and son, were bringing their 1972 Ferrum 32' steel sloop built by her designer, Andrej Arminski, in Szczecin, Poland, from Miami, FL to Baltimore, MD. They had been sailing and running their engine due to the light wind conditions, when smoke started filling the cabin, coming from the engine department. The sleeping son was unconscious due to smoke inhalation, when the father went below to pull him out. The son came back to once in fresh air, where upon the father had an asthma attack. After treating this attack, the son turned towards fire fighting and discharged a fire extinguisher into the engine compartment, to no avail.

They decided that the fire was too close to the propane tank and that they should abandon ship immediately. Along the way, the ditch kit was grabbed. They inflated the raft and jumped overboard, both missed the raft and swam for it wearing only their skivvies. There was not time to get the PFD's or clothing and put them on. They paddled the raft up wind away from the smoke. Using their hand-held VHF from the ditch kit, they made the Mayday call.

Ketch Ya Later not having seen another vessel for two days, was 3 miles away when they heard the Mayday. It took close to a half-hour to get there and they physically lifted the victims out of their raft up on to the deck of the Pearson. They watched the Ferrum 32 burn for 40 minutes until the fire went out – because the boat sank!

The victims were given food, clothing and trip to New York aboard Ketch Ya Later.

For maintaining a watch and providing aid to mariners in distress, congratulations is owed to the rescuing crew on Ketch Ya Later including Captain Irin Paris, Jesse Fradkin and Gerry Wood. US SAILING is pleased to present the Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Medal in recognition of this event.

Ralph Naranjo,

Chairman, Safety at Sea Committee  
By Direction

**The Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Award was awarded at the South Atlantic Yacht Racing Association midwinter dinner on January 27, 2001 in Hilton Head, SC by SAYRA Commodore Bob Bowden on behalf of US SAILING.**

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Left to Right: Irin Paris, Jesse Fradkin,  
Stand-in for Gerry Wood, presented by  
SAYRA Commodore Bob Bowden.

Left to Right: Irin Paris, Jesse Fradkin,  
stand-in for Gerry Wood.  
Photos by Joe James

#### **DETAILS:**

Irin Paris

The log is on Ketch Ya Later; however, we left Ft Lauderdale on May 20th before dawn and I think it took approximately five days which would make it May 25th. The latitude and longitude is also in the log, but since we were at the outer limit of VHF with the US Coast Guard with our transmissions continually breaking up making it difficult to be understood. I would place it about 45 - 50 NM off shore. I remember a few years ago barely speaking with another Coast Guard station at a range of approximately 50 NM, although I do not know the height of their antennas.

The Pearson 424 not having seen another vessel for two days, was 3 miles away when they heard the Mayday call. It took close to a half-hour to get there and they physically lifted the victims out of their raft up on to the deck of the Pearson. They watched the boat burn for 40 minutes until the fire went out – because the boat sank!

The victims were given food, clothing and trip to New York aboard the Pearson.

Irin Paris

Your email to Soundings Magazine with reference to the rescue described in their December issue page 22 has been forwarded to me.

My name is Irin Paris and am the Captain and owner of Ketch Ya Later, the 42' ketch rigged sailboat, that rescued the two sailors SE of Cape Hatteras after they abandoned their 32' steel hull sailboat while it was burning. My crew consisted of Jesse Fradkin who wrote the article which was published by Soundings, and Gerry Wood of Montreal, Canada area.

Gerry Wood

This is definitely a surprise.

To answer your questions; 1) The victims did not have on their PFD's as they had to scramble from their burning vessel. I understand that their PFD's were inside the boat making it impossible to retrieve them.  
2) At the time the seas were calm with very little wind. The boat in question was under power. The fire started in the engine room we were told.  
3) The air temperature was in the 80's and the skies were clear.  
4) As we were in the Gulf Stream I assume that the water temperature would have been about 75 degrees.  
5) The victims were lifted to the deck of the Ketch Ya Later by myself (Gerry) as Jesse the other crew held their liferaft steady. As I am a large person I was able to pull them up to the boat. This was done by holding each others wrists in a firemans wrist lock.  
6) I am not aware of the model of boat. I do not believe that it was a production boat as it was made from steel.

Jesse S. Fradkin

Thank you for your unexpected consideration of our rescue for this prestigious award. To have been able to be there at the right time and place for our fellow sailors in distress has been reward in itself, of course. And now, with the publication of my article, and your interest, in this that gave us so much pleasure to accomplish, it is becoming an even more special event in our lives. We are privileged, indeed, just to be considered in the company of those who have won this award in the past, and I thank you again for your interest, consideration and nomination.

My answers to the detailed questions you asked are as follows:

Were the victims wearing PFD's?

No, they were forced to leave their boat so hurriedly and unexpectedly, that they were only wearing their underwear, nothing more.

What was the Wave Height?

It was a calm day, 1-2 ft.

What was the Air Temperature?

It was in the 80's.

What was the Water Temperature?

It was in the 70's.

How did the victims get from the water level, up on the deck of Ketch Ya Later (Lifesling, ladder, etc)?

Helped them up by extending arms and pulling them up on deck.

Do you know the make/model of the burned/sunken craft?

It was a Polish built steel-hulled 32' sloop. The designer/maker is said to be famous in Poland, but I do not know his name.

Any other pertinent information would be our pleasure to supply you if necessary.

Irin Paris

Were the victims wearing PFD's?

No, they were not. After the son was revived in the cockpit, the father had a severe asthmatic attack which required the son to attend to him before he could attempt to control the fire. The severity of his asthma normally required the father to hook into a 12 volt system twice a day to remove the accumulated fluid from his lungs using what I think he called a nebulizer. The son attempted to use the fire extinguisher by aiming it at the dense smoke coming from the engine compartment, to no avail.

When they realized that the propane tanks were dangerously hot from the fire emanating from the engine area, they quickly launched the liferaft, and grabbed an emergency overboard bag before jumping wearing only their underwear. Fortunately the emergency bag contained a hand held VHF.

What was the Wave Height?

Relatively calm only approximately 1 - 2 feet

What was the Air Temperature?

In the low 80's

What was the Water Temperature?

It may be in my log on Ketch Ya Later which is currently in Charleston, SC. I will be there during the early part of December, and can check it if it is important. My estimation was it was in the middle 70's.

How did the victims get from the water level, up on the deck of Ketch Ya Later (Lifesling, ladder, etc)?

We reached down with our arms and pulled them aboard from the liferaft. Since they were wearing only underwear, we provided them with clothes, boat shoes, hats, fluids, etc.

Do you know the make/model of the burned/sunken craft?

It was a 32 ft steel hulled sloop built in Poland, but I do not recall the make/model.

When we met their friends at night on the gas dock at the Liberty Marina in Jersey City after they had responded to the father's phone call, one of his friends looked at the liferaft sitting on the dock and quietly asked, "Is that all that is left?"

There is a Report in Soundings Magazine December 2000.