

The Officers, Directors and Members of

US SAILING

are pleased to present the

ARTHUR B. HANSON RESCUE MEDAL

to

TERRY McMAHON

FOR THE RESCUE AS FOLLOWS:

US SAILING PRESS RELEASE

Terry McMahon (Shorewood, WI) and his crew were racing his Soveral 33 Natural High in the Milwaukee Yacht Club's annual Memorial Day Handicap Race in May of 1995. In 35 knots of wind, knowing that a perfect jibe at the weather mark could win them the race, McMahon jibed the pole before the main, to keep the spinnaker under control. When he jibed, the vang was off and the boom crossed, but the top of the sail never did. The boat rounded up hard tossing crewmember Stephanie through the leeward lifelines and into the icy 42 degree water.

The boat rolled back on starboard then violently slammed again onto port putting the boom and pole into the water. McMahon and another crewmember were struggling to get up off the cockpit floor when Patti McMahon was able to toss a lifebuoy, equipped with drogue and die marker, in Stephanie's direction. It was taken by the wind but Patti kept a visual on her, noting that due to air being caught in her foul weather gear, she had some flotation.

Once the spinnaker was down, ripped in half by the wind and water pressure, McMahon was able to get control of Natural High and tacked back for Stephanie. He tried to start the engine, but so much time spent heeled allowed air to get in the line and stall the engine. McMahon sailed the boat to leeward of her, threw a rescue line and she was pulled aboard the boat. Two crewmembers, one an ICU nurse, the other a doctor, took her down below and slowly warmed her, while McMahon headed for shore.

McMahon learned several lessons that day, the most obvious being the wearing of PFD's by everyone. He cited that prior experience in dealing with man-overboard situations or practicing techniques is crucial. Most importantly, though, was they should have never deviated from known boat handling procedures. They had never practiced the type of jibe that caused the knockdown, it was the first race of the season and winds were too high for them to be jibing the chute – all signs of an accident waiting to happen.

**The Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Award was awarded
to Terry McMahon**