

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

SCOTT MELANDER and SARA HITCHCOCK

**for the rescue as follows:**

On June 11, 2001, Hawaii Yacht Club sailing program director Scott Melander was providing orientation training to his new racing coach Sara Hitchcock in a 13-foot Whaler.

Meanwhile, a 40+ year-old surfer was crossing the Ala Wai Channel when a 50-foot sloop hailed their presence as they were motoring out of the channel. The surfer tried to dive, but it was too late. The propeller of the 50-foot sloop entered behind his left knee and exited out his ankle, leaving his leg cut to the bone.

As the instructors were exiting the channel, the surfer paddled over to them asking for help. Scott rolled him into the Whaler and had him lay facedown with his leg elevated. Scott pulled out his first aid kit, which included large gauze, however, no amount of gauze would be adequate to stop the bleeding. Scott and Sara pulled off their shirts and applied direct pressure to help slow the flow of blood. They then drove their whaler back into the Ala Wai Harbor turning basin where a neighboring yacht club, Waikiki Yacht Club was conducting classes. They approached and grabbed more shirts. At this time, a lifeguard on a jet ski arrived. Evidently, someone on land had seen the incident and the lifeguards were notified immediately. The lifeguard was already in contact with an ambulance and it was arranged to have them meet at a launch.

Another lifeguard arrived to add more gauze. The ambulance arrived at the scene about 10 minutes after the initial incident. By now, the victim could no longer feel his leg and was dizzy from the loss of blood. The victim remained calm and was cracking jokes through out the event, which helped to keep his rescuers calm. A stretcher was handed over the sea wall. A team of lifeguards and sailing instructors rolled him into place and handed him over the wall to the professionals. The whole incident lasted about 10 to 15 minutes. The 50-foot sloop that had caused the accident was chased down by helicopters.

Clearly, it was years of training that came to fruition in this one moment. Scott and Sara had current Red Cross and CPR certification as part of their US SAILING instructor certifications. In conjunction with Waikiki Yacht Club, Scott had participated in and helped run numerous trauma clinics.

Congratulations to Scott Melander and Sara Hitchcock for saving the life of a distressed mariner. US SAILING is pleased to present the Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Medal in recognition of this event.

Ralph Naranjo, Chair  
Safety at Sea Committee

By Direction

**Sara Hitchcock was honored by Joe Cochran at the Opening Day for Waikiki and Hawaii Yacht Club. The Hanson Rescue Award was the feature presentation for the event. Scott Melander was honored a 2nd time at the Hawaii Commodores Association and they were both recognized at the Hawaii Yacht Club annual meeting.**

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L to R, Safety at Sea Committee Chair Ralph Naranjo, Scott Melander and President David Rosekrans

L to R, Safety at Sea Committee Chair Ralph Naranjo, Scott Melander and President David Rosekrans  
Photos by Pam Benjamin

#### **DETAILS:**

On Monday June 11, an accident happened off of Waikiki. A surfer was crossing the Ala Wai Canal which is also the channel to the waters off of Waikiki. The 40+ year old surfer heard a hail from a 50 foot sloop that was motoring out of the channel. The surfer tried to dive but it was too late. He sustained severe damage to his left leg. The propeller entered behind his left knee and exited out his ankle leaving his leg cut to the bone.

This particular Monday happened to be a Hawaii State holiday (King Kamehameha Day). Scott Melander, the program director for Hawaii Yacht Club, was using this day to orient his new racing coach, Sara Hitchcock, with the area she would be teaching in. Sara had just returned with the rest of the Rainbow Warrior Sailing team from their win at the college women's nationals.

As they were exiting the channel, the surfer paddled over to them asking for help. Scott rolled him into the 13-foot whaler and had him lay facedown with his leg elevated. Scott pulled out his first aid kit, which included large gauze pads but the situation was laughable. No amount of gauze would be adequate to stop the bleeding. Scott and Sara pulled off their shirts and applied direct pressure to help slow the flow of blood. They then drove their whaler back into the Ala Wai Harbor turning basin where a neighboring yacht club, Waikiki Yacht Club was conducting classes. They approached and grabbed more shirts. At this time, a lifeguard on a jet ski arrived. Evidently, someone on land had seen the incident and the lifeguards were notified immediately.

The lifeguard was already in contact with ambulance personnel and it was arranged to have them meet us at the canoe launch which was about 50 yards away. By now, Scott's Whaler had a 17-foot whaler attached to one side and a jet ski on the other side. All three beached themselves on the shallow rocks.

Another lifeguard arrived and attempted to remove the shirts and add more gauze. The ambulance arrived at the scene about 10 minutes after the actual accident. By now, the victim could no longer feel his leg and was dizzy from the loss of blood. The victim remained calm and was cracking jokes through out the event which helped to keep his rescuers calm. "Don't worry, I can't feel my leg now and that is a good thing."

A stretcher was handed over the sea wall. A team of lifeguards and sailing instructors rolled him into place and handed him over the wall to the professionals. The 50-foot sloop that had caused the accident was chased down by helicopters.

A few factors were in place to contribute to the saving of this surfer's life:

1. The victim did not panic and actually contributed to his own rescue. He paddled after Scott, hailed him and helped when he was rolled into the whaler. Also, he was impressively calm.

2. Scott and Sara were both US SAILING certified instructors which also means they had current Red Cross and CPR certification. Scott is a Level I Instructor Trainer, Level II Coach Trainer Level III candidate and a Safety Boat Instructor Trainer. Sara is a Level I Instructor Trainer.
3. Scott had also practiced for the handling of emergencies. In conjunction with Waikiki Yacht Club, Scott had participated in and helped run numerous trauma clinics which dealt specifically with getting victims out of the water and onto the motorboat. These clinics also dealt with the handling of first aid while on the water.

Clearly, it was years of training that came to fruition in this one moment. The entire episode probably only lasted 10 to 15 minutes but the right choices were made to save a life.

Sincerely,  
Guy Fleming  
Sailing Director Waikiki Yacht Club  
1599 Ala Moana Blvd.  
Honolulu, HI 96814

No Mayday.  
Injury – Sever bleeding and shock.  
Victim was not wearing a PFD.  
Wind 8-10 knots  
Waves flat  
Water Temp 72  
Air Temp 85  
Victim in water for 5 minutes