

The Officers, Directors and Members of

US SAILING

are pleased to present the

ARTHUR B. HANSON RESCUE MEDAL

to the crew of

HUSSY

FOR THE RESCUE AS FOLLOWS:

On July 14, 1999, during a Wednesday evening summer series race, while still daylight, on Lake Charlevoix, MI out of Charlevoix Yacht Club at roughly 6:30 p.m., conditions included small craft warnings and the weather forecast called for more thunderstorms. Winds were 30 knots, waves 2 feet, water temperature 74 degrees and air temperature 70 degrees. Dr. David J. Strawbridge, D.D.S. and his two crew weighed the situation and when they saw the other J/22's headed out, they had to race to his J/22 *Swine Flew* 3 miles away, get aboard and race to the starting line. They just made it with 2 minutes to spare. In the haste, the normal life jacket call for these conditions was overlooked as well as preparing the on-deck safety procedures and safety gear such as the throwable flotation device. The wind lessened to 10mph as the rain poured, on the horizon, intense lightning was approaching after turning the weather mark. Half way down the run, the squall pushed the winds to 20-25 knots, suddenly the hiking stick wedged against the cockpit wall, turning the boat into a jibe placing Dr. Strawbridge on the leeward side and then he was swept off the stern with no PFD. Dr. Strawbridge's boat sailed off and his crew lost sight of him.

Mark Snyder, Brian Vandeyacht and Don Hicks, on the J/22 *Hussy* witnessed the overboard and were able to drop their spinnaker and work back to weather. J/22's do not have engines on board. On the first pass they were able to get a throwable flotation device to Dr. Strawbridge. On making the third pass with Dr. Strawbridge in the water for 15 minutes now, they were able to drag Dr. Strawbridge up onto *Hussy*, thoroughly exhausted and cold. From this ordeal, Dr. Strawbridge suffered bruised ribs on his right side and mild hypothermia.

The US SAILING Arthur B. Hanson Rescue medal is awarded to Mark Snyder, Brian Vandeyacht and Don Hicks for maintaining a vigilant watch, going to a mariner in distress, and recovering Dr. Strawbridge using sails alone, in this recovery.

Ernie Messer
Chairman, Safety at Sea Committee

**The Hanson Medal was presented by Charlevoix Yacht Club
Commodore Jack Hodge on November 6, 1999 at the
Charlevoix Yacht Club annual awards program.**



Mark Snyder (left) and Dr. David J. Strawbridge, D.D.S. (right)

THEIR STORY:

Following is a narrative written by the victim. It is in a "rough" hand written note. I quote:

"A Wednesday evening race in the Northern end of Lake Charlevoix, an area of about 2 miles square. Small craft warnings were posted on Lake Michigan, about one mile to the west. The weather forecast called for more thunderstorms so the Charlevoix Yacht Club decided it was up to the individual skippers whether to race or not. My crew consisted of a very experienced lady on the foredeck in the handling of the boat and an adult male with two years experience in addition to myself having skippered my own boat for the last 25 years.

My boat was moored in Oyster Bay, 3 miles from the majority of other boats and I thought the race was off only to drive to the shore of the race area, seeing the majority of the J/22 fleet starting out to the leeward end of the race course. The three of us raced back to my moored boat, threw the lines and sails together and hightailed it out of our bay to the starting line arriving two minutes before our start.. In our haste we failed to take some normal precautions, no life jackets on something we always do in heavy air.

As luck would have it we were able to pinch out the boats to starboard of the race committee boat to get our best start of the season and even though we were light we managed to hold our own until just before the windward mark when it started raining the proverbial cats and dogs knocking the wind down to under 10 knots of breeze. It was very shifty and we rounded the mark in 4th place but still definitely in the race.

A jibe set was the right call which we nailed and set off in the now increasing winds. There was intense lightning to the south of us and obvious worsening of conditions all around.

About half way down the run the wind had increased to be 20-25 knots but all was under control, that is, until the tiller extender wedged against the port cockpit wall with the pole on port. As I tried to free the extender the boat rolled to starboard into a standing jibe with me then to leeward swept off the stern, the boat now with no helmsman. J/22's carry no standard auxiliary power and with a crew not prepared for such an emergency it seemed as though it would be a long swim to shore for me.

Luckily Mark Snyder, Brian Vandeyacht and Don Hicks, on the J/22 *Hussy* witnessed the problem and were able to drop their spinnaker and work back to weather and after the third pass and 15 minutes +/- drag me onto their boat, thoroughly exhausted, cold and needless to say, thankful.

Since we had hurried to the race course we did not have life jackets on, the throwable was below, not in position to be thrown, and my thrown together crew had not been briefed on what to do in case of an emergency.

I have and will continue to advocate the judicious use of life jackets and importance of practices to such possibilities in the future."

Dave Strawbridge's notations and narrative are in very rough draft on a print out of your e-mail to me July 21st. If you would like, I can fax it or mail it to you. Let me know fax number or address in that event.

Thanks for your interest and efforts!
Karl Jurries

Don Hicks has USCG 100 Ton license, has been an ASA certified sailing instructor for several years, now works for Irish Boat Shop.

Vandeyacht has sailed and raced for many years, at a high level for a while (Bow on Collaboration) now lives with family in this area and works for Irish Boat Shop

Snyder and I have sailed together A LOT over many years, and worked together also.

I cannot imagine three people more likely to get someone out of the water successfully.

The person in the water, David Strawbridge, would quite possibly have been able to make the swim to shore, probably about a mile as he is a very strong "fitness" swimmer. But swimming conditions were not "ideal".

Dave Irish

ROUGH STATISTICS: Date of incident: July 14, 1999 approximately 6:30 p.m.

Daylight, Wind approx 30 kts, waves 2 ft. +, water temp. approx. 74 deg., air temp. 70 deg.

Victim's boat: *Swine Flew*, rescuer's boat: *Hussy*. Both were J/22's, Not under any ORC Special Regulations. Recovery method used: Throwable device was given to victim, he was manually lifted from water after the third pass. Victim's crew lost sight of him while he was in the water. No search pattern was used, victims own boat was not in control enough to assist with rescue. The crew of the rescuing boat observed, no search pattern was needed. No GPS or electronic MOB function was used. No "MAYDAY" call was made. Victim did not have a strobe, light or whistle. No clothing was visible above the water. Victim was able to assist in the recovery rescue, he was capable of swimming and was able to assist rescuers to lift him into the rescuing boat. Injury: bruised ribs, rt. side, cold but no noted or medically treated hypothermia.

Hoisted onto deck with use of hands only. No Lifesling was on board, none used. No PFD was worn. Victim was in stern, port quarter. Daylight. Victim was in the water about 15 minutes.

Event: Charlevoix Yacht Club, regular Wednesday evening weekly race, summer series. No rescue swimmer went into the water. Permission to publish the story is granted. Body of water, Lake Charlevoix.