

The Officers, Directors and Members of

US SAILING

are pleased to present the

ARTHUR B. HANSON RESCUE MEDAL

to the crew of

EXPERIENCE

FOR THE RESCUE AS FOLLOWS:

During the 1994 Chicago to Mackinac Race at 10:30 at night in the middle of Lake Michigan, a North American 40, owned by Steve Kindra, was in the midst of a spinnaker change when a Northwest 30-35 knot squall hit the boat. The helmsman turned down wind in the 5 to 6 foot seas, the boat went into a death roll and the bow submarined. This action catapulted the helmsman overboard. As the boat spun around it jibed and a less experienced crewmember, now in the water holding on, thought he would be safer in the water and let go. The boat righted and another crew grabbed the helm. Neither victim was wearing a PFD or had a light, and one wore dark, stealth-like clothing. They dropped sails, checked to see that all lines were aboard and started the engine. One line was missed and wrapped around the propeller. They re-raised the main and dropped the COB gear into the water. They sailed back on an estimated 180-degree course to start their search.

A competitor, *Experience*, a Soverel 39, owned by Charles Kuehn, helmed by Michael Considine, heard sails flogging on boats ahead, ordered the chute doused and ordered the #3, as other boats were going past them downwind. Michael noticed a strobe flashing in the water up ahead and ordered the crew to lookout for people in the water. Charles looked back at one of the boats that had passed and to his amazement saw a face in the water. The second victim was an ex-Navy Seal who was whistling loudly as his training protocol called for. Chuck shouted, "Man in the water," along with, "drop the sails, clear the lines out of the water, and get a light on him". Then Charles started the engine and Mike did a 180-degree turn. All eyes and ears peered out in the distance and finally a call, "he's over to starboard about 100 yards off the bow." The *Experience* crew, hand grabbed and pulled the sailor aboard.

The search started again for the second victim. They headed back to a strobe light that they dropped in the water earlier and spotted the second victim 50 yards off the bow. On the first try, their speed was too great and could not grab or hold the victim, they did manage to get a flashlight to the victim though. On the second pass, they successfully hauled the victim aboard.

Experience motored over to the NA-40 who was searching, under sail, and let the NA-40 know that they had their crew. The NA-40 was elated. A dangerous transfer of their crew to their mother ship was made successfully.

Congratulations to the rescuing crew on *Experience* including Charles Kuehn, Gary Koslowski, Mike Considine, Ike Stephenson, Scott Miller, Dan Marks, Steve Lambeau and Paul Consani. US SAILING is pleased to present the Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Medal in recognition of this event.

Ralph Naranjo, Chair
Safety at Sea Committee

The Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Medal was awarded to the crew of Experience by US SAILING Safety at Sea Committee member Glenn T. McCarthy at the Chicago to Mackinac Island awards presentation, July 25, 2000.

DETAILS:

As reported by Charles E. Kuehn

Did a Mayday call go out? No. Who responded? I called the Coast Guard and informed them we had two guys on board. They had no idea any one had been missing as *Nitemares* radio was not working after the knock down. Was any injury sustained by the victim? One yes, One no. Were PFD's worn? No. What position were the victims working before they went in? Bow and helm. Was this day or night? Night. Wind speed? 30. Wave height? 6-10. Air temperature? 55. How much time did the victim spend in the water? 15 to 30 minutes. What recovery method was used? We used the TEAM *EXPERIENCE* "get the dude out of the water" approach" You could know way sail back to these guys and control our boat and hang two guys over the side to reach for the MOB. It was safe to dump the main and secure the lines (it took 30 seconds) and that gave me unlimited power and direction. I always keep the key in the ignition and we were very careful not to have any line or sail in the water. We used flashlights and sounds to search for the guys. Did the victims boat lose site of the victim? Yes. What search pattern was used? We went back to where we tossed to MOB gear. Did the victim have a strobe light or whistle? No. What color clothes were visible above the water? None dark coat, yellow foul weather bibs. Was the victim able to help in the recovery? No. Was the race sailed under ORC regulations? Yes. If so what category? 2. How did the victim get hoisted onto the deck? Two of my big strong boys yanked him up off the starboard beam

We happened to pass by a sailor in the water at 10:30 p.m. Saturday night in the 1994 Chicago-Mac race. A squall had pass through and hit the fleet hard. Two guys from the boat "*Nitemare*" were tossed overboard. We were in the middle of a sail change when I saw a man in the water off the port stern. I tossed in our MOB gear and dropped sails, cleared the lines and went back to look for him. It was wavy, dark and blowing stink and now were out looking for a guy with no light or life jacket. Anyway, somehow we found one guy and hauled him in and he asks if we got his buddy? This was a different sailor than the one I saw. Around we went and headed back toward our MOB gear I launched. We were lucky to find the second guy and after two tries, successfully got him on board.

As reported by Steve Kindra, February 4, 1998 LM Case 13

In the 1994 Chicago to Mackinac race approximately mid-lake, *Nitemare*, a North American 40, was on port tack at 10:30 PM, reaching along after peeling from the .75 to 1.5 chute. Weather reports indicated that a cell between Milwaukee and Racine was on its way with 60 mph gusts. In the peel, they had used a snatch block to attach the 1.5 chute to the pole as a temporary. The bow crew went to pull the lanyard on the now empty afterguy and the lanyard gave way. 15 seconds after this, the squall hit. The helmsman turned down wind and the boat went into a death roll and the bow submarined. This action catapulted the helmsman overboard. The bow crew, harnessed to the boat, was fully underwater. As the boat spun around it jibed and an inexperienced crew member now in the water holding on, thought he would be safer in the water and let go. The boat righted and another crew grabbed the helm. They attempted to douse the chute and there was a knot in the halyard. They cut the halyard, collected the chute, and then dropped the main sail. They checked to see that all lines were aboard and started the

engine. One line was missed and wrapped around the propeller. They raised the main and dropped the COB gear into the water 15 seconds later. They sailed back on an estimated 180 degree course knowing that the two in the water had no PFD and no lights. As luck would have it, another boat, *Experience* came upon the two of them. One of the crew had the sense to use his lips and whistle at *Experience* who was already sailing on a main and number 3 jib. As they hauled the first out of the water, the rescued mentioned that there was another in the water and they commenced search and found the other crew.

As reported by Mike Considine, Helmsman of Experience

Experience was sailing on a beam reach under spinnaker when we heard the sounds of sails flogging from a squall line that hit ahead of us. Mike Considine was at the helm and hailed immediately to douse the spinnaker. Once the crew had retrieved the spinnaker, and was preparing to hoist the #3, Mike Considine noticed a strobe flashing in just off Experience's port bow and alerted the crew to look out for people in the water. A crewmember immediately grabbed a flashlight and the search was on. Luckily, two bodies were spotted immediately as they were almost in Experience's direct path. Whistles from one of the men alerted one of the spotters over board, (An ex-navy seal who was trained to whistle to alert craft after diving).

We immediately luffed under mainsail next to the two, but could not retrieve them on the first try. On the second try, we retrieved the first victim. We immediately dropped the main and turned the engine on to retrieve the remaining man over board. On the first pass under motor, the victim slipped through our hands. The boat was turned immediately and positioned as quickly as possible for the final attempt and he was retrieved.

After retrieving the victims, we returned them to the NA-40 and gave the NA-40 a hand-held radio because theirs was disabled during their knockdown. We also retrieved safety gear that was tossed in the water.

It should be noted we always knew there were two victims as they stayed together in the water.