

Todd Haines



US SAILING names up to five one-design award winners every year to recognize outstanding individuals and organizations in one-design sailing. In 2009, Todd Haines (Dousman, Wisc.) received the Gardiner Trophy (Service Award), which recognizes an individual's distinguished service and exceptional dedication in the promotion of one-design sailing and class organization.

The award comes from several years of planning, research, and hard work at re-building the A Scow class. Throughout his involvement with the A Scow class, regatta participation increased from single digits in the 1980s to an unprecedented 29 boats at the 2007 A Scow National Championship. Todd helped guide the fleet through rule and design changes that kept the A Scow on the leading edge of technology.

"If you've never sailed an A Scow, you do not know what an awesome boat they really are," Todd said. He also detailed how high-tech the boat has become. They now use carbon foil rudders, carbon spars, strategically placed carbon in the hull construction, 1500 square feet asymmetrical kites, and a boat that planes in six knots of breeze. The racing range of breeze for the fleet is 5 to 25 knots and they race 12 to 14 mile courses on average. Todd mentioned that racing is very fast and very competitive at nationals and at the Inland Lakes Yachting Association (ILYA) Championships.

Todd has used creativity and patience to stay on pace with the fleet and stay on the cutting edge of technology. "I have not always had the funds available to buy brand new equipment and have not had the luxury of being able to send my boat off every time for repair or modifications," he explained. "Because of this, I've learned how to do my own maintenance and modifications." For example, Todd managed to figure out his own foil rudder construction and installation with research and good networking.

Todd started sailing when he was six, as a fourth crew on his parents' E Scow in Madison,

Wisc. “I will never forget capsizing and having the boat righted under full sail, and me being the only crew left on board,” added Todd. “Of course, we tipped over again about 600 yards away. I was hooked for life after that.”

Todd has spent a significant amount of time teaching and training people to sail. Following his junior racing days at ILYA, Todd was hired as a sailing instructor at both Pewaukee and Nagawicka Yacht Clubs. “I found that the best crew will be one that you have recruited for their attitude rather than their skill level, and then trained them so they fit your team’s goals.”

Todd views sailing as a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between generations. “You are taught to deal with adults in a manor not offered in many instances in life,” he said. “You may end up in a protest with a 50-year-old man at age 16. You will be expected to address that adult as an equal with respect. I’m not sure of many other instances that offer all of these things to our youth.”