

The Officers, Directors and Members of
US SAILING
are pleased to present the
ARTHUR B. HANSON RESCUE MEDAL
to
The Rescuing Crew on Sociable
for the rescue as follows:

US SAILING has awarded an Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Medal to the crew of Sociable for their rescue of six sailors from WingNuts, a capsized yacht on Lake Michigan during a storm in the Chicago Yacht Club Race to Mackinac on the night of July 17-18, 2011. This Hanson Medal was awarded on Saturday, November 5 to Sociable's skipper, Robert Arzbaeher (Brookfield Wis.), and his crew at the race's awards dinner at the Chicago Yacht Club. The presentation was made by Janet



Baxter, former President of US SAILING. Sociable's crew included Brian Adams, Amy Marshall, Cathy Patrick, Brian Nagle, Matt Younkle, Greg Adams, David Patrick, Pete Duecker, Adam Flanders, Chris Miotke and Max Riesing.

Sociable received three nominations for the Hanson Rescue Medal, including the surviving crew of WingNuts, Commodore Joseph S. Haas of the Chicago Yacht Club, and from a Florida sailor who was not directly involved in this race or rescue.

Late on the night of July 17, Sociable, a Beneteau 40.7 out of Milwaukee Yacht Club, was sailing in a large group of Chicago-Mackinac Race boats off Charlevoix, Mich. when they were buffeted by severe squalls with wind speeds over 40 knots, steep seas, blinding rain and frequent sheet lightning. At approximately 11:15 p.m. CDT, navigator Brian Adams heard the faint sound of a whistle. Alerted that something might be wrong, the crew soon spotted lights about half a mile away. Dropping out of the race, Arzbaeher sailed toward the lights and found a competitor, the Kiwi 35 sloop WingNuts, capsized and upside down. Five sailors were on her upturned bottom holding on to the keel and waving lights, and a sixth person was in the water, hanging on to the rudder, most were wearing inflatable life jackets.

Arzbaeher would marvel at how effective this basic, mandatory equipment was at saving the sailors' lives. "A life jacket, a whistle and a light. My God, how simple it can be? But that's what it was," Arzbaeher said. "This experience really re-energized our focus on safety. You can never stop learning about safety and never stop thinking about what could go wrong in these situations."

The Sociable crew deployed the boat's Lifesling rescue device and dragged it around WingNuts. A race requirement for all entries, the Lifesling allowed the rescuers to get a buoyant connection to the distressed sailors without entangling Sociable in the web of lines and gear floating around the capsized hull. The six sailors were pulled to safety one or two at a time to the Sociable's transom, where they were helped on board.

"The Lifesling worked very well and the boat's scoop transom worked similar to a swim platform on the back," recalled one victim, Stanton Dent. Sociable's crew worked as a team under skipper Bob Arzbaeher's supervision to get the WingNuts crew safely out of the water without endangering Sociable in extremely challenging conditions.

Two of WingNuts' crew were submerged under the boat and had died from severe head trauma suffered during the accident. Their bodies were removed by divers after dawn on Monday.

All the WingNuts' people were chilled after almost an hour of exposure to 70-degree water and were given blankets and dry clothes. One was hypothermic and was treated by crewmembers Amy Marshall and Cathy Patrick.

While the rescues were being made, navigator Adams was below making VHF-FM radio contact with other boats and the Coast Guard, which had also been alerted by signals from two SPOT Messaging Devices that had been triggered by WingNuts crew members. The Coast Guard sent a helicopter and a 41-foot boat to the scene, and later sent an icebreaker, a small boat, and two other helicopters. At least 23 racing boats stopped racing and stood by WingNuts. A U.S. Coast Guard official familiar with the rescue has said of the Sociable crew, "They're one of the heroes."

Dr. Gino Bottino, MD
Chairman, Safety at Sea Committee
By Direction

NOMINATION 1

Date 7/23/2011 3:09:52 PM

Date of Incident Sunday, July 17, 2011

What was the nature of this Incident? Night rescue of crew from capsized vessel.

What happened? "After keeping a difficult watch for other vessels during the driving rain and storm, a crewmember heard a ""surreal sound"" - a whistle. Uncertain if it was real or imagined he asked other crew to listen and peer into the darkness with him. As visibility improved some vague lights were seen to port and the urgency built. The crew hoisted the main and sailed toward the lights. As soon as their boat was hit with a flashlight beam from the waterline, and a turtled hull spotted, the crew dropped the main, fired up their engine and contacted the USCG while powering to the capsized vessel and crew.

The crew atop Wingnuts directed Sociable to their weakest and largest crewmember who was in the water and needed immediate assistance. It took multiple circles for him to successfully hold onto the Lifesling, but eventually with great difficulty, he was pulled aboard Sociable. Hypothermia was an issue as he seemed to fade in and out and become non-responsive. The Sociable crew got him out of wet gear and wrapped in blankets while working to keep him awake and alert. One-by-one the other five crew members left the Wingnuts' hull and jumped into the water so Sociable's crew could pull them aboard."

Event Name Race to Mackinac

Sponsoring Yacht Club CYC

Event City Chicago/Charlevoix/Mackinaw

Event State MI

Body of Water Lake Michigan

Day or Night? Night

Air Temperature 60's?

Water Temperature 60?

Wind Speed 30 +/-

Wave Height 5+

Name and Home Town (City, State) 5 crew from Saginaw, MI

Boat Name Wingnuts

Boat Length 35

Boat Make & Model Kiwi 35

Name and Home Town (City, State) 1 from Chicago, IL

Boat Name Wingnuts

Boat Length 35

Boat Make & Model Kiwi 35

What position(s) was/were the victim working before they went in? I have not interviewed the surviving crew from Wingnuts.

Was a PFD worn by the victim(s)? Yes

What Type (Victim 1)? unknown

What Type (Victim 2)? "

What Type (Victim 3)? "

What Type (Victim 4)? "

Skipper's Name Robert Arzbaecher

Boat Make & Model Beneteau 40.7

Crew's Names and function each performed in the rescue: "Brian Adams: heard whistle/spotted lights/VHF radio communication w/USCG and other race/search boats. Amy Marshall/Cathy Patrick: Got

hypothermic crew into blankets and dry gear. Stimulated crewmember who seemed to be in and out of consciousness.

Brian Nagle, Matt Younkle, Greg Adams, David Patrick, Pete Duecker, Adam Flanders, Chris Miotke, and Max Riesing all worked as a TEAM under Bob to get the Wingnuts crew safely out of the water without endangering Sociable- the boat and her crew, in VERY challenging conditions."

Boat Name Sociable

Boat Length 39.1

Crew's Names and function each performed in the rescue: "Many other boats responded to Brian's call for assistance. I believe the race committee has the names of those boats.

The positive response demonstrated the best part of sailors- that so many were willing to drop out of the race and help search for MOBs.

Unfortunately, there were no floating MOBs to rescue. Wingnuts' crew heard Brian requesting assistance, but did not tell him to call off the search. Perhaps in shock, they were not ready to accept the facts and fate of their still tethered skipper and crew."

What recovery method was used (Quickstop, Reach Method, Figure 8, etc)? Lifesling deployed multiple times in tough conditions

Did the victim's boat lose sight of the victim? "victims" beneath Wingnuts

What search pattern was used? unknown what other boats not on site used

Was GPS or other electronic MOB function used to track or help locate the victim? Yes

Where there any difficulties with the electronic locator? no

Was a rescue swimmer put in the water Y/N? No

Did the victim have a strobe light, a light or whistle? yes + 2 personal EPIRBs-strobes were spotted

What color clothes were visible above the water? I don't know

Was the victim able to help in the recovery? Yes

In what way? "All except for the first, large and tired male who had remained in the water, unable to climb atop the turtled boat. The other five were in better physical shape."

How did the victim get hoisted from the water level up onto the deck? Lifesling to swim platform.

Was any injury sustained by the victim? Yes

Was a Lifesling aboard? Yes

What type (hypothermia included)? Hypothermia.

Was it used? Yes

How much time did the victim spend in the water? 45 minutes?

Did a Mayday call go out? Not by Wingnuts, the capsized vessel.

Nominator's Name Susan Davidson

Do you give permission to have this story published? Yes

Can you provide copies of articles published about this event Y/N? Yes

NOMINATION 2

Date 8/1/2011 3:02:06 PM

Date of Incident Sunday, July 17, 2011

What was the nature of this Incident? Sailboat capsized, with 8 crew members

What happened? "The following was the "Sociable" crews' collective recollection of the storm and rescue of the crew of "Wingnuts" on Sunday July 17th and Monday, July 18th

Summary:

Around 10:30 pm CDT on Sunday evening, we encountered severe squall while positioned approximately 15 nautical miles northwest of Charlevoix. Conditions prior to storm Seas were following seas of 4-6 feet with 20-25 knots south wind, conditions we had been sailing for the past 6 hours. During the squall, we saw heavy rain, a lot of lightning, and winds up to 50 knots. During a brief moderation of the storm, (it came in two phases) we were able to lower our main sail, and ride the storm out with our #3 jib.

We raised our main sail once the storm had passed around 11:15 pm CDT. Visibility was still poor, and the sea state was very lumpy from the storm. Shortly after raising our main and beginning to make headway, several crewmembers heard what sounded like a whistle. Around that same time, we encountered a bare poled sailboat to starboard, and we suspected the whistle came from that boat attempting to alert us to its presence. Hearing the whistle certainly heightened our senses that we should be vigilant for others given the nature of the storm that just occurred.

A minute or two after hearing the whistle, a crewmember spotted a faint light perhaps 1/4 to 1/2 mile to port, and this light after 1 minute was confirmed by other crew members. We continued on our current course for two or three minutes until we had an appropriate angle to tack over to the light. We brought our spot light on deck. As we drew closer, we were able to see other lights, and we signaled in the direction with our spot light. Our signal was returned with flashes from the lights in the distance. At that time we became certain we were headed toward a vessel (or person) in distress and we made the decision to lower our main sail and proceed under power. We started the motor and verbally notated the time as 11:30 CST. The sails on our boat were taken down and stowed.

As we approached we were able to discern the outline of a turtled hull with several people standing on it. Wind conditions at this point were around 15-20 knots, very confused sea state of 3-5 foot waves. At this time another Sociable crew member notified the Coast Guard via VHF radio of the situation, and this crew member took over sole responsibility of manning the VHF radio communication while the other crew began the rescue procedures. We attempted radio transmission several times without response from the USCG. A nearby vessel Vayu was able to relay to us that the coast guard was acknowledging our calls. Once we were within hailing distance, the Wingnuts crew told us that there were six crewmembers with the boat with two other crew members missing in the water. This information was relayed to the Coast Guard we requested assistance in the search efforts for the 2 missing crew members.

Five of the Wingnuts crew were standing on the overturned hull of the vessel, with a sixth crew member clinging to the stern of the boat in the water. Our first priority was to rescue the man in the water. With unknown amounts of rigging and lines in the water around Wingnuts, we needed to be careful not to approach too close as to foul our own prop. We also needed to keep a close lookout for the other two crew still in the water.

We deployed our lifesling off the starboard stern of Sociable, throwing it towards the man in the water, however Sociable was just far enough away so that the sling was still about 5 feet from the man. He attempted to swim to reach the sling but Sociable's drift was not allowing him to reach it. He was clearly very weak at this point. We retrieved the sling and made another pass closer in and were then able to put the slings rope easily within reach of this crewmember, and we pulled him to the transom of Sociable. This large gentleman was physically exhausted, and it took four of Sociable's crew to lift him aboard our vessel. We assessed his condition as mildly hypothermic, and he was vomiting a lot of water.

At this point we launched a handheld flare so other boats could see us, but determined it was creating too much smoke and was interfering with our rescue mission. Our estimate is that it took 15 minutes to get this first victim on board Sociable.

We made subsequent circles around Wingnuts while towing our Lifesling. The Wingnuts crew jumped from their hull into the water and swam a few yards to reach the Lifesling and/or the line it was attached to. On the first subsequent pass, we pulled one of the Wingnuts crew into Sociable. On the next two passes, we pulled two crew members aboard at once. Total time to get next 5 victims aboard Sociable was 10 minutes.

As the individuals came aboard and went below decks on Sociable we instructed the crew to get their wet clothes off and we gave them blankets. One individual was showing signs of hypothermia. He was placed in a sleeping bag and monitored. After about 30 to 45 minutes he was improving. One of the Wingnuts crew we brought aboard mentioned that he thought the 2 missing crewmembers were still underneath Wingnuts, possibly still attached to the boat by their tethers. While this crewmember was standing with us in Sociable's cockpit, a Sociable crewmember, asked out loud ""should we try to have a Sociable crewmember go underneath Wingnuts to check for the missing 2."" The Wingnuts crewmember immediately said we should not, it was too dangerous, with the rolling seas, and lines, or rigging that were loose underneath Wingnuts. Sociable's crew in the cockpit agreed. As we received this information, we relayed it to the Coast Guard, telling them we had strong reason to believe the missing people were under Wingnuts, including a request that a diver be available to assist with the rescue.

At that time, we were able to see nearby racing boats headed to assist. We noted which boats were available to help, and also co-coordinated a grid system for boats to look for the missing crew members. We launched several parachute flares upon the suggestion of the Coast Guard. We also noted several flares from a nearby boat Vayu. Sailboats from the Mac Race began arriving soon after we had the 6 crew members aboard, we estimate that 15-20 boats arrived on location within the hour of our first VHF transmission.

We launched subsequent parachute flares 45 minutes later at the request of the Coast Guard in order to aid the rescue boat/helicopter in ascertaining our position. Ahead of the arrival of USGS Search boat 375, USGS helicopter 6265 conducted a search pattern in the vicinity of the incident. It was probably 45 minutes after we had recovered the 6 crew, while we continued to circle Wingnuts looking for signs of the other 2 crew, that a Coast Guard helicopter finally arrived. The Coast Guard helicopter made passes thru the area with their search light on the water, but then seemed to go far off in the distance before returning for another pass of our immediate area. We were informed via radio that there were no divers available to assist with the rescue, either from the helicopter or rescue boat.

Upon arrival on the scene, the Coast Guard rescue boat used what appeared to be a boat hook to tap on the hull of Wingnuts. They also attempted to position their vessel in a manner to provide some visibility under the hull of Wingnuts. Upon hearing/seeing no signs of life, the rescue boat began conducting its own search pattern for 30 minutes before heading back to Charlevoix or Petoskey/Harbor Springs. At this point, we asked the Coast Guard what they wanted us to do with the 6 Wingnuts crew; the reply was to ""standby."" While the Wingnuts crew seemed to be ok, we were worried that shock might set in and one or more of them would need more medical attention. We then told the Coast Guard that we wanted to proceed to port to get the Wingnuts crew to medical personnel. Sociable determined our closest port would be Charlevoix, and we communicated to Coast Guard that we were heading there. At

2:15CST we left the scene, plotted a course and motored for about 2.5 hours before arriving at the Charlevoix Coast Guard station where we dropped off the six Wingnuts crew. Two ambulances were waiting at the Coast Guard station upon arrival, although all six crew refused medical attention."

Event Name 2011 Chicago Yacht Club Race to Mackinac

Sponsoring Yacht Club Chicago Yacht Club

Event City Chicago, Illinois/Mackinac Island, Michigan

Event State Illinois/Michigan

Body of Water Lake Michigan

Day or Night? Night

Air Temperature High 70sF

Water Temperature Mid 60sF

Wind Speed 30-60 mph

Wave Height 3-5 feet

Name and Home Town (City, State) Suzanne Bickel, Saginaw, MI - Deceased

Boat Name Wingnuts

Boat Length 35

Boat Make & Model Kiwi Boats; Kiwi 35

Name and Home Town (City, State) (17) Mark Morley, Saginaw, MI -- Deceased

Boat Name Wingnuts

Boat Length 35

Boat Make & Model Kiwi 35

Name and Home Town (City, State) Christopher Cummings, Gradville, MI

Boat Name Wingnuts

Boat Length 35

Boat Make & Model Kiwi 35

Name and Home Town (City, State) Lee Purcell, Chicago, IL

Boat Name Wingnuts

Boat Length 35

Boat Make & Model Kiwi 35

What position(s) was/were the victim working before they went in? "Additional victims: Stuart Morley, Midland, MI; Peter Morley, Midland, MI; Stanton Dent, Midland, MI; John Dent, Ann Arbor, MI"

Was a PFD worn by the victim(s)? Yes

What Type (Victim 1)? All wore inflatable PFDs

Skipper's Name Robert Arzbaecher

Boat Make & Model Beneteau 40.7

Crew's Names and function each performed in the rescue: "On deck: Brian Nagle; Matt Younkie; Greg Adams; Robert Arzbaecher; Pete Duecker; Adam Flanders; Chris Miotke; Max Riesing.

Radio: Brian Adams; Below aiding rescued victims: Amy Marshall and Cathy Patrick"

Boat Name Sociable

Boat Length 40.7

Skipper's Name Several others boats responded. See Appendix A

What recovery method was used (Quickstop, Reach Method, Figure 8, etc)? see Sociable account

Did the victim's boat lose sight of the victim? boat capsized

What search pattern was used? see Sociable account

Was GPS or other electronic MOB function used to track or help locate the victim? Yes

Was a rescue swimmer put in the water Y/N? No

Did the victim have a strobe light, a light or whistle? yes--see Sociable account

Was the victim able to help in the recovery? Yes
In what way? See Sociable account. Victims swam to rescue boat Sociable.
How did the victim get hoisted from the water level up onto the deck? Lifesling
Was any injury sustained by the victim? No
Was a Lifesling aboard? Yes
What type (hypothermia included)? Mild--see account
Was it used? Yes
How much time did the victim spend in the water? Estimated one plus hour
Did a Mayday call go out? yes
Who responded? Sociable and several additional race boats/USCG
Name Commodore Joseph S. Haas
Do you give permission to have this story published? Yes
Can you provide copies of articles published about this event Y/N? Yes