

The Officers, Directors and Members of
US SAILING
are pleased to present the
ARTHUR B. HANSON RESCUE MEDAL
to
Erik and Brian Jones
for the rescue as follows:

US SAILING has presented a Hanson Rescue Medal to Erik and Brian Jones of San Francisco, Calif. for rescuing two sailors from San Francisco Bay on August 19, 2009.

Erik, Brian and their friends were taking their 28-foot powerboat to Berkeley Marina, where they observed two sailors in a 15-foot dinghy capsizing 1½ miles east of Paradise Point. Fortunately, both were wearing life jackets and wet suits. However, the water was 51 degrees and the wind was blowing.



(Eric Jones)

“We watched them struggle to try to re-enter the boat with no success,” recalled crew Brian Gonzales. “It continually rolled over despite at least three attempts to right it.” The crew circled the dinghy and offered aid, which the sailors declined despite their obvious distress in hazardous conditions.

“We didn't leave the scene despite the fact they had waved us away initially,” commented Erik. “I don't think they fully comprehended the gravity of being in 50 degree water and also hadn't yet discovered their boat was damaged to a point where they would have had difficulty reaching land let alone their home port.”

The Joneses radioed the Coast Guard and waited for the arrival of a rescue boat while carefully monitoring the situation. The sailors eventually righted the sailboat and got under sail. Its exhausted crew asked Erik and Brian to keep an eye on them as they sailed to Richmond. When a Marin County Sheriff's boat arrived and got the dinghy under tow, they updated the Coast Guard before resuming their trip to Berkeley.

“Had it not been for our skipper's refusal to abandon the sailors, there would have been no way for the crew to sail the four miles back to Richmond and no way for them to call for a tow or other assistance,” added Gonzales.

“The lesson here is that just because someone isn't asking for help or initially rebuffs an offer for help, doesn't mean that one shouldn't remain on station to monitor or activate emergency services anyway,” explained Erik.

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