

The Officers, Directors and Members of

US SAILING

are pleased to present the

ARTHUR B. HANSON RESCUE MEDAL

to the crew of

CYGNUS

FOR THE RESCUE AS FOLLOWS:

On October 13, 1999 around 6:50 p.m. during the Charlevoix Yacht Club Wednesday Night Fall Series on Lake Charlevoix, while still daylight, in 1-1/2 to 2 feet waves and air temperature of 40-45 degrees, Valerie Barnes, steering the J/22 High Maintenance went overboard.

While sailing downwind in 20-25 mph, with gusts to 30+ mph wind, one of the big gusts hit the boat, temporarily taking over the destiny of High Maintenance, spinning the boat out of control. The rudder came out of the water and Valerie lost steerage, with the steep angle of the boat, she was dumped into the water. A competitor, Cygnus, a Pearson 26, owned by Dr. F. James Stewart, M.D. following behind, saw the event and dropped their sails, started their motor and came to Valerie who was seen by her bright yellow jacket and bright purple PFD. They threw Valerie a line and pulled her close to the boat and around to the transom where the stern ladder was lowered. Valerie climbed the ladder and was hoisted over the lifelines by the crew. Valerie spent 5-10 minutes in the 60-degree water and suffered a few large bruises.

Dr. F. James Stewart and his crew Steven Dean, Ralph Corwin and Justin Kelley are to be commended for maintaining a watch, responding to a mariner in distress and safely recovering the victim from the water. In recognition of this event, US SAILING is pleased to present the Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Medal to the Crew of Cygnus.

Ernie Messer
Chairman, Safety at Sea Committee

**The Hanson Medal was presented to
Dr. F. James Stewart and his crew Steven Dean, Ralph Corwin and Justin Kelley
by Charlevoix Yacht Club Commodore Jack Hodge on November 6, 1999
at the Charlevoix Yacht Club annual awards program.**

RESCUE DETAILS:

Another crew member from High Maintenance, Dave Gerber, who was trimming the spinnaker, also went overboard at the same time. Dave surfaced much closer to the boat than I did and was able to return to the boat and help right it. Dave drove High Maintenance to its dock. Had he not been able to return to the boat, the two remaining crew members would have had a great deal of trouble getting the boat back to the slip safely in the heavy winds and because the spinnaker apparently jammed and wouldn't come

down. Dave deserves a lot of credit for keeping his head about him, getting back to the boat, and making sure the other two crew members and the boat made it back to shore safely. Also, the other two crew members - Jennifer Jensen and Pam Grove - both remained very calm throughout the whole incident and helped Dave get the boat to shore. Crew members are Steven Dean, Ralph Corwin, Justin Kelley.

I haven't had a chance to talk to our trimmer yet, but the best that I can figure is this - We were sailing downwind - with the spinnaker up - in about 20 to 25 mph winds and some pretty serious gusts. Our trimmer - who is a much more experienced heavy air sailor than I am - wanted to avoid sailing dead down to prevent a jibe. I think we just got hit with a pretty good gust that brought us up. I was trying to head the boat back down, but didn't have any steerage. I had already let the main out and yelled at Dave to break the sheet on the spinnaker but it was already too late. I'm not sure if he tried to break the sheet and couldn't, or exactly what happened, but the spinnaker was filled on the leeward side and I couldn't get the boat to head down. And then we went over. The whole thing happened very quickly, and it's funny that as I try to remember what happened, it's not very clear to me. I'll be speaking with Dave on Monday and will let you know what he has to add.

Date of incident:

10-13-99, approximately 6:50 p.m.

Victim's name, address, phone, e-mail:

Valerie Barnes

Was PFD worn? If so, what type?

Yes, Xtra Sport Challenger

What position on deck was the victim working at the time they went in?

Helmsman

Did this happen in the daylight or at night?

Daylight

What was the wind speed?

20-25 mph, with gusts to 30+ mph

Wave height?

1 1/2 to 2 feet

Water temperature?

Unknown - approximately 60 degrees F.

Air temperature?

40-45 degrees F.

How much time did the victim spend in the water?

5-10 minutes

What are the names and types of the boats involved?

Victim boat: J/22, High Maintenance

Rescue boat: Pearson 26, Cygnus

What event was the victim's boat participating in?
Charlevoix Yacht Club Wednesday Night Race (Fall Series)

Was the race sailed under the ORC Special Regulations?
No

What recovery method was used?
Cygnus, the rescue boat, had to drop their sails and briefly start their motor in order to get back to the victim quickly. The crew members on Cygnus threw a line directly to the victim, pulled the victim to the boat, and lifted the victim over the side and lifelines. The reaction by the rescue boat was very quick.

What search pattern was used?
None. No search pattern was necessary as the rescue boat had a visual on the situation and victim.

Was GPS or other electronic MOB function used to track or help locate the victim?
No

Were other boats used in the search or recovery?
No; however, approximately three boats who had been sailing nearby and saw the incident happen immediately started heading over to offer assistance. Cygnus was the closest and hailed to the other boats that they would be able to effectuate the rescue.

Was professional search and recovery support brought in?
No

Did a Mayday call go out?
No

Was a rescue swimmer put in the water?
No

Did the victim have a strobe light, a light, or whistle?
No

What color clothes were visible above the water?
Bright yellow jacket, bright purple PFD.

Was the victim able to help in the recovery? If so, in what way?
Yes. Victim was conscious and able to hold on to a line so that the victim could be pulled to the rescue boat.

Was any injury sustained by the victim?
No - other than several large bruises.

How did the victim get hoisted from water level up onto the deck?
The rescue boat has a swim ladder that the crew lowered. Once at the top of the swim ladder, three crew members on the rescue boat lifted the victim up and over the lifelines and onto the deck.

Was a life sling aboard? Was it used?

Unknown if one was aboard. No life sling was used.

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