

**The Officers, Directors and Members of**

**US SAILING**

are pleased to present the

**ARTHUR B. HANSON RESCUE MEDAL**

to

**CHRISTOPHER PATTERSON and PATRICK RYNNE**

**FOR THE RESCUE AS FOLLOWS:**

On April 24, 1999, during an ISSA team race off of Manchester Harbor, MA, a Manchester High School boat, in a 25-30 knot puff, the aged 420 pitch-poled, throwing its skipper, Christopher Pine, forward into the rigging, where his foot became tightly entangled. Pine's crew was thrown clear of the boat. The boat started to turtle pulling Christopher Pine under water.

The boat also began to sink due to water flooding a damaged forward flotation tank. Realizing that if the boat did turtle, Pine would certainly drown, St. Sebastian's skipper Christopher Patterson quickly dove into the frigid 40-degree water and wrestled with the capsized hull to keep it on its side. Pine's weight and the strong wind made this all the more difficult. While Patterson stood on the capsized rail, another St. Sebastian's skipper, Patrick Rynne, dove into the water in an attempt to disentangle Pine from the sinking boat. Both Patterson and Rynne's crews took over sailing their 420's solo. In order to dive the four feet to the depth of Pine's entangled foot, Rynne first shed his life-vest, then opened and flooded his dry suit with water to negate its buoyancy. High School sailing rules mandate that all sailors wear PFD's. By this time, the committee boat picked up Pine's crew and was alongside to secure the mast to prevent the boat from rolling over. However, the capsized boat was rapidly sinking, dragging Pine under with each wave. Rynne dove approximately eight times, systematically releasing each line, and finally freed Pine just before the boat sank.

For their quick, brave and selfless actions, placing themselves in harms way, Christopher Patterson and Patrick Rynne are awarded the Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Medal for saving the life of Christopher Pine who would have surely perished. These men are heroes to be recognized for their spectacular valor.

Ernie Messer  
Chairman, Safety-at-Sea Committee

**The Hanson Medal was awarded by US SAILING Safety at Sea Committee  
member**

**John Winder at St. Bartholomew's Church, Needham, MA,  
during the high school assembly and mass on February 28, 2000.**



Patrick Rynne and Chris Patterson

### **THEIR STORY:**

Christopher Patterson (one of the rescuers) is now at Hobart College. The victim's crew (wearing PFD) was thrown clear of the sinking boat and recovered by the RC. The crews from the two rescuing boats took over and sailed their boats, while their skippers made the rescue. The boats were vintage 420's that were dilapidated. All 420's have since been replaced with new ones.

Patterson and Rynne received the Leslie and Bullivant Sportsmanship Awards (ISSA awards) for this rescue already.

Lawrence A. White  
President, ISSA  
PO Box 397  
Niantic, CT 06357-0397

Dear Larry:

The St. Sebastian's Community was honored to hear that Manchester high School has nominated two of our sailors, Christopher Patterson ('99) and Patrick Rynne ('01) for the Leslie and Bullivant Sportsmanship Awards for events that occurred during our team race April 24, 1999. Since the incident was witnessed only by our coaching staff and Manchester parents, we felt this letter might be helpful to you.

On a beautiful, but very windy Saturday afternoon (April 24, 1999), we raced Manchester High School in the waters off Manchester Harbor, Massachusetts. Prior to the start of race three, a Manchester boat capsized in a 25-30 knot gust. The boat pitch-poled while being righted and tossed Manchester skipper Christopher Pine forward into the rigging, where his foot became tightly entangled. The boat started to "turtle", and in doing so, began to pull Chris Pine under the water. The boat also began to sink due to water flooding a damaged forward flotation tank. Realizing that if the boat did turtle, Pine would certainly drown, St. Sebastian's skipper Christopher Patterson quickly dove into the frigid water (40-degrees) and wrestled with the capsized hull to keep it on its side. Pine's weight and the strong wind made this all the more difficult. While Patterson stood on the capsized rail, St. Sebastian's skipper Patrick Rynne dove into the water in an attempt to disentangle Pine from the sinking boat. In order to dive the four feet to the depth of Pine's entangled foot, Rynne first shed his life-vest, then opened and flooded his dry suit with

water to negate its buoyancy. By this time, the committee boat was alongside and was able to secure the mast to prevent the boat from rolling over. However, the capsized boat was rapidly sinking, dragging Pine under with each wave. We called the Coast Guard requesting assistance, but were concerned that there wasn't enough time for them to arrive from Gloucester. Rynne dove approximately eight times, systematically releasing each line, and finally freed Pine just before the boat sank. Were it not for the quick, brave and selfless actions of Christopher Patterson and Patrick Rynne, Christopher Pine would have surely perished....

Patrick Brennan,  
St. Sebastian Sailing Team