

**The Officers, Directors and Members of**

**US SAILING**

are pleased to present the

**ARTHUR B. HANSON RESCUE MEDAL**

to the crew of

**Richard Satchell, CPO, USN, Ret.**

**FOR THE RESCUE AS FOLLOWS:**

On Saturday, May 25, 1991, Mr. Richard Satchell, sailing his Ericson 27, observed a small cabin cruiser engulfed in flames at about one in the afternoon. The occupant, Mr. Roy Pearson, was tossing his lobster traps overboard to save them. Mr. Satchell dropped his headsail, luffed the mainsail, and came along side the burning vessel. Mr. Pearson stepped on board without getting wet. Within 15 seconds, the entire boat was engulfed in flames.

Mr. Satchell is to be commended for his deeds. He set a superb example of seamanship and corinthianism.

For his act of bravery without regard for his own safety, heroism and selflessness, the United States Yacht Racing Union proudly awards Richard Satchell its new rescue medal.

**The Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Medal was awarded to Tom Ciura and  
the crew of Summertime Dream for this rescue event.**

William Belmont (GGYC) and  
Richard Satchell

11th Coast Guard District  
Public Service Commendation

**Public Service Commendation**

to

RICHARD SATCHELL

The Commandant of the Coast Guard takes great pleasure in presenting the United States Coast

Guard Public Service Commendation to Richard Satchell, for his commendable action on May 25, 1991 while piloting his sailboat off Newport Beach. Mr. Satchell was sailing from Long Beach enroute to Dana Point, when he noticed smoke coming out of the cabin of a twenty-two foot whaler. A lone fisherman was tossing his lobster traps overboard and was unable to reach his radio or life jacket due to the fire. While approaching the vessel Mr. Satchel radioed a MAYDAY, and then quickly maneuvered his sailing vessel alongside the fishing vessel to execute the rescue of the fisherman, Mr. Roy Pearson. He maneuvered his vessel away, with his headsail going through the fire, minutes before the vessel was engulfed in flames. Rescue crews arrived shortly after Mr. Satchell rescued Mr. Pearson, and Mr. Pearson was transferred to the rescue boat. The fire was extinguished and the hull towed to port, a complete loss. Without Mr. Satchell's quick thinking, immediate action, and disregard for his own safety, the fisherman could have suffered burns or perished.

Dept. of Transp., USCG , CG-4771A (10-72)

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### **HEROISM AT SEA**

From "Navy Yacht Club's, Scuttlebutt" by Marion Monkvic (1991)  
Edited by Richard Satchell March 4, 2004

What would you do if you saw a boat on fire? As all good sailors would do – you would come to the rescue – right? Well, not everyone is that willing to lend assistance as Richard Satchell of "Putt Putt Maru" can attest to. On Saturday, May 25<sup>th</sup> Richard was singlehanding his boat to Dana Point for the club's Memorial Day cruise in light winds of 5-6 knots, smooth seas and a westerly 2'-3' swell, and clear skies. He was sailing a course of 115 degrees about 1-2 miles off Newport Beach in contact with Ron Nelson and his crew on "Harmony" behind him. Ahead he saw a fishing boat and thought he might have to alter course to avoid any problems but continued to watch the boat. When he saw smoke coming out of the cabin he figured the boat would surely move NOW! About that time he thought, "That guy's got a dirty exhaust stack." As he got closer to the boat – more smoke was pouring out and then he saw flames coming out of the cabin – the closer he got – more smoke and flames appeared. Richard realized quickly this was a serious ----- "The guy's on fire!!!!"

Richard immediately headed directly for the boat to give assistance. The boat was a 22' whaler, named "Market Girl." As he approached the boat he saw – splash – splash – splash – in the water and thought everyone was jumping in the water and he would have to hurry. When he got closer to the boat he realized the man was throwing lobster traps overboard! While approaching the boat he called a Channel 16 "MAYDAY" and gave the location and that a boat was on fire about 1-1/2 miles off the Balboa Pier. With too many things happening, Richard said, "I've got to go – I'm by myself!"

Then he saw a motor boat racing to the scene and stop just short of the fire and the people on board came out, to watch!!!! The motor boat reached the burning boat before Richard but made no attempt to give assistance. So, Richard assessed the situation and proceeded ahead.

On his approach to the boat, he dropped the headsail on the deck and luffed the main a little bit. He yelled to the man, who was in front of the flames mid-ship, "I'm under sail and as I come astern jump on board!" When the man heard this he began to look at all his stuff but Richard yelled, "Forget it – jump on my boat and let's get out of here!" As the boat bumped the burning vessel, the man jumped on board on the first pass. Meanwhile, Richard turned the boat away

and then saw his headsail go through the flames and he thought 'there she goes' but nothing caught on fire and they sailed away. Moments later, the whole boat was engulfed in flames. The boat was completely gutted, only the shell remained.

As they pulled away, Richard gave the helm to the man and hurried to take down his main and noted that the jib had been scorched by the flames. In a few minutes, the authorities were on the scene. The man did not have a life jacket on and was unable to get one because they were below when the fire started. Also he could not reach the radio - - because it too was down below. As Richard said, "The man had no protection." To add to his problems, the man did not have any insurance and his loss was about \$35,000.

After his passenger was transferred to the Newport Beach Harbor Patrol, Richard continued on his journey to Dana Point. Once the fire was extinguished nearly burning down to the waterline, the Newport Beach Harbor Patrol towed the boat back to shore.

In fact, everything happened so fast Richard did not learn the man's name until he read about it in the paper. The man rescued was 64 years old. His name was Roy Pearson, a commercial fisherman and owner of Pearson Landing Fish Market located by the pier.

Richard said he learned a lot about safety from that adventure. He is now going to relocate his safety equipment. His 3 extinguishers are all located below - he now will put one out in the cockpit or lazarette. His life jackets are stored in his head - now he will keep at least 2 jackets also in the lazarette.

I mentioned that he must have been "the star" of the trip and asked if a few people honored him by buying him a drink and he replied, "It definitely got wet out that night!"

We all learn from these experiences and now is a good time for everyone to look closely at your boat and see how you can make adjustments for the safety of yourself and others.