

The Officers, Directors and Members of
US SAILING
are pleased to present the
ARTHUR B. HANSON RESCUE MEDAL
to

Chris Owen, Ken Feehan, Bill Phillips,
Forrest Knowlton and Jack O'Holleran

for the rescue as follows:

On Saturday May 13th 2006 the J/24 Class of sailboats were participating in the Elite Keel Regatta held in the Bay off San Francisco. The winds were gusting near 25 knots, the chop was three to four feet, the air temperature was in the high 60s and the water temperature was 55 degrees. Onboard Running With Scissors, John Yares was sailing as the bowman. After raising the spinnaker at the weather mark, John's boat accelerated downwind. In response to a gust the vessel rounded up and John slipped, slid down the deck and overboard under the lower lifeline.

Although the other crew on John's boat were able to quickly through him a lifering, it was carried away by the wind and while taking the spinnaker down, they quickly separated from him. Sailing in an Interclub Race nearby, the crew of the Catalina 34 Mottley saw John's boat broach, and when they were within 75 yards they saw John in the water. Recognizing that they were the most likely to give aid, Mottley's crew dropped their jib, started the motor, left their main up and circled John. Positioning themselves to windward of John they stopped and drifted down to him where they could grab him and help him aft to the stern ladder. Suffering from mild hypothermia, John was brought on board, dried off and warmed up.

The effective lookout and quick actions of the crew of the sailing vessel Mottley, combined with their skillfully executed man overboard recovery efforts resulted in the successful rescue of a person in need and reflected great credit upon themselves, while upholding the best traditions of seamanship. US SAILING is proud to present the Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Medal in recognition of their accomplishment.

Bill Stump
Chairman, Safety at Sea Committee
By Direction

**Rich Jepsen presented the Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Medal at the
Treasure Island Sailing Club's Sailstice party on June 17, 2006.**

THEIR STORY:

From: Chris Owen
Sent: Sunday, May 14, 2006 3:40 PM
Subject: RE: InterClub Race #2 - JUST ANOTHER DAY ON THE BAY...

All,

I'm sending this to all of you as there are lessons to be learned & mostly so I only have to do it once! Ironically, 3 of my 5 regular crew were not with us yesterday, unusual for us, but the 2 regulars, Ken & Bill, each brought a friend Forrest & Jack - new to sailing - so there were 5 of us on board for the InterClub race #2 Saturday.

"... The C-34 Start was close with wind 10 - 15 knots steady from the west an hour after max Flood. The course was Berkeley to around Alcatraz, to #24 NE of Angel Island, to #3 under the Bay Bridge & Finish near Clipper Cove on Treasure Island. We had a long tacking leg into increasing wind & waves and finally got around Alcatraz in second place behind Crew's Nest. The next leg was almost strait downwind. We were doing 7.5 to 8.5 knots through the water without a pole up because the wind was now over 20 knots & building. We went around #24 (way around...) and were headed South to the Bay Bridge, but were far to the east of where we should have been (this becomes important in a few sentences). The wind was now at least 25 knots and the current was changing to Ebb, creating very choppy seas, 3 - 4 feet from crest to trough. We were still under a full main and a 130 jib doing 7.5 knots, but steering was very difficult. We almost rounded up twice, so we reefed the main which helped but were still overpowered so we cranked in the jib until I could regain good control. This became important... It was very rough conditions but thankfully still a sunny day. About 50 - 100 yards ahead of us, 3 J-24s were racing in close proximity. One seemed to broach and then their kite let loose. We could see crew scurrying & a pole wielded, but it was still pretty far ahead of us. About a minute later, it happened. One of my crew yelled 'There's someone in the water!' There it was - a bright red/orange object with a head on top - about 40 yards ahead at our 2 o'clock position.

I quickly looked around and determined 3 things - we were the closest boat to the overboard victim, the only one moving toward the victim as the J-24s were moving away - remember 1 was in some trouble still - and we were still doing over 7 knots. We had to slow down, get control of the situation and position ourselves for retrieval. I yelled to douse the remaining jib as I turned to start the engine, praying it would fire up immediately. It did. The crew got the jib furled, watched the victim's location, and got our horseshoe float into the cockpit. We didn't have a Lifesling, we didn't have our horseshoe float attached to a line. I left the reefed main up because I thought it might give us stability in the adverse conditions, but also because we just didn't have time to get it down. I was able to half circle the victim to position myself upwind so I could float down on him with the engine in neutral. I was very conscious we did not want to run over him or knock him in these winds & seas. I had yelled to throw him a line but nobody heard me, apparently. This turned out to be a good thing as I subsequently didn't have to worry about fouling my propeller on a lifeline as we got close. I got the aft ladder down into the water. The victim (the heck with that, his name is John) was very calm and he had good auto-inflate equipment. We floated down to him and Forrest grabbed his hand on the starboard side, about 10 feet from the stern. They stayed clasped until John got around back and grabbed the ladder. He rested just a moment and then climbed the ladder into the cockpit with a minimum of help, and bringing about 5 gallons of water with him! But he was safe and we were all elated.

The time from seeing John to getting him onto Mottley was only about 2 minutes and we estimate he was in the water less than 5 minutes, but it took its toll. We got him below and out of his foulies and life vest. His teeth were chattering away and his fingers were cramped but he recovered fast. John was thirty something, in very good physical condition, and we found out he was in active service in the Coast Guard!

I think this accounted a lot for his own cool headed handling of the situation. His J-24 (Scissors something from Richmond YC) had now recovered but we had no chance of returning him in those conditions. We hailed them and decided to motor to Clipper Cove at TI where it was calm and a transfer could be made. There was no discussion on Mottley about returning to the race. It would not have been appropriate. Amongst thanks all around, we returned John to his boat and waiting crew at Clipper Cove..."

Despite our DNF for the race, I can tell you every member of the Mottely crew was smiling as we headed back to South Beach. They did an incredible job and I am very proud of each of them...

Chris Owen
Skipper of the C-34 Mottley

P.S. "What I learned today"

1. Buy more expensive life saving equipment than you can afford. John got tangled in a line as he went overboard and was dragged behind his boat before freeing himself. His vest self inflated during this and so he remained very visible throughout.
2. Had he been much younger or a little older, in those conditions, there may not have been as happy an outcome. I kept checking his eyes for signs of panic just before we retrieved him. He was well trained. Train your crew.
3. We were incredibly lucky to get him on our first pass.
4. The worse the conditions, the more likely something bad will happen. Everyone needs to slow down & keep their wits about them.
5. All sailors have a unique fellowship.

Date of Incident: 13 May 2006
Event Name: Elite Keel
Sponsoring Yacht Club: San Francisco Yacht Club
Event City: San Francisco
Event State: CA
Body of Water: San Francisco Bay
Was this day or night: Day
Air temperature: 68
Water temperature: 55
Wind speed: 25
Wave height: 3'
First Victims Name: John Yares
First Boat Name: Running With Scissors
First Boat Length: 24'
First Boat Make Model: J/24
Was a PFD worn: Y
What type: West Marine 3000
Rescuing Skipper 1: Chris Owen
Rescuing1 Boat Make Model: Catalina 34
Rescuing1 Boat Name: Mottley
Rescuing1 Boat Length: 34'
What was the nature of this incident: Man Over Board
What recovery method was used: Approach under power
Did the victims boat lose site of the victim: No
What search pattern was used: No
Was electronic MOB function used to locate the victim: N
Was a rescue swimmer put in the water: N
Did the victim have a strobe light or whistle: Whistle
What color clothes were visible above the water: Red and Yellow
Was the victim able to help in the recovery: Y
Was any injury sustained by the victim: N
Was a Lifesling aboard: Y
Was it used: Y
How much time did the victim spend in the water: 5 minutes
Did a Mayday call go out: Yes
Who responded: No one
Nominators Name: John Yares
Can your story be published: Y
Can you provide articles about this event: N
Release: Ok to release to public
What position: Bow
Rescuing1 Crews Names: Please contact Chris Owen for their names.
How did victim help himself back onboard: Climb aboard Mottley using stern ladder.
How did the victim get hoisted onto the deck: Under his own power.

What happened:

I would like to publicly thank Chris Owen and the crew of his Catalina 34 "Mottley" for rescuing me, Running With Scissors' bowman, who slid overboard during last Saturday's "Elite Keel" Regatta. It was an outstanding display of seamanship and helped keep an accident from becoming much worse. Mottley was racing in a separate regatta and retired from it in order to perform the rescue. Many thanks, Chris.

It was breezy and we were surfing downwind under spinnaker when we rounded up and dumped me into the drink. In addition to the efforts of the "Mottley Crew" my PFD probably saved my life.

Right after the weather mark in Race 2, I went overboard during a roundup. I slipped, slid under the lifelines, and hung on to the aft stanchion dragging in the water. The helmsman turned the boat up to get it stopped and that rolled the leeward rail under and further dunked me. I let go at that point. The helmsman had tossed the sling within 3', but was quickly carried away by the wind. I chose to save my energy and not to swim for the ring.

I used the oral inflation tube to fully inflate my PFD, rolled onto my back with feet out and waited for help to arrive.

Chris brought his boat to within 2' to leeward under power at which point I grab a crewmember's hand briefly until the boat had completely stopped. I then swam to the stern ladder and slowly climb aboard. I removed my wet outer clothing and dried off with a towel. I was offered a sleeping bag and water and was introduced to the rest of the crew, whom I've regrettably misplaced their names.

It took Running With Scissors a few minutes to contain the spinnaker, get it down and turn back around. While they never lost sight of me, we were fortunate that Chris Owen, skipper of "Mottley", a Catalina 34 also out racing, saw me and fished me out before Running With Scissors could get back to me. We rendezvoused in the lee of T1 and transferred me back -- a little wet but no worse for the wear. Thank you Chris!

I will be happy to provide additional information.

This story will likely be published in Latitude 38.

v/r,

John T Yares

(From Paul - John is a LT, USCG)