

# AMERICAN ★ SAILOR

American Sailor -  
News and Information for  
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# Fitness for Sailors, Fitness for Life

by Anna Tunnicliffe, US Sailing Blog Contributor



As athletes, which is what we all are since we do participate in the sport

of sailing regardless of our level of competition, we want and need to be fit and healthy. But in addition to being fit and healthy for our sport, we want to be fit and healthy for life.

When we think of fitness, we think of what we do in the gym, yet fitness can be measured by strength and health. Therefore, you want to make fitness a lifestyle, not just a part of your day when you head to the gym and knock out some exercises.

What's the easiest way to do this? We go to the gym and do what we need to do to get strong for our sport and we also make sure what we are eating is correct and going to serve us well for both fuel and recovery points of view.

Let's first talk about what we need to do in the gym. My husband and I run and coach through Bradletes, LLC (general and sport specific training programs) and at T2 CrossFit. One thing that we prioritize for all of our athletes, whether it is day one or several years, is safety and form over weight. You need to make sure that you and your trainer, if you are using one, are keeping this in mind at all times. There are many different ways to train. We are a big proponent for strength training and functional fitness training. We do the strength training to build strength. Strength training allows us to focus on building specific muscle groups. After a break, we then do our workout. The workout is not to build strength, but to build muscle endurance and stamina.

As far as muscle groups that we need to work... it's all of them.

But the big ones we think of as sailors are our legs, core, arms and upper back.

Our legs are obviously very important, especially if we are sailing dinghies. Even though we may not be hiking, we use our legs to help pull in lines, or we stand in a semi-squatting position to gather the kite, or we climb uphill after a tack. Squats, back and front, strengthen the legs. Back squats are good for overall raw leg strength. Front squats focus a little more on the quads and require us to engage our core even more so we are serving a bit more of a double purpose.

We use our arms for trimming, hoisting or sometimes even leveraging. As sailors, we need to be strong for pulling. We can train our arms with our upper back. Overhead presses, pullups, upright rows and bent over rows are all great exercises that allow us to train what we need. Another muscle group that generally gets neglected is our forearms. We need to train our grip strength. We can do this in many ways, but the easiest way is to get a pair of the old school grippers and start using them.

And our core. A common "injury" or pain complaint of sailors is lower back pain. Most of the time this comes from one of two things, one being a weak core. When people think of core workouts they think of only abs. But our core is more than just the six-pack that we are trying to get; it's our whole midline section. We need to strengthen both the front and the back of our core. The stronger we can make this, the



Pictured Anna Tunnicliffe; Photo by FitAid

less back pain we will have. The second reason our back is tight is because we are tight and fail to stretch as much as we need to after both training and racing. Make stretching a big part of your program. It can be easily done while watching TV in the evenings.

We strength train to build strength. The reps are usually lower rep schemes and there should be a nice break between sets to allow you to recover before you head into your next set.

The workout, however, is faster paced. Most of the time the weights will be a lot less than what we do in our strength training but we are now focusing on muscle endurance. We move a lighter load but we move it for an extended period of time. Our muscles will start burning and hurt, just as they do when we are racing. The more we can get comfortable and stronger in this "pain cave" the better we will be able to handle it on the water and trust that we can push through to get the job done before we get a rest.

We put the work in at the gym and we start to get stronger, but the work doesn't stop there. Brad

and I have a saying at our gym: We get you for one hour a day, which leaves 23 hours for you to mess it up. What we mean by this is that we help you start leading a healthier lifestyle in the gym and now it's up to you to continue outside of the gym. It is imperative that we look after ourselves outside the gym. What that involves is stretching, recovery and nutrition.

I understand and can appreciate that not everyone wants to be a World Champion, an Olympic Champion or even a club champion; but what we all do want is a long and healthy life. Doing our part in the gym is a very important part of this plan, but what is almost more important is what we put in our body. I'm not saying don't have a good time; but good quality, healthy food is going to help us get healthier, which leads to us wanting to be fitter, which leads to us being stronger, which leads to us eating more healthy, and so the cycle continues. In doing this as well, we set great examples for the generations that follow us. If they see that we care about what we put in our bodies on a daily basis, then they will want to do so and will want to go to the gym. So we all become healthier people.

To get started, make a plan. Find a gym where you want to work out. Commit to a certain number of days at the gym a week and do it. Reward yourself with a "cheat day" once a week only if you made your goal at the gym. This is one way. There are many ways but find one for you that will work and get you motivated. The hardest part is walking through the door. Once you are there, it's easy.

Brad and I do fitness programs for athletes of all sports through Bradletes, LLC. For more information, visit our website at [www.bradletes.com](http://www.bradletes.com).



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# US Sailing Accepting Nominations for Rolex Yachtsman and Yachtswoman of the Year Awards

# 2017

## ROLEX YACHTSMAN & YACHTSWOMAN OF THE YEAR



Who is your choice for US Sailing's 2017 Rolex Yachtsman and Yachtswoman of the Year?

Submit your nomination(s) at [rolex.ussailing.org](http://rolex.ussailing.org).

US Sailing is now accepting nominations for these prestigious awards, widely acknowledged as the foremost individual sailing honors in the nation. Through November 30, 2017, each member of US Sailing may nominate the one male and one female sailor they believe turned in the most outstanding on-the-water performance during the 2017 calendar year.

Established in 1961 by US Sailing and sponsored by Rolex Watch, U.S.A. since 1980, the annual presentation of US Sailing's Rolex Yachtsman and Yachtswoman of the Year awards recognize the individual male and female U.S. sailors who have demonstrated on-the-water excellence at international and/or national events to earn

their place in the history of the sport.

At the conclusion of the nomination period, a shortlist of nominees will be presented to a panel of accomplished sailing journalists who discuss the merits of each and vote by secret ballot to determine the individual award winners. The winners will be honored in late February (date to be determined) during a luncheon at New York Yacht Club in Manhattan, where they will be presented with specially engraved Rolex timepieces.

Do you know of an American sailor who performed extraordinarily well at the highest levels of competition in 2017? Your nomination(s) may ensure a sailor will receive the recognition they deserve by making the shortlist or even winning one of these prestigious sailing awards.

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