

July 29, 2019

President's Report

Dear Board Members,

I hope everyone is having a great summer and have been able to spend time on the water. I have spent the past 7 weeks racing in a new class: the Melges IC37. Our family (husband Mark, daughter Katja and son Nick) are participating in the New York Yacht Club IC37 charter program for a series of events in June, July and one final event in September. We achieved my goals for our family to sail together (I skippered, Mark on the main, Katja trimming and Nick on tactics), learn new skills, and include several new and old friends on the team. A fun new challenge with 21 boats on the line for last week's 175th Anniversary Regatta held out of Harbor Court in Newport.

NYYC has put together this charter program to ensure a supply of boats for the biannual Rolex New York Yacht Club Invitational Cup. This is an all Corinthian (verified Group 1 competitors with the World Sailing sailor classification system) strict one design class that has attracted a talented group of sailors from many different classes. There are some unique features to the class that include a gender requirement and allow for an under 16 youth sailor to not count towards the weight limit. Most teams raced with 10 people including one youth sailor and at least 2 women. When we had a last minute crew bailout, our houseguest Pam Healy (Olympic bronze medalist with JJ Fetter in 1992 in the 470), who thought she was just tagging along with Craig for the festivities and their 30th wedding anniversary, jumped on the boat for some family fun! Including our Youth sailor, Amanda Rivers, the women on our team last week outnumbered the men 7-3! The racing was incredibly close and challenging and last week's event was won by the Southern YC team with board member Clerc Cooper on board. Congratulations to Clerc and best of luck to the US clubs: Southern, San Diego and New York who will be competing in the Rolex New York Yacht Club Invitational Cup in early September. We look forward to getting back in the boat for one last event in September. It has been a gift to spend this quality time sailing with my family one that I treasure as my kids get older.

While in Rhode Island I have had a few visits to the office and an initial meeting with Jack, Tony Rey and others about pro sailing and how to meaningfully include as members, this group of sailors who are most active in the sport. We are looking at what benefits US Sailing offers that are valuable and can be enhanced as well as how this group of sailors can better engage with us to help strengthen the sport. We have learned that many who earn part or all of their living racing and taking care of boats are not currently members and when asked to become members and get involved are willing and interested. We need this group to be an active voice within US Sailing. They share our mission of a healthy thriving sport.

I am especially proud of the performance of 5 young women over the last few weeks: 4 gold medals at the Youth Worlds for 420 sailors: and 29er sailors. Charlotte Rose who won Youth gold in 2017 and 2018 was the top US woman at the Laser Radial Worlds in Japan with a top ten finish.



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Congratulations to each of them and to our team leader at the Youth Worlds in Poland, Board member Sally Barkow.

As President of US Sailing, I am an ex officio member of the National Sailing Hall of Fame Board and attend all Board meetings. The move from Annapolis to Newport was finalized this Spring with the purchase of the Armory Building on Thames St. in Newport. I attended the Board meeting yesterday in person to check out the building and learn more about the planned renovations and museum design. The Board approved the selection of 10 new inductees for 2019. The annual induction ceremony will take place at the Seattle YC November 9th.

Looking ahead to the Annual Meeting in Chicago, the Board leadership team (Martine, Cory, Rich and John) have been working on a format that includes a US Sailing Foundation Board meeting on Wednesday, Board only meeting on Thursday 14 November followed by the Annual Meeting/election of new Board on Friday morning. Thursday will include a workshop with a consultant that John has been working with to help enhance how we can be more effective board members in conjunction with the CEO. Friday morning will include a regional stakeholder audience for the overview of activities and future initiatives. This is designed to be both an introduction to a full day of engaging with regional stakeholders and a way to involve members in the official business of the association.

The rejuvenation of the Sailor Athlete Council is a focal point for the next 3 months where we will be holding elections from the Sailor athlete pool of A and B athletes for members of the SAC and then nominating and electing an 'A' athlete to the Board to commence their term in November. The USOPC is increasingly focused on the importance of athlete involvement and as the National Governing Body for Sailing we are embracing this opportunity to both be in compliance and to involve our most active sailors and those with Olympic and Pan Am Sailing credentials in all committees and areas of US Sailing.

I will be traveling next week to Paracas, Peru to support our Pan Am team and to represent US Sailing at the Pan Am Sailing Federation Meeting. I look forward to spending time with our athletes and our support staff.

In closing, I'd like to say it has been a pleasure serving as President of US Sailing since October. I have come into contact with many sailors who have been in Newport racing and the positive comments complimenting both our staff and volunteers are numerous. Thank you to everyone who strives each day to make our sport better!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cory Sertl".

Cory Sertl
President of US Sailing

