



International Star Class Yacht Racing Association District & Fleet Report

Stars 75 Years and Counting

By Tony Hermann

Western Lake Michigan Fleet, District 4

“Star Boat sailing began in Racine, Wisconsin USA in 1938 – 75 yrs ago. Our earliest boat #s were 377, 412, 1236 and 1333. Since then, there have been more than 64 boats, 100 skippers and at least 150 crew members that have called these Western Lake Michigan waters home. During the early years 1938 – 1960, there were 9 Star Boat builders within a 15 mile radius of Racine. In 1948, officially, the Western Lake Michigan (WLM) Star fleet was formed and reignited in 1993. It was headquartered at Racine Yacht Club and combined star sailors from both the Racine and Kenosha areas.

Racine Yacht Club (RYC) is closing in on its 100th anniversary in the year 2016. Thus, Star sailing has been central to the sailboat racing history of RYC for more than 3/4ths of its history.

WLM’s annual meeting took place on Saturday, 3/15/14, of St. Patrick’s Day weekend. Summarizing, the 2013 WLM season featured 27 races and three regattas – the 59th Mission Regatta (June), the Al Hennig Memorial/Annual Racine Yacht Club Regatta (August) and the Blue Nose Regatta (September). Notable guests for these regatta events included our Illinois neighbors to the south – skippers Don Massey who won the the 59th Mission, Bill Allen/then president of the ISCYRA, Jack Rickard/Past President of ISCYRA and Rick Rundle as well as their respective crews Whitey Wurtz, Eric Beckwith, Sam Eadie and Charlie Koules. The RYC Regatta was won by another guest team from the East Coast/skipper Ben Sternberg and crew Val Vetysman. The Blue Nose Regatta was won by our own Chris & Mickey Nielson.

The 2013 WLM fleet racing series were won by a variety of different local teams:

Spring Series

- 1st Dave Berger & Tom Berger - Double Vision, USA 7834
- 2nd Ethan Lewis & Cory Norton – Kraken, USA 6921
- 3rd Curtis Kasabian & Terry VanParys – Ernesto, USA 7434

Summer Series

- 1st Jeff Schaefer & Rob Walker – Jake, USA 8111
- 2nd Tony Herrmann & Mike Herrmann - Morning Star, USA 8312
- 3rd Dave Berger & Tom Berger - Double Vision, USA 7834





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The highlight of Western Lake Michigan (WLM) fleet's 2013 season was the awarding of the Kaiser Kasabian Memorial Trophy. This trophy was established in 2010 for our overall season fleet championship which this year included all 27 WLM fleet races in Racine/ Lake Michigan waters. This Trophy honors Kaiser Kasabian, a dear friend, a loyal active member of our fleet for more than six decades and a veteran of the Korean War. In 2008, almost 60 years later, he succumbed to asbestos exposure occurring in the early 1950s while on board USS Douglas A. Munro and USS Piedmont, two naval destroyers in the Pacific fleet.

The outcome of the season championship was unclear until the last race weekend of the season. For the second season in a row, the Herrmann team prevailed. The difference in this year 2013, the front end was manned by Tony's youngest son, Mike Herrmann. Last year 2012, Eric Herrmann was the winning crew.

Kasabian Trophy

- 1st Tony Herrmann & Mike Herrmann -Morning Star, USA 8312
- 2nd Dave Berger & Tom Berger -Double Vision, USA 7834
- 3rd Jeff Schaefer & Rob Walker -Jake, USA 8111

This year, beautiful small keeper trophies were awarded the winners (see picture) and the decision was made to retroactively award the previous winners and Kaiser's wife Ardys with similar keeper awards. A very important annual fleet award voted on by our members was the 2013 "Russ Boldus Sportsman of the Year" won by Matt Pederson, a very tough competitor and our loyal fleet secretary for the last 5 years.

The Western Lake Michigan (WLM) fleet looks forward to the 2014 season – 12 boats and plenty of young blood in the fleet."

