

Governing Board Meeting – October 17, 2023

Written Reports

Report from the President – David Starck

As I officially take the helm as President of the Lightning Class, I pause for a moment, clear the air, and express my gratitude to all Governing Board members, past and present, for your hard work and dedication to the Lightning Class. Likewise, a special thank you to the Executive Committee members and our Executive Secretary, Laura Jeffers. Without your volunteerism and leadership, the class would not function.

I'd like to welcome the following individuals to the Governing Board:

Joe Starck – VP North American Championships

William Faude – VP Pan Am Games

Jason Bemis – VP Special Projects

Amy Simonsen – VP Southern Circuit

Roger Slade – District Commodore, Central N.Y.

Nathan Cunningham – District Commodore, New England

Those taking new positions:

Josh Goldman – VP World Championships

Jeffrey Hayden – VP Co-Chair Lightning Labs

Finally, thank you to Rob Ruhlman (VP Worlds) and Joan Hurban (VP Lightning Labs) for your time served on the Governing Board.

As far as class business, financially, we in a good place. A huge 'shout out' to Bertie Werley for taking on the oversight of the class finances. She has lots of good ideas to keep us in good stead which includes a keen focus on the value of class membership, giving people a reason to join/renew.

Looking towards the 2024 season, along with membership value, I will be focused on our pipeline for new equipment, boat parts, new boats. We need to plan accordingly for our future 5-10 years out. Furthermore, I will be communicating with fleet captains, district commodores, and other volunteers throughout our entire class footprint, asking how the class leadership can help them grow their district/region, local fleets, etc. Regional and local regattas are the lifeblood of the class. This includes our international footprint too.

Finally, speaking of international, we are just over a month away from the 2023 World, International Master and South American Championships being held in Cartagena, Colombia. The Organizing Authority in Colombia has been working very hard to host an amazing event. Keep an eye out for social media posts from Colombia.

Finally, I've asked a working group to look at the structure of the WJM & North American Championships and make recommendations on how to increase participation. Our new VP NA's Joe Starck will lead the group discussion and come to us with recommendations.

Thanks again to everyone for making the Lightning Class a special place to sail and spend time with family & friends.

Chief Measurer's Report- Joe Buczkowski

Since our last meeting, we accomplished updating the class policy on electronics which is in the final steps of approval from World Sailing, and the resumption of mast construction. Both were needed and will ensure the class continues to be relevant into the future.

On Oct 16 the class conducted a meeting with reps from world sailing as we seek to have approval by the Pan Am games and the Worlds. While I was not present, it was attended by Laura Jeffers, Dave Sprague and Darryl Waskow. As anticipated World Sailing had feedback on wording but no changes to intent of the change. The updated proposal has been submitted and we expect to hear back from World Sailing in a few days. More to follow on this subject. Although not approved formally we have allowed its use in events and have seen the impact of electronics use with social media during events and great photos on the water. The ability to check on weather in marginal conditions has eased the anxiety some skippers felt on marginal days and helped them to make an informed decision on safety. All feedback I have received has been positive, but I look forward to hearing from more members with their thoughts about how the changes have impacted their sailing and the class (both good and bad).

Masts are back! Coming out of the pandemic there were many supply chain and worker issues across the globe but for us it was most prevalent in the inability to get new masts. While we did get by on inventory and being creative with repairs to older masts, the ability to get a new mast is significant for the overall health of the class. All of the new masts from the Allen Boat Company are fully certified and meet all class specifications. Comments from those who have a new mast support that they are just as good as any of the previous masts. Several were used at the NA's across a wide range of wind conditions with no issues. A big thanks to Tom Allen and his team for getting all the things done that go into restarting a production of masts. On the subject of masts there has been some interest in other builders to start making masts. These talks are in their infancy and hopefully will develop over the next year.

I want to thank all the volunteers at Metedeconk River YC and Toms River Yacht Clubs with measurement. Their help was instrumental in making measurement at both events go smoothly. I have been working with the team in Colombia to put on a great event for the worlds and a Special thank you to Dave Sprague for representing the class as both the Pan Ams and the Worlds.

I look forward to working with the new slate of officers with Dave's ideas for the future of the class, and as Chief Measurer I want to continue to modernize our class through electronic conversion of plans to a CAD based versions as well as how we conduct measurement at events so that we maintain the principles of one design sailing yet, minimize time measuring boats and sails.

Treasurers Report – Bertie Werley

Overall, both Income and Expenses are in line with our 2023 Budget and historical levels.

While North American Skipper Dues are up as a result our dues increase in April, the overall number of skipper memberships are down slightly. Laura and I are meeting separately to discuss some measures we can take to address this and hopefully drive-up membership, including:

- a more personalized follow-up after the system-generated reminders have been sent,
- a “campaign” to increase the number of auto-renewals, and
- development of our value proposition to members – what do they get for their money?

Our Flashes Advertising Income is down; we need to figure out how to charge for advertising on the website, and our Merchandise income is down due to a timing issue of ordering inventory.

Overall Expenses are nearly flat with 2022 and in line with our Budget.

Laura and I will be meeting in December to begin work on the Budget for 2024, and will finalize it in January after year-end actuals are available.

Secretary Report – Julio Velez

In Salinas, Ecuador, the first edition of the Salinas Sailing Week championship took place, an event that featured various classes, including the Lightning class, and included the international participation of a crew from Colombia and a representative from Peru. Next year, there is an expectation to have a greater international presence from other countries. The idea is to host a low-cost event where we provide accommodation and boats at no cost.

In Ecuador, Sebastian Higuera is set to become another supplier for the Lightning class in South America, particularly for stays and halyard spares. He already has the machinery and is about to begin production. This is excellent news as it will optimize both time and costs for our region when such spare parts are needed. Also, we are working to see if we can find a supplier for masts in South America, but so far, we haven't found one that can meet all the required specifications.

The Pan American Games and the Lightning World Championship are just around the corner. Many teams have been training rigorously for these two events, making them highly competitive. The organizers of the World Championship have everything ready and are looking forward to welcoming the class in the best possible way.

Newsletters, social media, and articles are a priority to keep our members updated on class events and also to attract new sailors.

Boat Grant Program - Co-Chairs- Greg Fisher/Ryan Davidson

Committee-Bill Fastiggi, Matty Schon, Bill Faude, Caroline Patten, Karl Allen

It's been a great season for our 2023 Boat Grant Teams! A lot of sailing for all 3 teams!

Team Tarkan Bolat (with Michael Rivken and Katie Benstead) in Chicago area sailing 15619. David Stix was their mentor. They recently sailed the Bratz regatta where he had a super time and said he felt like he was "going 60mph in 10 foot waves!" Michael and Katie sailed the districts in Milwaukee and they raced weekly with the Rhodes 19 fleet in Chicago. They finished off the season with the Wawasee Regatta. They loved the boat, the class and all the help and support people gave he and his team!

Team Owen Moore (with Emma Hawko and Ed Coleman) in New England sailing 15406 and their mentor was Don Brush. They sailed the ACC's, NAS, Marblehead Race Week- 3rd, Squam Lake -3rd, NE Districts -5th and won their fleet series! They ended the season with the Fall Squam and Leaf Peeper regattas.

Team Jordan Wiggins (with Abbie Goodness, Ann Sheridan, Pierce Orenstein, and Jack Sutton) in Charleston, sailing 15475 and mentor, Ryan Davidson. They sailed the local regattas here in Charleston, including the SE Districts. Finished in the top 4 of all of them and as a result was the overall winner of the combined regatta

scores-18 boats entered! Jordan found a job in Sarasota early in the summer but made it back for all the SE District events throughout the summer and will be back for the Wild Oyster.

Other Highlights:

- Emma Hawko is the NE District secretary and becoming even more involved with the class.
- Allison Hansen, a boat grant crew from last year sailed the NAS this year with Tommy Allen and wants to stay involved.
- We mentioned in the last meeting the enthusiasm for Boat Grant Alumni to sail the boats in the Southern Circuit....super successful and more interest again THIS YEAR.
- It's cool that Boat Grant recipients Emma and Ed are sailing the Worlds with their Boat Grant skipper from last year Clavin Lamosse!

We've mentioned before the value of having great equipment for our Boat Grant teams to sail. It has clearly made a difference in the enthusiasm, the demographic of our applicants and maybe even the talent level of our participants. It is, again, due to the support of the class members in supporting this program. On behalf of the committee, thank you. We should mention the generosity of North Sails in donating 4 new jibs to the program this year.

Finally, we have identified a great opportunity for a fundraising campaign involving a match to an existing fund. We will be reaching out to our membership once again asking for your consideration and your generous support. These funds will be used for new sails for the three boats and ongoing maintenance.

We are in a good place. We have great equipment, a great committee, great applicants year after year who are just as passionate as we are in enjoying and supporting the class. And we are appreciative of all your support. Thanks.

Classic Lightnings Report – Bob Astrove

2024 Classic Lightning Get Together will be held weekend of June 22-23, 2024 at the Keuka Yacht Club in Hammondsport NY (Keuka Lake.) We have a new date for next year, moving the event up one week from our usual date due to some conflicts and at the request of our host club.

If you have never come to one of these events, they are great fun. A weekend of celebrating the Lightning and sailing our boats. If you have been before you already know these are special events and great fun for all. Bringing your boat is best. But we all need crews as well, if you can't bring your own. And if you are a modern boat owner this event is held in conjunction with the long-standing Champagne Regatta which is also a great event, and the combination of the two fleets (separate starts) makes the event one of the highlights of the year.

Also, on the docket for 2024, we will be doing another early spring workshop at the Finger Lakes Boating Museum. I keep promising to get the details out, but keep running into delays. It will be held the weekend of April 5, 2024. We will be working on classic boat setup and rigging options, instruction in repairing cracks in wooden hulls and building some tools to simplify the process of setting the boat up and putting it away. All who attended last year had great fun while we re-canvased the decks of 4 boats.

Further, with no details imminent, we are looking at doing a second classic event next year in New England in perhaps September (a great time of year to visit that part of the country.) I think the key to hosting an event is we would need 4 or 5 reasonably local classic boats committing and taking the lead on planning.