



2004 Youth World Championship from the VPs Prospective

By: John Atkins, VP Youth World Championships
(Photos by Sally Atkins)

The 2004 Lightning Youth World Championship was held in Sao Paulo, Brazil on Guarapiranga Lake from February 28 through March 6. 14 Teams from Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Greece and the USA attended the championship.

The beginnings of this Championship started the day after the 2002 Youth World Championships finished in Rochester NY USA. I was in the process of inspecting the boats at Newport Yacht Club when Torsten Bojlesen arrived at the club and introduced himself. He was hoping to watch some of the racing only to find out that the Championship had ended. As it turned out the host families for both Brazilian teams were having a good-bye breakfast at the Club so at least he could talk to the teams, but what brought a smile to his face was that the new Youth World Champion was Thomas Sumner and crew. Before leaving, Torsten came over to me and asked who he should talk to about hosting the next Youth World Championship. This was perfect timing as I had just accepted the position of Vice President for Youth World Championships. I replied that I was and the rest is now history.

The Regatta chairs, Torsten and John Bennett worked for over a year and a half to organize this championship (to the tune of almost 1000 e-mails). The Championship was centered at the Clube de Campo Sao Paulo, but 3 other yacht clubs, Sao Paulo Yacht Club, Yacht Clube Paulista and Yacht Clube Santo Amaro, equally supported the Championships with boats, personnel and dinners. The sailing area is a lake formed by a dam that was built in the 1930s and is used as drinking water for Sao Paulo.

Housing and most meals for the Competitors as well as for both Sally and I and the Judges were provided by the Clube de Campo Sao Paulo. The Club is situated within a Nature Reserve with the housing area about 2 _ kilometers from the Sailing Center. Transportation between the housing area and the Sailing Center was by tractor and buggy but on many mornings we opted to walk through the reserve, past the golf course, equestrian area and tennis courts. The front deck of Sailing Center provided a great place to have breakfast and watch the abundant wildlife, even if we mistook the Spoonbilled Roseates for Pink Flamingos.



We arrived late (midnight) the day before the start of the

Championship due to plane problems but there in the airport terminal was our driver who had been there since 3 PM that afternoon waiting for us. Arriving at the club around 1:30 AM, we were greeted by Torsten and shown to our beautiful Vila. There we were greeted by Xavier Roca and the other Judges. Xavier was a judge for the 2002 Youth Worlds so it was nice to rekindle our friendship.

After a few hours of sleep and a wonderful Brazilian breakfast, I met with Nelson Schmidt who was responsible for boats as well as sail measurement. It didn't take long to realize that this part of the Championship was in the best of hands and the lack of any real breakdowns over the course of the Championship was a testament to Nelson and his crew's commitment to provide and maintain the best available equipment. The boats were provided by the various Lightning fleets on the lake and varied from 11700 series to new 15000 series which included Allen, Nickels and Lipincott hulls.

The PRO was Claudio Buckup who provided excellent race committee work and the Jury consisted of 3 IJs, Nelson Illha from Brazil, John Mac Call from Argentina and Xavier Roca from Ecuador along with 2 National Judges, Jamie Chavez Teuber from Chile and 1 from Brazil. Three areas of the lake were used during the championship with racing starting in the afternoon to take advantage of the thermally generated south/southeast winds which were steadier than the early day winds. There were a few protests and all breakdowns were minor and were resolved quickly on the water by the repair crew before racing started.

All six scheduled races were run which provided a throwout. Two races were run on Monday, the first in light backing winds requiring course changes throughout the race. Marcelo Bellotti won, with defending youth champion Thomas Sumner in second and Vassilas Angelos of Greece in third. The second was in moderate air from the thermally generated southeast. Thomas Sumner won with Marcelo in second and Robert Ramirez of the USA in third. Only one race was sailed on Tuesday and that being in an unsteady westerly. Thomas won with Marcelo in second and Christos Mavridis of Greece in third. Wednesday was a scheduled layday providing a time for the competitors to relax and get together. Two races were run on Thursday, both in a steady South wind with a little rain thrown in throughout both races. Race 4 was won by Thomas, with Christos finishing second and Sebastian Herera of Ecuador in Third. Race 5 was won by Maegan Ruhlman of the USA, Marcelo in second and Thomas in third. The sixth race was held on Friday in moderated air. Marcelo won with Thomas in second and Joao Hackerott of Brazil in third.

Brazil took 1, 2 and 3 with Thomas Sumner retaining his Youth World Championship title. Second place and one



point out of first was Marcelo Belotti, who sailed in 2002 as well. The third place was Joao Hackerott.

Overall this was a great championship for the competitors not only for the sailing but probably even more so for the friendships made. This championship has both helped the local fleets grow with lots of publicity and brought the fleets together. There is a great deal of interest for the younger Brazilian sailors to race the Lightning as a result of hosting the Youth Worlds and many are already looking forward to 2006 in Europe.

Congratulations to Thomas, Felipe Brito and Mark Pineda on repeating as Lightning Youth World Champions, and also to all the competitors who displayed true Corinthian Spirit both on and off the water. Thanks to both the Organizers and the Competitors for a great regatta, they along with their committees made this regatta what it was.

Sally and I wish to extend our thanks to everyone who was involved with this championship for not only doing their respective duties but also for making this a most memorable event.



About a month after the Championship, I received an e-mail for John Bennett informing me (in his words): All the sailboats from the Yacht Club Santo Amaro were destroyed in a quick tornado that hit the Guarapiranga Lake last Monday. Yes John, the Yellow Nickels was cut in half, Bieckarks boat, world champion I think, is in pieces and several woodies that the owners wouldn't sell for any amount of money look like match sticks. This will be a huge blow to our sailing in São Paulo. YCSA is the home of many world champions and many of the best boats in the country were in this hangar.





2 Boats, one Coach - 2004 Junior North American Championship

By: Ian Schillebeeckx - Belgacom USA 14901

We finally took off on Friday morning 7/30/2004 5:00 AM for our trip, to Crystal Beach, Ontario, Canada and the Lightning Junior North Americans. I could finally participate as a skipper: Beth Ward and Lucas Hofmeister completed team Belgacom. Another team from Carlyle Sailing Association (CSA) traveling with us was team N.K.D.A (No Known Drug Allergies) skipper Nicolas Beckman (Nick " The Great") with middle crew Eddie (crazy Eddie) Burke and bow crew Ian (Schmearcat) Moriarty. And of course, the coach, my dad was there.

After 11 hours driving, (7 in rain), we finally stopped at the Buffalo airport to pick-up my crew, Beth and Lucas. The boarder guard had quite some questions the next day: we wondered had they ever seen such a sight: double decked Lightning trailer, crew (6 kids and "the coach") and gear that filled the car to the ceiling. Customs had difficulty getting a head count.

We arrived in Crystal beach Saturday around 11:00 AM it was blowing the leaves off the trees and we had to unload our double decked Lightings in the pouring rain. The coach did well ... and we were sailing three (3) hours later in 8 foot seas and 15 knots of Northerly wind.... what an experience!

The next day we participated at the local club race, both teams N.K.D.A and Belgacom did reasonably well given the trying wind conditions: "consistent" 10 to 15 degrees shifts. We of course were a bit challenged, starting out by letting the spinnaker pole fall in the water and losing bow crew Lucas of course the fault of our coach. After complaining, we re-rigged the front crew hiking straps (although they failed again later) and arranged for a better spinnaker pole attachment system.

Day 1 - we started and were in the lead ... now my turn to miss my hiking strap and fall off the boat; luckily my crew, Lucas, had practice, and grabbed me by my feet and pulled me in while I had the main sheet and tiller extension still in my hands. After this incident and some shifts, we rounded the mark in second place. The race was on and we were not going to give this position away... at least that is what we had in mind! The last leg was a drifter, team Nicolas got a nice 30 degrees lift and steamed to the finish line, he finished 4th ... we finished 6th as we consequently over stood the finish line.

Day 2 - We raced four (4) races in shifty Northerly wind conditions (10 to 15 knots, raining, and wavy),

but we knew we could be fast if we stayed calm. We did quite well and finished 3rd, 4th, 2nd and a disappointing 10th place (720 penalty at the start). Team N.K.D.A did very well too and finished 10th, 14th, 13th and 7th.

Days 3 -We were 3rd overall after day 2 ... we had to sail even faster under these conditions to win! The day started off very disappointing as we sailed a 6th, 4th and a 10th place, N.K.D.A finished 7th, 11th, and 3rd. The last race was critical for us as we wanted to stay in the top 5 overall... we were going to win the last one! Starting in the middle of the fleet, we notice a shift on the right the rest didn't. By the time they noticed it, it was too late and I crossed the entire fleet and rounded the wind ward mark in first position.

With excellent downwind spinnaker speed, we rounded the mark in first place a loud horn announced shortening of the race course and we were heading towards the finish covering the second and third place boats. Dan Moriarty and Matt Burridge tricks came to my mind. Constant information came in from my team on the second and third placed boats. The left side seemed the way to go: more pressure. The other boats followed through the middle of the race course. But then, Lucas mentioned that we were sailing too far left on a 10 degree lift ... what now ... we needed a header to tack and get to the finish line ... we hung in there, but it lifted even more ... the other teams meanwhile were more in the middle, and could tack and be lifted to the finish... I ended a close third.

The final result was, team Belgacom 5th place overall and team N.K.D.A in an honorable 10th place overall; our Lightning CSA NA campaign was a success - and we are looking forward to the Sheboygan/Milwaukee 2005 NA's .

The regatta was great. In addition to the sailing, CSA was truly a success in beach volleyball. We played volleyball every day till 11:00 PM, while the coach made our lunches for the next day and searched for Nutella in the local food stores for our breakfast which we ate just in the nick of the time to get to the race course.

Thank you to the lightning class for organizing such a great event and to all the lightning sailors from Carlyle Lake who have supported Junior Lightning sailing and encouraged both CSA teams with their 2004 Lightning NA campaign!



Fleet 266 Junior Lightning Sailing Program: A Focused Approach

By: Marc Schillebeeckx 14901

Today out of the blue sky I got a call to write 12 words about Fleet 266 Junior Lightning Sailing program. So, when I was asked the question "Why are we successful with our junior lightning program" I had to ask myself the question: "Are we successful"?

I do think now this is not a rhetorical question anymore ... so let me answer this!

First of all being successful with a junior lightning program takes quite some effort from the local fleet itself (fleet, parents and club). Our success is basically generated by the many skipper/parents that wanted to have juniors on board as crew members and dedicated their valuable time to these juniors. And yes one may say that as a result of having these juniors on board we (skippers/parents) once in-a-while were not so fast anymore.

Usually we discussed junior participation at our yearly February fleet meeting over a few beers. We determined how many junior skippers we could send to the Junior North American and started running with the idea. Once the number of boats/skippers was established we looked around for crew within the fleet "and" within the districts. This approach allowed us to have two junior boats for the 2004 junior sailing season. I shall not forget to mention that lightning members from Harbor Island Yacht Club (HIYC) played also a significant role in our success. Like somebody at HIYC would say to me: "Do not forget to promote inter-fleet relationships and ... our kids had a great time with junior lightning sailing!"

We must say that all parents involved with junior sailing made sure that they (these junior) were able to sail lightning year around. We made sure we encouraged them as much as we could and arranged for participation at official lightning regattas as much as we could. We even went one step further and crewed for our juniors at club fleet regattas and some official lightning events.

The Junior North Americans was always "THE EVENT" to go to. Juniors talked and chatted over the internet for hours ... we arranged for double decking and housing to keep the cost of the event down as much as we could ... and we may not forget to mention that all fleet members of fleet 266 and ... the junior side of our club (Carlyle Junior Sailing Association) pitched in with donation to make the trip to the NA's possible. We told our juniors at the beginning of the year ... "do not worry we will get you to the NA's" ... and it happened!

Looking forward to participate again with two junior boats at the 2005 Junior North Americans in Milwaukee.





GETTING JUNIORS INTO LIGHTNINGS (HOW WE DO IT)

It all started back in the mid seventies when Jim Carson and Dave Ruiter recognized a void in the Metedeconk River Yacht Club's Junior Program. Older juniors had absorbed all they could from existing Club programs and, in addition, were working days so they were unable to participate in conventional daytime lessons.

Thus the Metedeconk River Yacht Club Advanced Junior Program was born and has persisted for nearly thirty years, training from seven to fifteen juniors per year in the fine points of Lightning sailing. The program has developed its share of outstanding sailors over the years, but leaders in the Class, the boating industry and indeed the world sailing community. Paul Gelenitis, Betsy (Gelenitis) Alison, Jay and Jody Lutz, Ryan Dunn, Joe Buczkowski, Bill Bogardus, Brian and Keith Taboada, and Mitch Hnatt to name a few all got their Lightning training in Metedeconk's program. On the horizon are newcomers Andrew Brennan, Wade Schon, Jimmy Roe, and Courtney O'Connor, all recent graduates we expect will make a mark beyond junior sailing.

The existing program was adopted by the Yacht Club in 1975 and is made available to juniors that attain the top junior rating, that of "Racing Skipper". The program leads to the Club Junior Championship, sailed in Lightnings at the conclusion of the program. Although the Club owns one Lightning, boats are borrowed from members of Fleet 34 many of whom came through the program themselves. It's not hard to borrow Lightnings when the incentive is an instant source of young, enthusiastic crews.

Typically, candidates must have multi person boat experience and are recommended by the Club Junior Instructors. They are required to submit letters requesting acceptance to the class that contain a resume of sailing experience and reasons why they want to participate. Upon tentative acceptance, candidates are scheduled to "try out" by testing their sailing knowledge and by sailing a Lightning. Fortunately, most candidates are able to pass this test although stepping into a Lightning from a Blue Jay or '420' can be a formidable experience.

In the early years of the program 100% attendance was expected. Today we find sailing does not elicit the same kind of priority as in the past and it has been necessary to adopt a more liberal attitude toward excused absences. Early season lessons are often frustrating (will they ever learn?), but it's rewarding to see the results at the end of the year. Yes, they can actually jibe a chute!

If your juniors need a different program, if your Fleet needs crews, here's the program that's served us well for all these years.

A PROGRAM FOR ADVANCED JUNIORS

INTRODUCTION: Fleets or Clubs wishing to improve junior skipper and crew proficiency in the Lightning may use the following program, initiated by the Metedeconk River Lightning Fleet in 1975. The information provided is intended as a guide around which a program can be developed tailored to suit the individual needs of both instructors and trainees. Sessions should be chosen and developed to meet the most immediate needs of those enrolled in the course.

PROGRAM INSTRUCTORS: Two or more knowledgeable, experienced sailors. The number required is flexible and will depend on their availability. One person should act as "leader" to coordinate and direct the program. An instructor need not attend each session. However, at least two should be on hand for each session, one to lead the session and the other to assist and take notes for a critique.

EQUIPMENT: Minimal race committee equipment including at least three portable marks (hippity-hops are fine), stop watch, power boat for use as an instruction launch, boat horn, a bull horn and two or

more fully equipped Lightnings in sound condition. (The number of participants in the program will bear some relationship to the number of boats needed.)

TEXT: ISAF Rule Book.

PARTICIPANT QUALIFICATION: Participants should be limited to no more than twelve to fifteen in order to provide individual instruction. No more than 3 or 4 trainees should be chosen for each boat available. Learning to skipper and crew a Lightning requires careful division of duties aboard the boat. These duties should be divided amongst three people as in actual Lightning racing with extra persons assigned aboard the instruction launch to assist and observe.

Participants should be selected from applicants by a committee consisting of a Club or Fleet officer or Junior Instructor and the Program Instructors based on criteria announced in advance. Suggested criteria are:

- a) Mature minded individuals aged 15 - 18 years. Younger individuals showing unusual ability may be selected. The upper age limit may be adjusted to suit local junior age limitations.
- b) Satisfactory completion of all other locally available junior programs.
- c) Demonstrated ability to become competent Lightning skipper and/or crew.
- d) Willingness to attend all scheduled sessions.

SCHEDULE: Five to ten three hour sessions are recommended scheduled to suit availability of instructors and trainees. (Metedeconk's program is scheduled for Thursday evenings at 1800.) A typical schedule might be:

1800 Boats in the water, sails on, ready to go.	
1800 - 1830	The lesson
1830 - 2030	Instruction and racing on the water.
2030 - 2100	Critique

THE LESSON: Half-hour session with discussion focused on the topic for the day. Spend more time on the lesson at beginning of program and more actual racing later in the program.

INSTRUCTION AND RACING ON THE WATER: Practice of points discussed in the lesson for the day. Then as many short races as possible. Change skippers each race or practice run and give everyone a chance to sail in each crew position. When racing use three-minute dinghy starts to save time. Instructors should point out mistakes as they occur and coach from the instruction launch. Any alleged rule violations should be protested and protests heard during the critique. Instructors should record important good points and mistakes for discussion at the critique.

CRITIQUE: General discussion of important points observed during the session.

HOMEWORK: Assign study of rules appropriate to next session.

SESSIONS: The following topics are suggested:
 Session 1) Icebreaker quiz, care and use of the boats including launching and
 hauling, familiarization with the boats.
 2) The Spinnaker
 3) The Start
 4) Sail Shape and Adjustment
 5) The Compass
 6) Protests (good bad weather topic)
 7) Weather and wind (another bad weather topic)
 8) Specific Rules (i.e., those that apply to mark roundings)



Getting Juniors Energized!!!

I was asked to write about the successes that our fleet has had in attracting junior sailors to the Lightning. My initial thought was - it's so easy! Why wouldn't juniors want to sail Lightnings!!!

First, the strength of our fleet is such that it is the most competitive racing in our area. We have a lot of boats and they are all modern, competitive racing Lightnings. When the young sailors at our club look at the boats they are the coolest boats in the club. Our fleet racing is competitive, but we try to make racing fun. Lots of short races. Lots of socializing, and good camaraderie, occasional cookouts after sailing, fleet parties. We host lots of regattas that are very visible at our club.

Second, we keep close tabs on the junior sailors at our club and the neighboring clubs. We've got a local community sailing center and two clubs that have junior sailing programs where they teach kids how to sail in dinghies. When people are looking for crew we try to get the juniors as crew. Once we get them in the boat we make a point to let them steer a race, or if they are less experienced, on the way in after sailing. Explain what the controls do. Talk about sail trim. Encourage them to ask questions. Have them fly the chute.

We also put on clinics for the junior sailors a few evenings a month during the summer where we let them sail our boats - sometimes with three juniors, or sometimes with two juniors and a fleet member as a coach, depending on their skill level.

Success breeds success. In the past 12 years we've had a great slew of junior sailors. Among them they've won three Junior NAs, A Youth Worlds and a Sears Cup. But just as important is that we've had at least three teams from our fleet participating in the last four junior NAs and at least one Junior team at every Junior NAs in the last 15 years.

Fleet building 101 (or building fleet 301)

We've tried to take a pragmatic approach to building our fleet. First we tried to identify our "target market." Who might be interested in buying and racing Lightnings? Who do we want to attract? How do we go about it?

First we looked at the make-up of our own fleet. Most of our members fall into one of three distinct categories. We figured that the people that we would attract to our fleet would have similar motivations. We came up with three distinct types of potential lightning owners.

1- Someone who owns a PHRF type of boat and wants to improve their racing skills by racing one-design.

Typically this group will be in their late 40's or early 50's. They are attracted to the Lightning because it is lower cost to race and maintain, no special tow vehicle is required and fewer crew are required.

2 - Couples in their 30's with 2 jobs and no kids who like to race.

3 - Someone who has kids who are young teenagers and are looking to race as a family, or for a boat for their kids to race.

The next step is that we sell the boat and sell our fleet. We try to figure out what their needs are and then show them how the Lightning meets their needs. If they have older juniors in our club sailing program, we convince them that they need to get a boat for their kids to sail. If they are PHRF sailors who express interest in racing one-design, we get them out on a boat. We try to enlist them as crew. If a skipper can't sail, he or she loans his boat for someone else to sail in our fleet race.

We try to find them a boat. Our fleet has even taken the unique step of buying a competitive Lightning in the fall when the used boat market is plentiful and then actively look for a buyer for that boat in the spring when the used boat market is tight and the demand is high. Once you convince someone that they need to buy a Lightning, it helps if you have a boat for them to buy!

We are trying other things to help continue our growth and support our fleet. We have a fleet website with a fleet emailer. Anyone who wants to sail with us or wants to be on our email list can sign up on through our website. We try to send out emails to this entire list a few days before any fleet races to talk about the upcoming races, who needs crew, who is available to crew. After sailing we also email our results.

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Dead beetles, cheap sunglasses, fire gum, and Spiderman on board

"A REALLY SWEET BOAT... IN A HAPPINESS ZONE"

To get away from summer work, to be in zone, in happiness for two weeks. That's how Junior Skipper Meagan Ruhlman sums up the joy of sailing with her peers in the North Americans.

Meagan is one of a handful of Juniors recently asked to describe their loyalty to the Lightning Class and its major regatta of the year. It begins with family and is sustained by friends, according to our sampling.

Meagan started sailing what she calls "a really sweet boat" when she was four at the Pymatuning Yacht Club. She was brought into the class by parents and a brother.

"There's always someone in the Lightning Class who has talent and the ability to take me to the next level," she says. "I learn and grow from them, pushing myself. Everyone is so open and friendly; it's a comfortable atmosphere."

Meagan credits the camaraderie between sailors and the unbeatable competition for keeping her interested in the class. "I'm creating bonds with them that can help me later in life."

"I can't stress enough how awesome the atmosphere is; there's such a bond between Lightning sailors, especially among my junior friends. We talk about it all the time; we know we're going to spend the rest of our lives racing against each other even though we don't live near each other. We know that because we see it in our parents. It's a really cool experience."

This was Meagan's second NA's with crew Martha Fisher, one of her best friends. "She calms me down really easily; she keeps it light and fun. There are always issues on the boat but she brushes them off and lets them go. Whatever happens on the water stays on the water," she says.

Meagan grew up with Ian Gilliland, her "totally relaxed" middle crew. "If I yell he laughs it off and he's always telling jokes," she says.

"Sometimes people get so wrapped up in the skipper, but without my crew I'd be nowhere. I have to keep my crew happy any way I can."

"Larry McDonald once told me that a good way to make sure the crew will work is to make sure the crew is always in a good mood and doing their best for me. He said one way to assure this is to bring along their favorite snacks -- to let them know you're thinking about them."

For Meagan's team that means chewing gum on the boat. "We always have Dentyne Fire Gum -- not a question," she says, "and minty gum."

The boat Meagan steered to a third place finish in the juniors belonged to her parents. The "really exciting" news is that she received it as a Christmas present.

Meagan, who will be 20 next summer, has aged out of the

juniors, but she looks forward to continuing two weeks of fun by sailing in the Women's from now on.

"THE INTENSITY OF THE NA'S IS THE BEST."

A much younger sailor, Andrew Hess, was only 12 when he sailed for his then 14-year old brother in last summer's NA's. At the Connecticut NA's he'd sailed one day but this was his first Junior NA's "full time."

Sounding mature beyond his years, Andrew says, "The intensity of the NA's is the best."

"Dad was a sailor and I learned on a Lightning," he says of his introduction to the sport.

Andrew and Alex's father, Charlie, started the competitive program for juniors at the Pontiac Yacht Club, Fleet 54. The goal of the program is to get junior participants to the Junior NAs. In 2004, the club had its first entry: his two boys and Jeff La Palme. Next year they hope to have two boats with junior teams in Milwaukee.

"We are a Lightning club," says Charlie Hess.

"We focus on Optis through 13-14, get them involved in Lasers, and all along as crew in Lightnings. Other programs in other clubs drive kids into 420s, FJs, or double-handed boats. We try to get kids into Lightnings as skippers as soon as we can. They have ample opportunity -- two or three opportunities a week to crew or skipper."

"It really works," says the elder Hess, who started the Opti class at their club when his oldest was seven. The club rallied behind it and they've had a junior instruction program ever since. The travel team for kids is fashioned after a travel soccer team and parent involvement allows them to move the kids where the regattas are.

"We have a full time coach for them," Hess says. "It's taken a while to build up the infrastructure but now we're there."

Young Andrew likes the way a Lightning sails, the shape of the boat, the way it's set up. He has an Opti that he sails in the summer but he likes three people because "you don't have to do everything."

The all boys boat -- "Flash with the Power of Three" practiced for three weeks prior to competing in Buffalo. There, Andrew met a lot of people who make sails.

"I got to know some of the professionals," he says.

"THE BEST BOAT TO CONTINUE MY SAILING CAREER IN"

"Malletts Bay Boat Club already had a huge fleet of Lightnings and I realized that it would be the best boat to continue my sailing career in," says 16-year old Chad Miller of his decision to join the class.

Chad had been sailing only FJ's at MBBC, but he thought they were rather simple and not as much fun as another boat might be. He wanted to try a 49er until "Mark Gardner



told me to get my parents to buy me and my sister a Lightning, so we did."

Chad believes the Lightning is special because of the fleet. "It is not an easy class to sail in; I am only 16 sailing with some of the best in the world, and compared to them I know absolutely nothing. Also, it is such a technical boat that you really need to know everything about it to make it move well, or you could just get lucky."

At the helm of their currently un-named boat during the NA's, Chad's not exactly sure how everything was set up.

"Everything is continuous and is run to every side, front and back. We just barely got one of those clothes line things that takes up the excess spinnaker halyard. That came after many remarks from my crew as we rounded the leeward mark with the chute still halfway up. We try to change our mast in accordance to the wind each day, and sometimes to changes on the water when it is necessary."

Nothing unusual about their equipment: extra rope, and an old cut up cranberry juice bottle because they never had a bucket that stayed on the boat for that long.

According to Chad, a shared chemistry makes their team special.

"We joke all the time, but always give a helping hand, and we think we know what needs to be done. Each person on the boat is completely different and brings a different aspect to the boat. There is one young girl, one boy from Vermont, and a genius from New York City; we can't help but get along most of the time.

"We needed to have some of the free bagels from breakfast onboard at every race or we would not function during the day."

Chad did take note of the crew's attire: "We can be identified in the rain by the two outside kids in rain jackets --one with the best hat in the world, and the middle kid in a ski jacket he claims is waterproof. On other days, the middle kid will have on a black sweatshirt with jeans.

"All of us use extremely cheap sunglasses, and, hopefully, soon you'll be able to tell who we are because we'll be out in front. I hope it's soon..."

"YOU HAVE TO GET YOURSELF AMPED FOR THE STRESSFUL SITUATIONS"

Tara Schon is juiced about the Juniors. She remembers "the energy that goes through your veins" and recalls that "You have to get yourself amped for the stressful situations" that arise in a Lightning NA's.

As passionate as she is today about sailing, at first she didn't like it that much. As an eight-year-old she started sailing an Opti at the Metedeconk River Yacht Club. She graduated to a 420, spending four high school years with that and FJs. There was a Laser summer and she instructed under the tutelage of Faye Bennet at Spray Beach Yacht Club, and at Beach Haven on Long Beach Island.

She and her brother have sailed together but last August she was crewing with her cousins on "Fluffy," a boat borrowed from Jody Lutz. The same three had sailed the Sears Cup in Annapolis and she says their "cousin bond" works because there is a lot of communication. The cousin who skippers keeps his head in the boat. The middle person

keeps the spinnaker going and upwind looks all around. She is on the bow.

Regarding any identifying marks on their boat, Tara says they found a big dead beetle that stayed on the bow the whole time, even when they almost flipped once. And they won a toy Spiderman at an arcade in Niagara Falls that went along for the ride.

Tara, 17, believes Lightning sailors are the most fun because while they are "hard core on water, every day in the Juniors, after a good day or a bad day, we play a good game of volleyball.

"The people are so much fun. If someone says 'Lightning,' they're one of your own."

"It's a long regatta," she says. "Bonding with people -- that's the best."

"IT'S A VERY RESPECTED CLASS"

"They say that three's a crowd," says Geoffrey Pictor. "But not really -- Lightnings are fun because it's a three-crew."

A tenth grader in East Aurora, New York, Geoff became involved with Lightnings indirectly from big boat sailing. He'd been doing some big boat sailing with his friend, Bergen Ackerman, who also owned a Lightning. Bergen asked Geoff to join him in a couple of Lightning regattas and that eventually led to the NAs.

"At least it isn't like 20 people, and solo sailing can get a little lonely so, if you have three people that's pretty good for conversation and it gives more of a team atmosphere to the sport," says Geoff.

Their team had done some Tuesday and Thursday night racing but Geoff was philosophical about their preparation. "A lot of teams were really competitive and a lot of those teams were really out to win," he says. "Our team was just getting started in Lightning sailing. We were just out to have a fun time and we didn't want to come in last place. We did our best and we were as competitive as we could be with the old boat that we had."

Hull number 11117 may have been the oldest boat in the Juniors. It could claim superlatives: the only boat with wood splash rails; the heaviest boat? (80 pounds overweight); the lightest crew? (340 pounds total).

At check-in the sailors were greeted by, "I know this boat," as old-timers recognized the rounded seats and customized work of former owner Paul Neiderlander -- "a great fabricator," says Geoff. Sails and backup equipment came from Tommy Allen.

"It's a very popular class. It's a very respected class," says Geoff, adding, not incidentally, "my dad sails Lightnings so he can be our coach a lot."



My Lightning Experience-A club sailing experience

- Robert Grey Hoffman - age 12

As I began my summer 2004 I thought it would be like most of my summers, sailing 420's and Opti's at sail school and doing a good amount of racing. It did not turn out that way. Half way through the first week of summer I was told that a friend and I were invited to sail and race on Mr. Jones's Lightning. It was more fun that I expected. We sailed twice a week and raced once a week.

I learn the most when we practiced Tuesday and Thursday mornings: tactics, mark rounding, boat speed, sailing to windward, flying the spinnaker, sails, rigging, stats, history and math.

Then we raced on Sunday afternoons. There were usually three boats. We had wind almost every race and it was usually sunny. I was allowed to skipper some of the races. My upwind sailing skills improved greatly as well as my spinnaker skills.

The people I raced with and against were very nice and accepting. I was treated as an equal not a child. They were all willing to teach me and help me. I liked the way that everybody helped everybody whether it was rigging, launching, de-rigging or dealing with marks.

My experience with Fleet 225 meant a lot to me. I always looked forward to the days we went sailing because I knew I would have fun and learn a lot. I had fun every Lightning sailing day.

I think that my Lightning experience will help me for many years to come. It will help me because it has opened doors to new opportunities with sailing and racing.

LIGHTNING-a boat to grow with

Tom King - age 15

Six years ago, I was nine and I had no idea how to sail. That's when my dad bought his first boat, a J/24. The first time we went out, it was really windy. My mom was freaked out, but my brother and I were having an awesome time. Over the course of the next few years, we enhanced our skills in sail school and from trial and error. I started to race 420s and enjoyed it a lot.

Two years ago, I started sailing with Lightning Fleet 225. The head instructor had a Lightning and I started there. We raced in a few club races on Sundays and I really enjoyed how the Lightning handled in all wind and how it was more or less easy to learn the controls of all positions. There I learned how to fly a spinnaker and competitively skipper.

This past year I crewed with a few people in Fleet 225 and went to a couple Lightning Regattas and

had a great time. In the future, now that I am almost sixteen, I plan on buying a Lightning and joining Fleet 225. This will help to improve my competitiveness, and since Lightnings are the best boat I have sailed thus far, I am going in the direction of sailing a Lightning for a long time into the future.



A Full Circle of Family, Friends and Fun:

Among other things, my Dad always said, "What comes around goes around."

This summer I had the pleasure of living that statement.

Back in 1980, 24 years ago, I watched Ian Jones, Kevin Robinson and Jody Lutz win the Lightning Youth Worlds at the Buffalo Canoe Club. It was there I decided I also wanted to win that title. The next few years both Ian Jones and Larry MacDonald pitched in many hours of their time to help me become a better Lightning sailor. They made the sport of sailboat racing fun, probably one of the most important ingredients for success!

I went on to win the Youth Worlds in 1984 with a team of Joe Starck and Joe Donovan. This helped open the door to literally a world of opportunities and adventures in the sailing community. Over the last 20 years I spent endless hours taking on different one design classes, different venues and numerous challenges, but this summer proved to be very special, bringing me back to where I started; the lightning class at the BCC.

However, I would be remiss if I didn't credit my original Lightning and sailing roots. My Mom, Jean, was the proud owner of Lightning 276 and my Dad, Jack, was the loud owner of lightning 749. I fondly remember Mom taking all three Swanson kids sunfish sailing up the Niagara River for ice cream or a picnic. We were young enough that all three of us fit in the bottom of the cockpit. Mom has watched an unprecedented number of sailboat races in all kinds of conditions and countries; the elements are just a challenge, not a deterrent for her. I am always comforted knowing Mom is out there cheering for us!

My Father, a man who always wore a tie when racing on Sundays, was a bit more formal with his instruction. He waited until Mom taught us how to sail, then he stepped in with the racing perspective. He was a great sport to bring us along as crew or crew for us when the occasion was right. I still clearly remember the first Lightning race I skippered. I must have been about 10 or 11 and I hit the ground tackle of the first mark as we rounded it in last place. Dad explained what we had to do to exonerate ourselves, to which, I commented, "But Dad no one will ever know we hit it." Well, . . . his lecture came through very clearly; integrity, sportsmanship and fair sailing, are and will always be, the foundation of this great sport. From there we moved on to using forks and knives in many great tactical discussions at the dinner table.

I also had the great fortune of sailing with my sister Jill and

my brother John. They were very gracious to tolerate my nonsense and also put me in my place when I was out of line. We had loads of laughs and many fond memories racing together. I can honestly say, without my families support (Mom – the worlds best support team, Dad – giving appropriate direction and making it possible, Jill – unparalleled moral support and smiles when needed the most, John – holding the fort down at work, so I have the ability to continue racing) pursuing my passion would not have been possible. I am very grateful to my family, as well as all my friends who took an interest in my sailing throughout the years!

After many years of traveling the world to compete at a top level, I decided it was time to come home and give back to the class that has been so gracious to me. So this summer, for the first time in my Lightning career I sailed the Women's North Americans. I can't claim the idea as my own, Larry MacDonald sailing with his kids was the inspiration. So, following Larry's lead I looked around for 2 enthusiastic junior sailors to be my team.

I didn't have to look very far to find Joe and David Starck's niece, Maddie Waldron (13) and Ian Jones daughter Lauren (11). And keeping it all in the Lightning family for the NA's, I was extremely lucky to be asked to skipper for Maddie's Uncle Tom Starck and Ernie Dieball's older brother Skip. Some may view this as an extremely small entangled world. I on the other hand, think of it as a privilege, one I would not want to trade for anything!

I tip my hat to Maddie and Lauren for an extremely memorable Women's regatta!

From the top of the mast
to the stern of the boat
Jody was always keepin' us afloat!

When there was wind in her hair
or even light air
Jody would always be there.

So thanks Jody
for all that you've done
It was really lots of fun!

What could be more rewarding than to receive that poem as a thank you from your team after winning the Women's NA's? Sailing with a team of juniors was one of the more exciting adventures I have been on in recent years. Maddie and Lauren proved to be an outstanding team,



but more importantly, they brought enthusiasm, excitement and a refreshing outlook to the boat every day.

Going from 1st to 6th was exciting, sailing in the rain was fun and hiking hard was a challenge to see who could get more of their ponytail wet. But what was most impressive was how they functioned as a team, each looking out for the other, so nothing was left undone. As a great team always does, they made the skipper look good!

After finishing up the Women's NA's, I thought Tommy and Skip had big shoes to fill. It would be tough to top my experience from the Women's regatta. However, with the breeze kicking up above the forecast the first qualifying day, chances were good our team had the possibility to shine. Skip and Tommy really did shine! They were so good they even made me shine!

Of course I am bias, but I truly think "Chipper" and "Tugger" are a force to be reckoned with! Fortunately, I can brag about them without worrying too much about them being drafted by someone else. You see, I am one of the few lucky ones small enough to sail as part of their team. It was a true privilege joining them!

I can't think of anything they can't tackle as a team. Whether it is on or off the water, they get it done leaving only smiles and laughs in their wake. Throw them 0 - 35 knots, changing a tire on a freeway in the dead of night, drinking a few cold ale's, gybing in 25 knot and big waves with little warning, Tim Horton's at 7 AM, fixing / tuning/ rigging the boat . . . you name it, they successfully accomplish it, always as a team!

So, reflecting back on the NA's, I think not of the races and results, but mostly of the reward and gratitude from the experience of coming full circle to the place (BCC) and class (Lightning) where the journey began. Of all the places I have raced and events I have participated, sailing with and against my family and friends is truly the top honor!

The 2004 NA's proved to be an eye opening experience for me, one I will not soon forget. The experience left me wondering, who else would be lucky enough to embrace the Lightning Class in their circle and benefit from the door it opens to the world?



It Takes A Fleet To Raise a Sailor

By: Ash Scache, 11178, Fleet 16

My paternal grandfather and I have always been close. We share a name, a hobby, and a friendship. He has been a sailor since the early 70s and instilled on me from a young age a working knowledge of how to sail a boat. This being said, he was never a racer. He crewed on a Lightning for two years until his knees forced him to stop.

He and I sailed his O'Day Mariner together every summer, and spent countless hours on Lake Wallenpaupack enjoying the wind, the weather and each other. When I was nine, he saw a need to get me a boat that I could sail on my own. He found Sunfish for a reasonable price, and, not knowing anything about what makes a good racing boat, bought it. I sailed it for a few years, off and on, not really being comfortable with handling the boat alone. This changed when I started crewing on Heinz Kornmann's lightning in 1997. With Heinz and I on the boat was veteran Cathy Schneider, who took me under her wing, and expanded on the knowledge I had and taught me how to not only be a able sailor, but to be a fast sailor, as well. She and I would go out on the lake in our Sunfish, pick a given point on the lake, and race to it. She always beat me. But I learned how to sail well, and the next year, in our newly reactivated (and now deactivated) Sunfish fleet, I won the club championship. The next week after I was awarded the trophy, Cathy and Sandi Scull, a fellow sailor in the Lightning fleet, took me to see an old friend of theirs, Joe Shatt.

I knew what lines the visit would follow, so I was not surprised when I saw, in the back corner of his yard, an old Lightning. He showed it to me, illustrated all the work that I would need to do on it, and told me his price. I, of course, being only 14 at the time, had to go through my parents, and after much pleading with them (who are both non-sailors), they agreed to be a silent purchase partner in the boat. I would have to pay for the boats rigging and for the materials to repair the rotten wood-cored fiberglass ribs which spanned the boat. Remember my grandfather from above? With both of us sick as dogs, the last week of June was spent inside the stripped cockpit of a lightning, doing fiberglass work. I did so, and the next summer, two weeks after my grandmother died, I set sail aboard Haulin Ash. I owned my own Lightning before I could drive a car.

The next year was unremarkable. I came, I sailed, I finished last. End of story. However, the one thing that annoyed the heck out of my fellow fleet members was a complex lifting system that Joe Shatt had designed to take the strain off the chainplates. Well, I had used it, but for the end of the season, Cathy bought me a real lifting bridle. It was trouble from the beginning of the next season. First it pulled out the rear attachment point, and I spent two weeks doing my oft-practiced skill of fiberglass repair. It worked- Once. The boat made it into the water....but not out on the hoist. With the boat

up on the dolly ready to be lifted onto the trailer, the starboard chainplate pulled out. That was the end of 11363, but I didn't know it yet.

The next spring, I had everything set up to do the repairs to that boat when a ad in Flashes caught my eye. Tank Allen Lightning- free to good owner. Unrigged. Trailer- \$300 Location: CT. I saw this and I thought 'what the heck, I'll give him a call'. Two weeks later, I had purchased the trailer and 'liberated' the boat from the backyard of Edson White. I rigged it that summer, and attempted, albeit SLOWLY, to sail this boat, which had been defiled with a coat of VC-Tar. I made it through the year, with my saving grace being the fact that I knew that I had rigged this boat exactly the way I wanted it. That winter, in addition to applying to and being accepted at DeSales University, I hatched a plan to sand off all of the VC-Tar, fix a small crack in the keelson, and give the boat a new color- blue. I figured I'd lose as much weight as I'd put on, so it wouldn't be a big deal. And it wasn't. After spending my post-senior prom weekend lying underneath of the boat with a \$15 orbital sander, my fleet members helped me flip the boat, and I applied two coats of EZ-Poxy. The next we flipped the boat back, and stepped the mast. I did a lot more rigging, but the boat was ready to go. And it has never been faster.

This last summer, I had the privilege of having many people crew on my boat. Most skippers would think that a bad thing, but I disagree. At 18 years old, sailing in a fleet full of 40, 50, and 60 somethings, it is wonderful to be able to share what you love with your friends, and in the case of this summer, my girlfriend, as well. You know what else? Maybe its just my own improvement over all these years, but I didn't do all that bad. I still finished last for the year, but I missed a lot, with other commitments. But I beat some people, and even did better than finishing second to last, and, for the first time ever, skippered a Lightning with a spinnaker flying.

In closing, I want to thanks, from the bottom of my heart the following people, who all deserve MEDALS for having put up with me and stewarded me through the years. Cathy Schneider, who really has been my 'boat mom', has been nothing but a great force in my life. She gave me a place to keep the boat, an occasional place to stay, and, from time to time, good words and good crewing. Thanks Cathy. (Aunt) Sandi Scull has been my technical expertise, and also a wonderful help not only through sailing, but in life, as well. Thanks to Heinz, for giving me my start in the Lightning. Thanks to Brian Williams, George Madel, John Rowley, John Weiss, Stan Moldawsky, Deni Morgan, Bob Schmidt, Ken Didion, and anyone who has tried, no matter how small, to make me a better sailor and person. And thanks to my parents and grandparents for putting up with this 'Dumb ASH idea'.



FAIR PLAY - LEAD BY EXAMPLE



Dave ROSEKRANS, President of US SAILING, speaks on the promotion of proper ethical behaviour amongst the future of our sport, our junior sailors.

I wanted to take this opportunity to mention a great tool that any organization can create to promote proper ethical behaviour amongst the future of our sport, our junior sailors. US Sailing, the Junior Sailing Association of Long Island Sound, and Larchmont Yacht Club have developed a poster on ethics guidelines. The poster can be displayed at any sailing event, whether it's a sailing class or a race. The text was developed by the junior sailors themselves and it is included below (please feel free to copy). I highly encourage other youth sailing programs to take on a similar project of developing sportsmanship/ethics guidelines:

Respected Sailors Always:

1. Know and abide by the Racing Rules. They promptly:
 - Take a penalty or retire when they know they broke a rule, or
 - File a protest when appropriate.

2. Obey event regulations, on and off the water, including housing rules.

3. Are organized, prepared and responsible for their own equipment.

4. Show respect to fellow sailors and those helping to run regattas and programs.

Respected Sailors Never:

1. Swear at, intimidate or harass anyone, including teammates, on or off the water.

2. Steal or borrow, without permission, anything that does not belong to them.

3. Break laws related to alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs."

Paul ELVSTROM (Four-time Olympic gold medalist), commented: "You haven't won the race if, in winning the race, you have lost the respect of your competitors."

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