

President's Report: Hugh Hutchison

As we emerge from the limitations and frustrations imposed by the pandemic, I am pleased to report that the state of the International Lightning Class is good. Our membership is stable, our finances are strong and our regatta participation is approaching pre-pandemic levels.

We are coming out of a unique year that we certainly hope will never be replicated. A year ago, we were cancelling regattas left and right. Now, certainly with some limits, we are looking at a reasonably full schedule. No doubt, the lingering concerns of the pandemic remain a force that impacts many of our activities, but it is also clear that we have returned to a full schedule of regattas where substantial participation is expected. We are almost back to normal but not quite. Our goal must be to match and then exceed pre-pandemic levels of growth and participation.

I have just returned from two regattas that portend well for the future of the Class, the North American Championship and the Women's, Junior's and Master's North American Championships. More than 60 boats competed in each of the regattas.

The WJM's is a special event that really highlights the strengths of the Class. The regatta is clearly competitive, but the entire personality of the event is different from other regattas. No doubt the inclusion of the Junior fleet is a major contributor to this environment. The Juniors bring a special energy to the whole regatta and each time I attend one of these regattas I find myself trying to figure out how to encourage even greater junior participation because those that do attend come away with new friends, great memories and just a closer relationship with the Class. Pymatuning Yacht Club, under the leadership of Regatta Chair Bertie Werley and her team, did an outstanding job in hosting this year's WJM's and we owe them a debt of gratitude for their efforts. To the extent that you qualify for any one of the WJM fleets, you do yourself a disservice by failing to attend. Put it on your schedule for next season.

The North American Championships, hosted by Edgewater Yacht Club in Cleveland, served as a qualifying event for next year's World Championship. As a reflection of the strength of the class among younger sailors, there were 13 "under 30" teams participating. Tim Scanlon turned the regatta into a personal tour de force. Tim was the regatta chairman and oversaw the organization of a flawless regatta, both on the water and off. Moreover, he walked away from the regatta as our new North American Champion. Given the responsibilities and time commitment required of the regatta chair, it is unheard of for that person to also win the event. Congratulations to Tim for his unprecedented performance.

Our South American Championship is on track to be contested in December in Ecuador. Unfortunately, our European Championship has again been postponed to next year due to the pandemic

Another casualty of the pandemic is the 2020 Youth Worlds. The regatta was initially postponed to 2021 but the logistical burden of transporting youth teams from around the world remained and has proven to be an insurmountable obstacle. Unfortunately, the regatta was cancelled. However, the time and effort put in by the Sheboygan Yacht Club team in preparation for that regatta will not be wasted. Sheboygan will host the 2022 Lightning Harken Blockheads Youth World Championship in July, 2022. Information regarding this regatta is available on the Class website.

Our World Championships (postponed from 2021) are on track for May 2022 in Wrightsville Beach, NC.

Our acclaimed Boat Grant program has experienced a minor setback. With the cancellation of much of the schedule last year, not all of our selected teams were able to participate in the program. We did have one team of sailors on the water and they were the highest finishing U30 Team at this year's ACC's. Nevertheless, our Boat Grant leaders have remained on the job and fully anticipate a return to an active schedule next season.

Our Classic Boat Group remains active and their online chat platform has been as active, or more active, than ever. The enthusiasm that the classic boat group brings to the Class is remarkable and reflects positively on the broad range of interests supported by the Class.

Our measurement team is working on modernizing (not changing) our specs so that they can be available in CAD format. It is a project that is long overdue.

The Lightning has been identified as selected equipment as a mixed three-person dinghy for the 2023 Pan Am Games and we have been working with Pan Am Sailing to identify country qualifiers. As a Class, we have been pleased to be selected to continue our participation in the Pan Ams and have agreed that in future games the Lightning teams will be a mixed team composed of two females and one male. The agreement to take positive steps to support gender equity in sailing has been met with substantial praise throughout the sailing community.

We continue working to keep the Lightning name in the forefront of one-design news. A recent US Sailing One Design Portal panel discussion on the state of the sport featured our own Laura Jeffers. We have maintained a regular publication schedule with Flashes, Flash Blasts, continually updated blogs and other entries on our website and routinely updated Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. We continue to regularly publish ads in Scuttlebutt and you will find publications related to Lightning sailing and sailors throughout the sailing press.

There obviously remain challenges directly related to the pandemic, with the impact on the European Championships and the Youth World Championships as prime examples. Hopefully, the limitations imposed by the pandemic will be behind us shortly but we are not there yet. Not all of the news is good on the health front with the continuing threat of variants that require us to maintain our vigil. Nevertheless, I encourage everyone to take any steps they can to increase participation by new, old and potential members to keep the momentum rolling. Any ideas or proposals along those lines will be gladly accepted by the Executive Committee.

I can only say that it has been an honor and a privilege to serve as the Class President for the past two years. I continue to be in awe of the many people who volunteer their time and talents to make this organization a success. Although we identify ourselves by the design of our boat, it is the people that make the Class. Thanks to you all for your continuing contributions.

Chief Measurer: Joe Buczkowski

I want to start by saying it was great to be at the North Americans- not only as your Chief Measurer but as a competitor. Edgewater did a great job with the event and measurement went smoothly. There were only a few minor discrepancies. I also want to thank everyone for making the past year fairly simple as there were not many issues to resolve. That said there are a few points I do want to bring out to everyone:

1. The anchor used for safety needs to be a fluke type anchor. Several boats had the collapsible style which is not allowed.
2. Over the past year I did have a few inquiries as to legal electronic compasses. They were resolved without problems. I do want to emphasize that legal electronics are clearly stated within both our Bylaws and Specifications. Short of something drastic happening, I do not foresee a change to the electronic guidelines in the near future. Of course, if there is a new development that is a benefit to the class as a whole, we can take a look.
3. The technical committee is currently working on converting the class drawings into CAD versions from the paper versions. We are starting with the Mast. As building methods have evolved, most if not all manufacturers of dies and the extrusions used for masts are using CAD drawings vice the paper drawings. A special thanks goes to Scott Graham, who has dedicated time to this effort as a favor to the class. We should have the conversion complete in the next few weeks and the way forward is to treat the CAD drawings just like the paper drawn version- owned by the class. This CAD version would be the only digital version authorized to be used by any builder. In the long term we would work to convert every drawing to a CAD version for use. Although we cannot predict the future, it is more likely than not that boat building in the future will rely on digital methods vice paper. Having an approved digital version owned by the class will prevent efforts from others to do their own conversion and set up the class for success well into the future.

I look forward to continuing my service as Chief Measurer with the class into the future and sailing through the fall season. Hope to see you out on the water. Please support your local fleet and district level regattas. If there is a regatta you haven't been to but have always thought about it, go and do it. I bet you will find it a blast!

Treasurer: Bill Bogardus

As of the July financial statements, the Class remains in a strong financial position and in line with our budget for 2021. We are currently ahead of pace in skipper dues and merchandise sales but have some work to do in the areas of crew dues and fleets dues. Please check if your crews or your fleets are paid up for 2021. I expect our income and expense to remain close to our budget, which would outpace 2020, but fall slightly behind 2019. Also, our Class funds continue to make a huge impact. The ILCA Fund provided for the majority of the expenses of running the Boat Grant Program. The Limbaugh Fund allowed under 30 teams to compete at the North Americans for discounted registration fee. In addition, I for one have really enjoyed our digital records, paid for by the History Fund, you should check them out. Please consider donating to these funds so they can continue to support the Class.

VP Europe: Lauri Heming

Lightning sailing in Greece will commence in October this year, and they are planning to participate in the Athens Sailing Week in November arranged by the Greek National Federation. They are planning to organize the Voula Reindeer Regatta in first weekend December 2021 provided Covid remains as it now is.

They feel due late start of the Lightning sailing season and the Covid situation in the neighboring countries, it does not allow for a proper Europeans prior next year. They will plan dates not conflicting with the Worlds, if Worlds, in 2022.

Classic Boats: Bob Astrove

Like the rest of our sport the past year has been rough. However, we do have plenty of good news to report for the Classic Lightning community.

We just held our annual Get Together. While attendance was expectedly down a little, we had 10 boats attend and enjoyed our usual terrific weekend on Keuka Lake, located in the NY Finger Lakes region. Of significant note this year 5 of the 10 boats attending had hull numbers sub #1000 (80-year-old boats).

We also just had an article published in Scuttlebutt Sailing News describing what we do to support Classic Lightning owners and enthusiasts. I encourage all to read it. A special Thank you to Jim Force for putting this together.

<https://www.sailingscuttlebutt.com/2021/07/12/internet-forum-bonds-classic-lightnings/>

As best as we understand we are unique in the one-design world for the focus and support we provide to owners of old boats as well as our significant population of non-competing boat owners.

Interest and activity appear to have actually accelerated over the course of the pandemic. Most of our activity is via our internet chat group. Message volume is actually up 50% over pre-pandemic volumes. Moreover, we appear to have experienced turnover in terms of who is posting and the subject matter. We have a number of newer owners, people just starting out restoring an old boat, and people new to Lightning's. This is evidenced by the questions posted to our chat site being more basic sailing and rigging questions. Furthermore, there appears to be evidence that more people are picking up older 1960's & 1970's glass boats for refurbishment and day sailing. However, supply still exceeds demand for these used older boats. We are responding to these changing trends by looking for new ways to take advantage of the technology, offering one on one sessions via facetime & zoom, and hoping to soon be setting up some group sessions to review specific subjects supporting people's specific questions.

All in all, Classic Lightning's appear to have survived the pandemic. Now we need to focus on holding our interest levels high and pushing people to focus less on their complex maintenance projects and tinkering and get out and enjoying their boats.

Our chat page is reached at <https://groups.io/g/classic-lightning> All are welcome.

Finland District Report: Sanni Siira

The sailing season is going on nicely locally. So far, we have sailed three district ranking races, five local open races, including two distance races on the lakeside of Finland.

The traditional Tuoppi of Viapori regatta gathered together various classic classes' from 12mr to wooden Lightnings. Three crew attended the race while the weather was on the heavier side and Lightnings were the only ones to hoist spinnakers.

This year the Finnish championships were sailed on Lake Tuusula as TP's 50th-anniversary regatta. 18 Lightnings participated. We gathered together new teams, experienced sailors, and families both organizing and racing. During those three days, we were lucky to receive varying breezes from stronger gusts to very light wind conditions, rain, bright and warm sunshine, and even some thunderstorms. The ultimate victory went to Samppa J Salminen (FIN 14364) crew. This year his third championship gold medal, 19 years after the second time winning. We were happy to present the silver medal to the almost-all-junior team, skipper Arttu Leppänen (FIN 14331) with Joonas Bollström and Matti Aalto. Previous Olympic sailor Georg Tallberg (FIN 15500) visited the class and won bronze. Two very active all-female crews attended the race, and Laura Pesola's (FIN 15415) crew was fourth this year. The regatta was also about celebrating the club's anniversary and Saturday's event held fireworks after a relaxed cocktail hour.

The current COVID-19 situation forced us to cancel the two first Spring regattas, but as the restrictions are loosening up we still have three more racing events left for the year and, of course, the weekly club races. All in all, it has definitely been an exciting and eventful season with diverse training and racing activities.