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In The Wind

J / 1 0 5 C l a s s A s s o c i a t i o n

Randy Hecht's *Niuhi* **Controls J/105 North American Championship**

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Photo courtesy of Martha Blanchfield at Renegade Sailing

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President's Corner

Fellow J/105 sailors:

Things are getting a bit quiet here in Toronto as the boats are all put away for the winter, and we are left to dream about races yet to come. In a bit of an unusual turn, I will be serving an additional term as President and Nicole will be doing the same as Vice President. While often seen as a thankless task, the opportunity to serve in an executive capacity is extremely rewarding, and I would certainly encourage anyone who wants to have input into the Class in a more formal way to step into the ring. We have tremendous support from Julie and Chris Howell and the continuing excellent technical advice from Matt Arno, so the really hard stuff is taken care of.

It looks like sailing is back to where it was pre-COVID (let's hope I have not jinxed anything), and the enthusiasm is as high as I have seen it. Great boat, great regattas and the best big boat one-design sailing anywhere. Why would anyone want to be anywhere else?

2022 was quite successful from a regatta standpoint. San Francisco did their usual fantastic job of hosting the North American Championship. This regatta was won decisively by Randy Hecht and his team on *Niuhi* – apparently there is a new sheriff in town. 2023 sees the Championship move to American Yacht Club in Rye, NY, and preliminary indications are that the organizing committee there are well into their preparations for another great event.

I have been fortunate to be Class President as we have seen the growth of women's regattas. In 2022, there were events in San Francisco, Annapolis, Toronto and Seattle. These were all a tremendous success, and we expect to see these carried on in 2023 with hopefully some additional events.

The Class has historically had quite strict guidelines as to what is allowed and what is not from an equipment standpoint. While we all want to see the boats perform as well as possible, we also must be cognizant of the cost of such modifications and what that does to the level playing field that the Class is known for. One recent discussion focussed on the use of laminate mainsails as opposed to the current Dacron mainsails. This issue has been raised periodically over the years, and the general conclusion in the past has been that if we are all using the same sails, the skill, talent and hard work of the sailors will be the determining factors. The current board is in agreement with this concept.

President's Corner

I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season. We are fortunate to belong to a community of sailors who get a real kick out of racing this great boat. Hopefully, we will see more people travelling to compete with different fleets, which will further the camaraderie that is the hallmark of the Class. Those of us in the north will envy those who get to sail year-round, but we can be assured of a great season in 2023. Keep well everybody.

Cheers,

Russell Hopper
Class President

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Rumor has it, the real reason, virtually, every boat in fleet 6 and 10 are using PB sails is because Paul Beaudin is a nice guy.



All the Top 10 at Liberty Cup were using PB sails. Every boat flew a PB #1 Stratis Carbon Jib. Film/Film for better stability over the performance life, Carbon load bearing fibers, blended with Technora for excellent durability. This jib is optimized for 5-15 but can handle life as an all purpose sail. Adding the #3 Jib, which has a sensible cross-over at 15, makes the best possible inventory for speed and sail longevity in the majority of sailing regions.

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Randy Hecht's *Niuhi*

Controls J/105 North American Championship

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Photos courtesy of Roxanne Fairbairn

Randy Hecht's *Niuhi* mastered the J/105 North American Championship through 11 races to become 2022 Champion. With crew Maggie Bacon, John Bonds, Spencer Cole, Ethan Doyle, Russ Silvestri, Juliana Testa and Ryan Treais, they dominated from Race One, tallying only 29 points. Even without a discard for the event, *Niuhi* didn't need to participate in the final contest, although they did join their 27 fellow J/105s for one last trip around the course. Ryan Simmons' *Blackhawk* landed in the runner-up position





Photos courtesy of Roxshots

with 62 points. Tim Russell's *Ne*Ne* earned third place via tiebreaker at 75 points over Jeff Littfin's *Mojo*. The San Francisco Yacht Club in California hosted from September 29-October 2. Sunday's race winners were Hecht's *Niuhi* in winds of 8-12 knots and Charles Pick's *Box of Rain* as the breeze increased to 12-15.

DAY ONE RECAP: Conditions built from 6-8 knots to typical San Francisco winds of 19-20. Although many different boats had the lead,

Hecht's *Niuhi* recorded scores of 1,7,2 for 10 points to top the pack. They held a four-point advantage on Ian Charles' *Maverick*. Simmons' *Blackhawk* tallied 17 points for third place. Hecht's *Niuhi* succeeded in the first battle, along with Charles' *Maverick* and Simmons' *Blackhawk*. Then it was Adam Spiegel's turn on *Jam Session*, as Shawn Bennett's *Masquerade* and Rolf Kaiser's *Donkey Jack* completed the top trio. A familiar group comprised the top three in the day's final race: Simmons, Hecht and Charles.



Photo courtesy of Roxanne Fairbairn



Photo courtesy of Roxanne Fairbairn



Photo courtesy of Martha Blanchfield at Renegade Sailing

DAY TWO RECAP: Other than a seventh in Race 2, Hecht's *Niuhi* tallied only firsts and seconds for 15 points in six races. Simmons' *Blackhawk* put together a solid day to move into second overall with 28 points. Charles' *Maverick* remained in the top three with 34

points. As with day one, Hecht's *Niuhi* began Friday on top, as Littfin's *Mojo* got in on the action with Simmons' *Blackhawk* behind. Simmons added his second bullet in the next match, while Hecht and Charles stayed close. Doug Bailey's *Akula* moved into fourth overall with a win in Race 6, with Hecht again in second and Shawn Bennett's *Masquerade* in third.



Photos courtesy of Martha Blanchfield at Renegade Sailing



DAY THREE RECAP: There may be quite a few position changes, but they aren't at the top of the fleet. Conditions were Bay-like again with breeze at 15 knots, gusting near 20 and choppy seas. Hecht's *Niuhi* continued to dominate, posting a 1,2,2 on the day for 20 points. The regatta was up to nine races. Simmons' *Blackhawk* (41 points) and Charles' *Maverick* (60 points) held on to second and third places respectively. Hecht's *Niuhi* kicked

off Saturday just like the prior two days—with a bullet. Simmons' *Blackhawk* stayed strong in second and John & Michael Rivlin's *Peaches* broke into the top three. Russell's *Ne*Ne* moved up the leaders' list with a victory in the middle battle, in advance of Hecht and Littfin's *Mojo*. Russell's *Ne*Ne* went back-to-back in the final contest (launching him to fourth overall with 62 points), tailed by Hecht and Simmons.



Photos courtesy of Roxanne Fairbairn

Top Five:

1. *Niuhi*, Randy Hecht - 1 -7 -2 -1 -2 -2 -1 -2 -2 -1 -8 ; 29
2. *Blackhawk*, Ryan Simmons - 3 -13 -1 -3 -1 -7 -2 -8 -3 -14 -7 ; 62
3. *Ne*Ne*, Tim Russell - 20 -12 -9 -5 -4 -4 -6 -1 -1 -11 -2 ; 75
4. *Mojo*, Jeff Littfin - 5 -6 -13 -2 -9 -15 -10 -3 -7 -2 -3 ; 75
5. *Maverick*, Ian Charles - 2 -9 -3 -11 -3 -6 -11 -7 -8 -6 -15 ; 81

Photos are available on the J/105 Class Facebook page, and complete results may be found at <https://yachtscoring.com/emenue.cfm?eid=15010>.





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CLASS PAGE

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Photo courtesy of Jan Anderson

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Sailor Spotlight: **Sara Billey**

Dear J/105 Sailors,

Hello, nice to meet you! I was just elected as the new Secretary/Treasurer of the J/105 Class Association. I am looking forward to serving the community and learning about J/105 sailing/racing all around the country. I hope to learn more about your story as well. It's interesting how sailing can change a person's life at any age and stage of life. Maybe we can find a way to help the sailing community to thrive by sharing stories. So, here is my story about how I went from a beginner to winning races in just four years.



Photo courtesy of Jan Anderson

I'm a bit of an unconventional sailor. Many people in this community grew up sailing with family or joined the sailing team in high school and college. Some are in the sport mostly for the beer and camaraderie with friends, some tell stories of going to Tasar Worlds or doing the Pacific Cup. My story is different. I had never been on a sailboat as a kid, I wasn't that interested in flipping a boat over on the Charles River when I learned to sail in college, the wind direction always seemed to surprise me, and I don't even drink beer! But being on the water always had appeal. As a 54-year-old woman with only four years of racing experience, I'm rather unusual on our dock - but maybe not so unusual in our community.

In 2017, just before my 50th birthday, I took my first sailing lessons with the University of Washington sailing club (WYC). (In my day job, I'm a professor of mathematics at UW.) I sailed my first ever race in a Laser in Lake Washington. When I did, I realized for the first time that you have to pull on all the "little strings" on the boat. Worse, you have to do it at the right time! I came in dead last, but I caught the sailing bug.

My husband, Paul Viola, and I spent that spring racing, and in 2018 we bought our first keel boat: a J/105 named *Peer Gynt* (#235). We immediately started racing in the waters of the Puget Sound, near Seattle, WA. We particularly appreciate the warm welcome from the local Fleet 20. They're a



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very knowledgeable group, and it's great to be able to chat with them on P dock. The J/105 is a great boat for active racing in the PNW. There are often 8-12 J/105s signed up for big regattas, enough for one-design starts.

We try to use each race as an opportunity to learn something. Starting out, our excellent crew helped us get up to speed quickly, with the guidance and lessons of instructors like Steve Summers, Jeff Madrigali, Andrew Kerr and J/World in San Diego. Private lessons with your team are worth every penny in terms of impact and results, especially compared to the annual cost of owning a boat. Another high-impact learning opportunity was conversations with Chris Tutmark, our rigger—his detail-oriented style taught us to pay attention to every rotation of the turnbuckles. Off the boat, I recommend *Speed and Smarts* magazine and *Winning in One Design* by Dave Perry. And, of course, it's important to keep good records—from summaries of lessons to reviews of each race. Our notes on local geography, currents and wind patterns really come in handy when we need to beat the competition.

Double-handing a J/105 is one of my favorite aspects of the boat. It's fast and nimble, yet very manageable with two people. In 2019,

Zuzana Culakova and I competed in the Race To The Straits, a two-day long-distance race hosted by the Sloop Tavern Yacht Club. We sailed from Seattle to Port Townsend and back (30.7 NM each way). Zuzana was brilliant at navigation, and we zigzagged our way up the coast the whole way north, tacking to avoid as much of the flooding tide current as possible. While many boats failed to arrive within the time limit due to light wind, we were tucking our tired selves into a slip at the dock, happy to have beat some tough competition. The second day, we flew home on the spinnaker the whole way. The last 10 minutes of the race came down to a nailbiter with our J/105 neighbors on *Insubordination*. After six grueling hours, we crossed the finish just 11 seconds behind!

Double-handing gained a new meaning for me during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our community came together and created a "Cohab Series"—races where the crew of each boat was required to be a COVID pod. We set up a Google form that let people self-report their times, and dozens of people came out to race. This gave us ample opportunity to finetune our double-handing skills. While practicing, Paul and I regularly switch who is driving and who is trimming sails. It gives us a chance to see

the whole boat from different perspectives. We help each other learn and optimize every aspect of our boat. As we got better at double-handing, we found that we became better all-around sailors for a six-person crew. We've also put our skills to the test by single-handing *Peer Gynt*. If doubled-handed doesn't make you feel like you know your boat, singled-handed racing will do the trick! There is really nothing like it.

In 2020, I made a goal of sailing 100 days in the year. Paul thought it was impossibly high, but I found that goal extremely motivating and rewarding. I planned out our sailing schedule, including all possible races in the area, practices, lessons, and a cruising trip. It was a reason to go out on cold days, wet days, days after losing, days after ripping sails, no wind, too much wind, etc. We went no matter what. It was amazing how many days that year turned out to be great sailing days! The clouds parted and the sun would come out when it wasn't predicted. The light breeze was enough to keep moving. We went home proud if we managed to douse clean in tough conditions. In the end, we hit 105 days of sailing in 2020 on a sunny day in December after a second-place finish in the Winter Vashon Race. Then we hit 100 days in 2021, and we will have 80 sails this year by mid-November with hope of once again getting close to 100 days of sailing. We will finish out this year sailing at the Mission Bay Yacht Club in San Diego, where we now have gotten into the Sunfish and Lido14 fleets.

The practice is paying off in terms of boat speed, technique, and strategy. Our boat just won its first Fleet Championship race this year at the Puget Sound Sailing Championship (PSSC), thanks to our awesome crew, new North Sails and our boat diver! Huge thanks to my co-owner and life

partner Paul, who is incredibly committed to making the boat go fast at all times! We have come a long way.

In Fleet 20, we now have quite a few women racing on J/105s. In fact, we had five out of 12 boats skippered by women on Monday nights over the summer of 2022, and we dominated the top of the results page! This was impressive, given that five years ago there were no women skippering J/105s here. Shauna Walgren has worked tirelessly to introduce women to sailing and support women in competitive racing. I credit her and her sailing partner Al Hughes on *Creative* for changing the game. Chris Phoenix, owner of *Jaded*, and John Aitchison, owner of *Moose Unknown*, also had great women on the crew so that also helped me get integrated with the Fleet. Walgren was instrumental in organizing two annual Women at the Helm Regattas with STYC to encourage more women to drive. It's become one of the biggest events in our area with broad participation. It's fun to be a part of a growing Fleet with the momentum to do great things.

In Fleet 20, we are talking about putting in a proposal to host North Americans here. The area has some of the best inshore ocean racing in the country. The currents add an extra challenge. The snow-capped Olympic Mountains shine in the distance, and we can see Mount Rainer at 14,410 feet tall on many summer days. Our Fleet members from Oregon race their boats up here in the Pacific Northwest Offshore Race in order to do Swiftsure and Raceweek PNW. Many people take their boats cruising through the San Juan Islands and up into Canada. Whale sights are likely in the summer, along with many porpoises, sea lions, seals, birds and starfish. I like the bright purple ones best.

Technical Committee Report

Matt Arno – Class Measurer, Fleet 17, Texas

Doug Bailey – Fleet 1, San Francisco

Angelo Guarino – Fleet 3, Chesapeake

RULES CLEANUP

As the Technical Committee writes this, we are awaiting the ExCom's vote on modifying Class Rule 3.4 Level 1. It will be interesting to see where things wind up. But there is other cleanup to do in the meantime.

Rule Interpretation 99-01 forbade using a spin halyard cleat on the mast. That has since been superseded by new Class Rule 5.3.22 which explicitly allows for such a cleat. The Rule Interpretation has been marked as superseded.

Rule Interpretation 00-04 provided direction on how to measure the headstay length. Since there is no longer any restriction on the headstay length, this Rule Interpretation is not needed. The Rule Interpretation has been marked as superseded.

Rule Interpretation 02-14 did not allow the use of ratchet blocks on the spin sheet turning blocks at the stern. That has been superseded by Class Rule 5.3.24 which allows a boat to use ratchet blocks or low friction rings to replace standard blocks wherever desired. The Rule Interpretation has been marked as superseded.

Rule Interpretation 02-19 defines what is considered an "event" for sail declaration purposes. It quoted an old version of Class Rule 6.3 which allowed only a single jib. It has been revised to quote the current version of the Rule. The definition of an event is unchanged.



We have revised Rule Interpretation 00-02 regarding having a second jib halyard to add clarity and explanation. The revised language is:

RI-00-02 Rev 1. **2nd jib or spin halyard**

Q: Can you use a second jib halyard to rake the mast forward while sailing downwind?

A: No, the second jib halyard is optional equipment not available to all sailors. Since it is not available to all sailors, a second jib halyard or a second spin halyard is not allowed for any purpose while racing under the class rules. The second jib or spin halyard must be removed. A messenger line may be left in place to allow the halyard to be re-run easily but cannot be used including in the event of loss or breakage of the first jib or spin halyard. It would still be an advantage to allow a boat to use a messenger line to rapidly reeve a new halyard when boats without a messenger would be forced to return to the dock to reeve another halyard and thus more likely to miss the next race(s).

Lastly, we have one new Rule Interpretation:

RI-22-02 **Lifeline tension**

Q: What does “total deflection caused by the force straight down and straight up must not exceed 8 inches” mean?

A: It means the deflection from a straight line between the stanchions exit holes must not exceed 4 inches up and 4 inches down for a total of 8 inches. In practice, the deflection up is assumed to be the same as the deflection down and the downward deflection is measured. When a force of 11.2 lbs. (5 kg) of tension is applied, the deflection from a straight line between the stanchions exit holes must be less than or equal to 4 inches.



Your donation makes a difference

The Young American Sailing Academy (YASA) is developing a new generation of offshore sailors. Through the program, juniors establish life-long sailing skills, broaden social/leadership skills, and master high-level racing skills. At YASA, we believe the J/105 is the perfect boat to train enthusiastic sailors, which is why a charitable donation to YASA's growing J/105 team is beneficial to the youth sailing community.

With your charitable donation, YASA will be able to expand the outreach of the program. As a 501(c)(3) YASA will provide you tax deductions. YASA welcomes donations of all kinds including boats and inshore and offshore sails.

Peter Becker / 917-715-1471 / peter.becker@yasailing.org / www.yasailing.org



Calendar

2023

2023 Southernmost Regatta

Jan 16 – Jan 20

**2023 Rolex Big Boat Series
at St. Francis Yacht Club**

Sep 13 – Sep 17

**2023 J/105 North American
Championship at American
Yacht Club**

Oct 5 – Oct 8

2024

**2024 J/105 North American
Championship at Edgewater
Yacht Club**

Sep 26 – Sep 29

2025

**2025 J/105 North American
Championship at Royal
Canadian Yacht Club**

Sep 16 – Sep 21