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105

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*

**Goes Back-to-Back as
North American Champion**



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Photo courtesy of Christopher Howell

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President's Corner

Dear Fellow J/105 sailors:

It is my pleasure to step into the office of Class President for the next year. I am a lucky sailor who gets to blast around with Team Arbitrage (#116) on our windy home waters of San Francisco Bay, duking it out with the 30+ other fanatical teams of Fleet #1. Here we have nine season counters with five or six races per weekend, and the talent pool is deep. I am also fortunate to have traveled to compete in most of the other active J/105 Fleets, including Long Island Sound, Annapolis, Marblehead, Chicago, Toronto, Newport, Houston, San Diego and even Chile. What tactical call did I make that put me on so many of your racecourses? I hit a shift and tacked on a sweet lift named Bruce Stone! Not many people are as passionate about J/105 racing as Bruce is – in his 24 years as an owner, he has borrowed or chartered 24 different boats, befriending many owners who came along as crew.

In 2015, we bought *Good Trade* #96 to optimize our away game. Yet after winning the 2019 NAs in Marblehead, COVID-uncertainty caused us to sell GT. Sure enough, though, as racing picked up again, we came to miss the two-boat program. A few months ago, we picked up #98 in Annapolis and raced as *Arbitrage* in the 2023 NAs at American YC in Rye, NY. We will travel to the NAs in Cleveland next summer and Toronto in 2025, plus do our favorite Block Island Race Week in between. So, as you can see, your new Class President (and First Gentleman) are all-in!

In my tenure as part of the ExCom, I have come to appreciate valuable characteristics of our boat design and racing culture that make us a strong Class. The J/105 is a Goldilocks sailboat – not too big, not too small – with a roller-furling one-design jib (roughly 105%) and asymmetrical downwind configuration easily handled by reasonably sized crew who eat only about six sandwiches per day. With performance attributes that support tactical gamesmanship and relatively simple speed mechanics, the boat's vintage keeps its price point within reach, as does our Class governance. We have good people who lean into the work of shepherding the Class into the future, helping us stay attractive to top racers while prioritizing the grassroots base. Many thanks to our Fleet Captains and Class Officers who have kept us true to our essence.

While my agenda is mainly to help hold the steady and successful course we have made thus far, I plan to push healthy communication at both the organizational level and among us as friendly competitors. Our new Class website will fortify connections from Fleet-to-Fleet and serve as an efficient resource to all members. Let's make an effort to share our good ideas and stories to raise our collective game.

Nicole Breault

Class President, San Francisco Bay Fleet #1



Randy Hecht's *Niuhi*

Goes Back-to-Back as North American Champion



Photos courtesy of Christopher Howell

Randy Hecht's *Niuhi* proved that you can recover from a tough first race and go on to become a North American Champion. Following up on their dominant win in San Francisco home waters last year, the team including Maggie Bacon, Spencer Cole, Ethan Doyle, Russ Silvestri and Juliana Testa clawed back this year at the J/105 North American Championship hosted by American Yacht Club in Rye, NY. In the no-discard series, *Niuhi* placed 15th in the opening contest, but added nothing worse than a fourth (including four bullets) to claim a repeat victory with 27 points. Bill Zartler's *Deja Voodoo* led throughout the regatta but couldn't withstand the blitz from *Niuhi*, settling for the silver position with 42 points. New J/105 owner Ray Wulff's *Patriot*



compiled a solid series for the bronze rank at 49 points. Thirty-one J/105s completed eight races during the four-day Championship October 5-8.



race, while Zartler's *Deja Voodoo* placed 11th. Zartler recovered to take the next match, three places ahead of Hecht. In the end, Hecht's *Niuhi* sealed the deal by taking the final race (Zartler 12th) and returning the NAC perpetual trophy to San Francisco.

DAY ONE RECAP: It was a beautiful sight to see 31 J/105s on a quarter-mile line to launch the Championship. Breeze began from the east at 7-8 knots and increased a bit, allowing two races with summer-like temperatures and sunny skies. Zartler's *Deja Voodoo* held a slight one-point advantage over Brian and Kristen Robinson's *Velvet Hammer*. Zartler went 1,3 on the day for 4 points, compared to the Robinsons' 3,2 at 5 points. There was a tie for the next two positions at 9 points: Wulff's *Patriot* and Damian Emery's *Warlock*. The fleet stayed ashore for a brief postponement while

A three-point difference separated places one and two (Zartler and Hecht) heading into the final day's battles in sporty conditions. Winds at 18 knots and choppy seas tested all competitors, however Hecht's *Niuhi* put on the pressure by winning Sunday's first

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Photos courtesy of Christopher Howell



the breeze filled in, and spent the time usefully holding a Class discussion. Race one was set for 12:30 pm, when a general recall led to a U-flag start. Zartler's *Deja Voodoo* gained the victory, trailed by two Annapolis teams: Wulff's *Patriot* and Robinson's *Velvet Hammer*. Hecht's *Niuh* earned the next win, with Robinson and Zartler again cracking the top three.



Photos courtesy of Christopher Howell



Photos courtesy of Christopher Howell



DAY TWO RECAP: Conditions turned overcast, but not for Hecht's *Niuhi*, who posted scores of 1,2,2 to ascend into second place overall with 21 points. Zartler's *Deja Voodoo* continued with their consistent

performance to preserve first place with 18 points. Wulff's *Patriot* kept hold on third place at 31 points. Friday's opening contest was delayed slightly due to low visibility but got underway in breeze of about 10 knots. Hecht's *Niuhi* notched his second consecutive bullet of the Championship, while Zartler's *Deja Voodoo* and Wulff's *Patriot* stayed hot. *The Usual Suspects* of the Suspect Syndicate took line honors in NAC race four, ahead of Hecht's *Niuhi* and Bruce Stone and Nicole Breault's *Arbitrade*. A brief but heavy rain squall soaked the fleet before getting the day's final battle underway, won by Ben duPont's *Warbride*, and including Hecht and Emery's *Warlock* in the top three.



DAY THREE RECAP: Weather conditions did not allow any races to be completed.

TOP FIVE:

1. *Niuhi*, Randy Hecht - 15 -1 -1 -2 -2 -1 -4 -1 ; 27
2. *Deja Voodoo*, Bill Zartler - 1 -3 -2 -6 -6 -11 -1 -12 ; 42
3. *PATRIOT*, Ray Wulff - 2 -7 -3 -9 -10 -13 -2 -3 ; 49
4. *Warbride*, Ben duPont - 11 -16 -4 -7 -1 -3 -10 -2 ; 54
5. *Warlock*, Damian Emery - 4 -5 -5 -17 -3 -14 -5 -9 ; 62

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Photos courtesy of Christopher Howell



Photos courtesy of Christopher Howell

Photos are available on the J/105 Class Facebook page, and complete results may be found at <https://yachtscoring.com/emenue.cfm?eid=15597>.



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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.

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Sailing Sisterhood is Tight

Annapolis J/105 Regatta Featured Excellent Competition and Camaraderie

Annapolis, MD September 5, 2023:

The sailing sisterhood was out in force on Labor Day weekend in Annapolis for the second Fleet 3 J/105 Women's Regatta. Host Sailing Club of the Chesapeake welcomed 97 sailors ranging in age from college students to retirees, and experience running the gamut from college sailors and Olympic campaigners to international champions and weekend warriors. Over 30 spectator boats gathered to watch the competitive racing.

After a two-hour delay on shore to allow the southerly to fill, PRO Sandy Grosvenor was able to get three races in. The one-day regatta featured 8-12 knot consistent southerly breezes, 14 boats, well-known sailors, and close competition, with three different boats each winning a race.

Grosvenor pointed out that "two finishes in Race 1 were so tight that we had to review them in video to figure out which boat beat the other."

Ashley Love skippered *Mayhem* to victory, starting off strong with a win in the first race. Megan Ploch drove *Velvet Hammer*, dialing in to win the last race and placing second overall. Alexandra Clary on *Champagne Puppy* was one point behind to finish in third, an overall finish she also claimed in the 2022 edition of the regatta. Sara Morgan Waters on *Crash* finished fourth overall with a win in the second race.

Jonathan Bartlett of North Sails observed, "The starts were aggressive. Weather mark roundings were tight and well sailed. That

tells you right there how well sailed the boats were." Scott Nixon of Quantum also weighed in, "The actual racing was tight and the starts looked very even, as most of the teams hit the line at full speed on time. The teams that rounded the weather marks in the top spots displayed nice J/105 set ups in the light and choppy southerly breeze." Grosvenor's Race Committee was "excited and impressed by how good the competition was and how close the racing was, especially given that most crews do not normally sail together and many of the drivers, while experienced sailors, were not necessarily that experienced with the J/105."

Ashley Love has recently led several teams to the podium at the Corinthian Yacht Club's National Women's Invitational Team Race for the Thayer Trophy. Love had Marie Crump, who skippered the winning entry in 2022, calling tactics. Crump has had an illustrious sailing career in world match racing, an Olympic Yngling campaign in 2004, and was part of the winning J/80 Championship team in 2013 and 2021. Love said, "The starting lines were competitive in big current, the short legs kept mark roundings condensed and skilled boat-handling had the fleet crossing the finish line overlapped. There was never a dull moment and our team stayed dialed in and fighting for every inch."

Maddy Ploch, who organized the crew for Velvet Hammer, had her sister Megan drive for the regatta. Megan Ploch's resume is peppered with wins, including the 2017 edition of the reincarnated International Women's Keelboat Regatta in J/70s. According to Maddy, a "Firstie" senior on the US Naval Academy Offshore Sailing Team, "The regatta is a great time. Everyone is

supportive and competitive at the same time which makes for an amazing environment to race in."

Alexandra Wardell Clary, originally from Canada, had Stephanie Bacon, commodore of the Royal Victoria Yacht Club in British Columbia, and a former member of the Canadian Sailing Team, trimming main. Bacon and Clary reunited after sailing 470s together "years ago." Clary enjoyed the "high level of competition and first class race management."

Sara Morgan Waters, who has been making sailing headlines since her All-American career at St. Mary's College, has been part of Love's winning match racing team for the Thayer Cup and won the inaugural Susan Widmann Sinclair Women's Championship at Noroton Yacht Club in June. "The talent and ability of the crew at the regatta was impressive. Women filled their roles with confidence and competence which must have been fun, but not surprising, for the many supporters and spectators that came out to watch."

The popular regatta drew a large spectator fleet, who got to see not just local teams, but some out of town talent as well. Two teams traveled to race on borrowed boats: the Charleston team, Pirate Princess Racing, was skippered by Katie Mallory, and the Buffalo team was skippered by Magdalena Jaworska. The USNA Offshore Sailing Team entered Constellation, skippered by Sophomore Nancy Rhodes of North Carolina.

In addition to strong competition, camaraderie was a focus for the organizers. The weekend events kicked off with a skipper's meeting happy hour Thursday



evening, sponsored by the Annapolis School of Seamanship. The teams were able to weigh in, introduce their crews, and get to know each other off the water. Over 150 competitors, volunteers and fans attended the awards party. With teams having been formed across boats and fleets, Love observed, "There was more bonding and interaction amongst boats on land than I have seen at a J/105 party."

J/105 Fleet 3 is one of the largest fleets in the J/105 class, and one of the biggest amateur one-design fleets in Annapolis. This women's regatta is part of an overall J/105 class initiative to get more women involved. Multiple J/105 women's events have been held in 2023, including in Toronto, San Francisco, Seattle, Galveston Bay, and Charleston.

The Sailing Club of the Chesapeake (SCC) altered the 105 rules for this regatta to encourage all women teams. The SCC specializes in hosting "signature" regattas that each have their own personality, like the EWE Spirit Regatta, the J/105 Women's Regatta, and the Hospice Cup, to be held on September 16. Grosvenor enjoyed the "terrific race committee. They were a pleasure to work with."

The regatta would not have been possible without the support of many parties. As Waters summed it up, "Thanks to the boat owners who unquestionably lent their boats and equipment, sponsors for investing in the event, and organizers for giving their time to build the platform and make this opportunity possible." Sponsors included CBYRA, the J/105 class, WeatherGage Technologies, Dr. Vernon Sheen, Annapolis School of Seamanship, Darling Charters, Forward Brewing, Gill, Local By Design, Oyster Insight, Quantum Sails, Scotty's Vodka, Helly Hansen, Laura Moore Designs and Sea Bags of Maine.

The 2024 regatta is already on people's minds. Nixon observed, "It was really fun to watch and see how high the level of women's sailing has gotten here on the Bay. Seeing a handful of the teams train over the past few Wed Night races in prep for this event shows how serious the regatta has become. I am sure this event will be even more competitive next year." Bartlett also talked about next year: "The crew work for the top boats was better than the bulk of the fleet but that gives the fleet something to shoot for in 2024. Practice will make the difference for them." The date for the 2024 J/105 Women's Regatta will be announced this fall.

RESULTS

Awards were given for 1st through 5th place

Finish	Boat	Skipper	Points
1	Mayhem	Ashley Love	6
2	Velvet Hammer	Maddy Ploch	9
3	Champagne Puppy	Alexandra Wardell Clary	10
4	Crash	Sara Morgan Waters	14
5	Mirage	Molly Hughes Wilmer	17



Calendar

2024

2024 Southernmost Regatta at Key West

Key West, Florida, United States

Jan 15 – Jan 19

2024 St. Petersburg Sailing World Regatta Series at St. Petersburg Yacht Club

St. Petersburg, Florida, United States

Feb 16 – Feb 18

2024 Charleston Race Week 2024 at Charleston, SC

Charleston, South Carolina, United States

Apr 18 – Apr 21

2024 Annapolis Sailing World Regatta Series at Annapolis Yacht Club

Annapolis, Maryland, United States

May 3 – May 5

2024 Chicago Sailing World Regatta Series at Chicago Yacht Club

Chicago, Illinois, United States

Jun 7 – Jun 9

2024 Marblehead Sailing World Regatta Series at Eastern Yacht Club

Marblehead, Massachusetts, United States

Jul 25 – Jul 28

2024 Rolex Big Boat Series at St. Francis Yacht Club

San Francisco, California, United States

Sep 11 – Sep 15

2024 J/105 North American Championship at Edgewater Yacht Club

Cleveland, Ohio, United States

Sep 26 – Sep 29

2025

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

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Sep 16 – Sep 21