



# A BOAT FOR ALL ECONOMIC SEASONS



## THE LIGHTNING, A BOAT FOR ALL ECONOMIC SEASONS

THE LIGHTNING WAS DESIGNED AND BUILT IN THE MIDDLE OF AMERICA'S LARGEST ECONOMIC DOWNTURN AND IN THE SHADOW OF LOOMING WAR

JONATHAN LANGE



*Lightning racing on Irondequoit Bay, New York in the 1940s*

1938 was not a great year, measured in most ways. Nine years after the Wall Street Crash of 1929 the United States was still stuck in the Depression. Six years of the New Deal had changed the country, but unemployment was still high, wages low, and America's middle and working classes were struggling. In Europe, Hitler was expanding his power. Chamberlain tried to appease Hitler in Munich (we know the rest of that story).

So it seems an unlikely time for Olin Stephens to design, and the Skaneateles Boat Company to build, the first boat of what would become one of the most successful sailing classes ever. While it is true the huge growth in the Class numbers happened after World War II, we can take heart that the birth of our Class did not come with the post war boom, but in the depths of pre-war, depression America.

Why did the Lightning make sense in tough economic times, and does that bode well for the Class in 2009?

The Lightning was designed to be affordable. While the price tag for a Skaneateles boat was still out of reach of most Americans, it was a boat that could be built by amateurs. There were countless "Father and Son" boats built. It was small enough to be pulled behind a normal American car but big enough to fit the entire family for a day sail. We all know that one design, properly enforced, means affordable racing. It eliminated the ability of the rich to buy superior boats and dominate the Class.

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These same attributes, plus our strong Class Association and large pool of competitive used boats, bode well for the Class during this economic downturn. Our boat and our Class are well positioned to be the Class that makes it. Potential buyers who thought about that larger boat should be presented the "Lightning Option." The man or woman who might like to have a racing keel boat, but can no longer afford the tow vehicle, needs one of us to present our Class as a great option as well.

In economics, products like the Lightning are called "inferior goods." That is a terrible term for our beloved boat, but all it means is the kind of good for which demand goes up when the economy goes down. The classic example taught in economics class is "hamburger vs. steak." In good times, demand for hamburger goes down and steak goes up, making steak a "superior" good. The opposite happens in bad times. Demand for hamburger goes up. Well, we sail the hamburger boat!

As I am writing this, the price of gasoline at my local pump has just fallen to \$1.58. That is down by over half from last year. The combination of bad economics and cheap gas works for us. It makes Lightning racing an inexpensive alternative to that European trip or other competing forms of recreation. We are experiencing the perfect storm for the growth of our class.

So what do we do? Let's take advantage of this opportunity. Let's present our boat as the winner in the Recession of 2009. Tell our friends to forsake those "Herbert Hoover Yachts" and join us in our class. You know what will happen. Even when the economy recovers it will be too late. They, like us, will have fallen in love with our boxy boat. They will be hooked.



*Ray Walvoord from Pultneyville NY, sharing construction pictures of his boat Johanna, #898, which he built in 1942*



*Craig Thayer, long time volunteer and wood boat aficionado, shares a tip or two with other restorers*



# CAMP SEA GULL

## CAMP SEA GULL MOLDS LIGHTNING SKIPPERS

JOHN GUTH

I can still remember the day vividly, even twenty-six years later. It was a typical hot and humid July afternoon along the lower Neuse River, a five-mile wide stretch of open brackish water, not far from Oriental, North Carolina. A solid 15-knot, south-westerly sea-breeze had pushed in, as it did most afternoons, creating ideal conditions to test the sailing skills of young men who had spent three weeks training for the opportunity to achieve the most coveted sailing rank at Camp Sea Gull, the "Lightning Skipper." Out of 760 campers each session, ten would might earn the rank.

One of the Sailing Master's assistants had confidently hopped on board to give the hands-on sailing test and promptly told me to back down away from the dock for 100 feet, keeping the Lightning in irons. "Jib up, board down, I called out to my crew," and thus began the most nerve-wracking thirty minutes I had experienced in my fourteen years.

The assistants, also known as UAs, as in "Un-Assigned", had the responsibility for running the sailing program under the leadership of the Sailing Master. The UAs usually spent their evenings along the waterfront in the spacious sail loft, keeping the fleet of fifty Sunfish, ten Lasers, ten Lightnings and a mix of "big

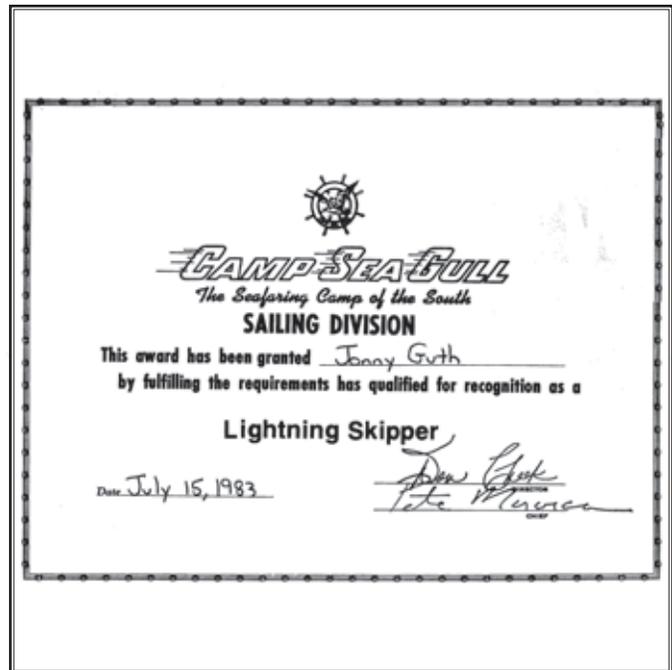


boats" operational. That meant fiber-glassing the numerous holes that were created during that day's Sunfish regatta, patching up sails on the old sewing machine, or making assignments for the fifty sailing staff members for the next day. Little did I know, I would later be lucky enough to serve two summers as a sailing counselor and three more in one of the sought-after UA positions, maintaining the Lightning fleet—the fleet that had been the centerpiece of Sea Gull's sailing program since its founding in 1948.

Wyatt Taylor, who had been named General Secretary of the Raleigh YMCA in 1936, had a unique vision and convinced the Board of Directors that a camp located near coastal waters would provide excellent camping and seamanship opportunities. When the camp first opened in 1948 on 300 acres along the shores of the Neuse, Cherry Point Marine Air Station, directly across the river, donated ten wooden Lightnings, beginning Sea Gull's rich history with the Class. Over the years, the camp has maintained a fleet of Lightnings of varying builds and vintages, including Mob-jacks, Clarks, Lippincotts, and most recently, Allens. Wyatt's



# CAMP SEA GULL



founding ideal was never to compromise with mediocrity. He could often be heard down on the docks saying, "Things don't just happen, you make them happen!"

And so it was, late that afternoon that a somewhat cocky, scrawny fourteen-year-old was trying to make the rank of Lightning Skipper happen. After backing down and falling off onto starboard tack, the UA asked me to demonstrate all the points of sail with proper sail and centerboard trim, set a spinaker and gibe several times, douse the chute, approach a mooring buoy, and properly complete a man-overboard procedure. In between these drills, I was quizzed on things ranging from Bernoulli's principal and lift, to how to land on a lee shore, the purpose of all the knots, anchoring techniques, mast rake and bend, and all the nomenclature of the Lightning. Then, all of a sudden, in an act that we trainees had always heard was more myth than reality, the UA proceeded to up-ship the rudder and jump overboard. (You gotta be kidding me!) I now had to execute another man-overboard, only this time while sailing without a rudder, controlling the boat with only the main and jib sheets and our weight.

In order to complete the Lightning Skipper practical, there was one last test, which was also the most daunting. You had to pull off a perfect docking under the watchful eye of the Sailing Master standing on the main tower of the pier. Stop the boat too far from the dock and your crew may not be able to heave the painter far enough, but smack the boat into the dock and, well...total embarrassment! Fortunately, I managed to cut the boat into the wind at the right distance, using the chine to slow the momentum, and the boat drifted up to within four feet of the pier. "Jib-down, board up!" As I waited nervously on the dock to find out if I passed, Pete "Quack, Quack" Morasca walked slowly towards me.

Pete has been a fixture at Camp for over thirty years as the Sailing Master and recently the Director of the Sea Program. He is known for molding the sailing program into the nationally

recognized program that it is, for mentoring hundreds, perhaps thousands, of campers and counselors on sailing and seamanship, and for promoting the Lightning as the training platform of choice for Sea Gull.

Pete is one of many lifelong sailing buddies made at Sea Gull, and I'm fortunate to still keep in touch with the same guys I raced Lightnings against in the Camper Championships and Counselor Match-Racing regattas. We sailed Lightnings together as campers, became staff trainees and counselors on the sailing staff, and eventually UAs as Assistants to Pete. One of these guys, Henry DeHart, is now the Director of Sea Gull, while others of us are active in the Lightning Class. We still get together almost every year to take a sailing trip, and we frequently reunite back at Camp to show our kids where we first started sailing Lightnings. And after ten years in the Class, it is because of Sea Gull's Lightning program that I will finally realize one of my sailing goals this September in Burlington, Vermont—competing in the Lightning World Championship.

There are surely too many former Sea Gull campers and counselors that have been active in the Class over the years to name them all, but several that come to mind include Peter Rich (my long-time crew), Jay Taylor (NC), Philip Taylor (NC), James Taylor (NC), Bob Astrove (DC), Steve Cushman (Chicago), Dan Morton (NC), Corky Gray, Mark Hillman, Steve Gregg, Dov Estroff, and Mike Greene.

And like so many adults who remember the first time they rode a bike without training wheels, or skied down a slope on their own, I can remember Pete and the UAs lifting me up over their shoulders that summer afternoon and heaving me off the dock into the Neuse River— after passing my Lightning Skipper. It was the same dock from which my father and I would go for our first sail together on a Lightning five years later during parents' weekend. My father took the helm of a Lightning for the first time since building hull #4270 as a teenager forty years earlier. Things don't just happen, you make them happen.



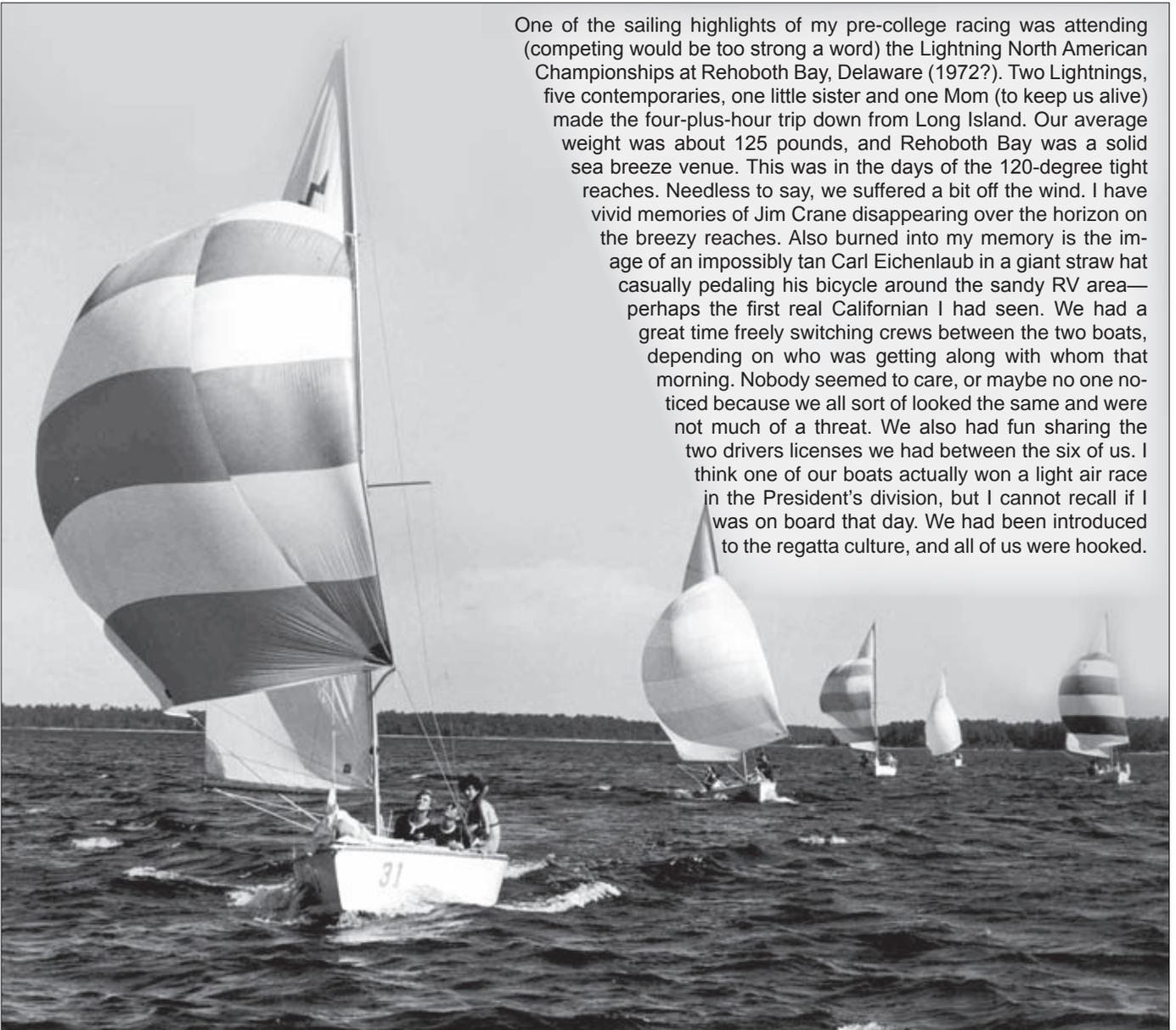
# COMING HOME

## COMING HOME...A WANDERING SAILOR FINDS HIS WAY TO BUFFALO AND MUCH MORE!

NEIL FOWLER

Neal Fowler (15202) sails with Fleet 329 in Annapolis, Maryland; he has been sailing for more than thirty-five years. After sailing in many high performance and highly competitive classes, he is once again sailing Lightnings. Here is his story.

As a junior sailor on Long Island Sound in the early 1970s, the Lightning was the official junior boat. There were hundreds of them. During July and August, there were four major events held on weekdays that drew enough Lightnings to require splitting the Fleet into separate divisions. I had come up through the Blue Jay Class (aka little teeny Lightning), and by crewing for various adult Lightning sailors on weekends, had gained the use of their boats for some of the junior events. The junior activity during the week encouraged big turnouts, and we enjoyed some limited success and many failures on the racecourse. It was all great fun, but the chance to learn from some of the best small boat sailors in the country on the weekends was my good fortune. The adult competition (Bill Shore, Lou Pocharski, Jeff Penfield, Bob Seidelman, and many others) was very good, and the opportunity to race against them on the weekends certainly made a huge contribution to my sailboat racing education. How can you beat that? The Lightning Class remains much the same today.



One of the sailing highlights of my pre-college racing was attending (competing would be too strong a word) the Lightning North American Championships at Rehoboth Bay, Delaware (1972?). Two Lightnings, five contemporaries, one little sister and one Mom (to keep us alive) made the four-plus-hour trip down from Long Island. Our average weight was about 125 pounds, and Rehoboth Bay was a solid sea breeze venue. This was in the days of the 120-degree tight reaches. Needless to say, we suffered a bit off the wind. I have vivid memories of Jim Crane disappearing over the horizon on the breezy reaches. Also burned into my memory is the image of an impossibly tan Carl Eichenlaub in a giant straw hat casually pedaling his bicycle around the sandy RV area—perhaps the first real Californian I had seen. We had a great time freely switching crews between the two boats, depending on who was getting along with whom that morning. Nobody seemed to care, or maybe no one noticed because we all sort of looked the same and were not much of a threat. We also had fun sharing the two drivers licenses we had between the six of us. I think one of our boats actually won a light air race in the President's division, but I cannot recall if I was on board that day. We had been introduced to the regatta culture, and all of us were hooked.

# COMING HOME



During and after my college days, the Fireball, 470 and finally the 505 classes (the 505 is still my favorite) occupied virtually all of my sailing time. I did not sail a Lightning again until I did some crewing during a five-year stretch as a sail maker in the early 1980s. I had the opportunity to crew for Jim Crane, (still fast on the reaches), and the late great Bruce Goldsmith (I'm still laughing). These guys introduced me to the Southern Circuit, one of the most enjoyable series of sailing events ever conceived.

Life got in the way after the early 80s, and my sailing was limited to occasionally filling in as pinch helmsman for various teams who could not make it to Savannah for the Southern Circuit. This role I was more than happy to fill. I had the pleasure of sailing with Lightning Hall of Fame crews Hale Walcoff, and Kip Hamblet at a couple of Savannah events. Again, strong turnouts well run events and solid competition kept me coming back.

I kept racing 505s (east coast events only) in the summer and IC dinghies in the winter, all on a very casual basis. About five years ago my long-time 505 partner retired to keel boat land, and my kids figured out that I wasn't cool enough to be around. This freed up my time to do more events. I took the opportunity to go to the NAs at the Buffalo Canoe Club (BCC) with old college teammate Dave Peck and his wife Nina. I learned that not only is the Buffalo Canoe Club not in Buffalo—it is not even in the same country as Buffalo! Again the Lightning volunteers managed a well-organized, well-attended, very competitive event.

Even though the BCC was not in Buffalo or the USA, I did manage to bond with the BCC bar, which led to a reunion with an old 505 buddy, Todd Johnson. We have since sailed four Southern Circuits, two NAs, one Pan Am Trials, a couple of Districts, and some other stuff together. Life got in the way again this past year, but I know I will end up back in the Lightning again. Why?

**ORGANIZATION**—The vast majority of the events that I have participated in have been well run, very organized and, most importantly, I did not have to set them up. I have drifted away from several classes that I love to race, as I realized that almost every event within a two-hour drive from home was to some extent organized by me. Every hour of racing required four to five hours of organization, and that did not include getting the boat ready (which often didn't happen). With folks facing limits on their free time, a strong class organization like the Lightning allows sailors to concentrate on sailing.

**COMPETITION**—The sailors in the Lightning are very competitive. I know, I've tried just about everything. They know the boats inside out and have been very willing to share their expertise. Rarely does an on the water dispute remain unresolved on the racecourse. At a recent Midwinter championship, we counted 15–20 boats that we believed were capable of winning any given race. That's depth and pleasant racing.

**EASE OF GETTING UP TO SPEED**—The somewhat keel-boat-like sailing characteristics of the Lightning (I think of the

Lightning as half dinghy half keelboat) remove the emphasis on the expert boat handling that is required to compete in the high performance classes. You can develop competent boat handling in a fraction of the time. Hence, more new sailors, more old guys (yours truly), etc. have a shot at winning.

**PEOPLE**—The people sailing the Lightning are fun. The boat does not require giant or miniature sailors. Regular guys are the right size. Women and kids are the right size, and everyone can be competitive. The events are geared to provide entertainment to the whole crowd.

**HISTORY**—So many of the legendary one-design sailors in North America have ties to the Lightning. It's humbling to compete for the same trophies they did (and still do!).

**GREAT EVENTS**—Southern Circuit, North Americans, Worlds, Pan Am status, Pymatuning (well I've heard it's fabulous).

**COST**—The Lightning is a tremendous value. You get a lot for the money. A strong organization, an evolved competitive product out of the box, a ton of events, and strong resale value give sailors more than most other classes. And for those who want to sail with family members (you know, that free time limitation), the Lightning is the way to go.

I think the Lightning package is one of the best values in sailing. I know I will keep coming back, even though most of the hiking straps are in sideways and the Buffalo thing still has me scratching my head.





# BOAT GRANT

ALLAN TERHUNE

The ILCA Boat Grant program has been one of the highlights of the Class for the last few years, and when I was asked to write a short piece for the yearbook, I was excited to do it. People know many things about the program, so I have decided to take a different approach with the article—one that would inform everyone about the inner workings of the program, how it started, some funny stories, some success, some failure. Hopefully this will give everyone an insight to the program that they have not thought of before and will have everyone even more energized to support, participate and encourage, what I believe, is an amazing program.

## **THE BEGINNING**

Bill Fastiggi and I came up with the idea for the program in the winter/spring of 2006. We discussed the concept of getting younger, college aged sailors involved in the Class and how we could make that happen. We came up with the rough outline of a program and pitched it at the NAs in San Diego. The one point we stressed was that this was a marketing program, and advertising was the key. We stressed that we did not necessarily have to worry whether it caught on, as the advertising for the first year would be worth the work.

We launched the program that winter with the blessing of the Class. The press releases went out, and it actually swept the sailing community like wild fire. Applications were coming and it was up and running. Bill and I were excited, and then it hit us. It was time to start finding boats. Nickels graciously agreed to provide a boat the first year, we were lucky to have a great boat donated, and the ILCA purchased a boat. We were also loaned another boat, so we were ready for year #1—four boats and all looked great.

## **THE FIRST WEEKEND**

The first real weekend of the Boat Grant was at the No Gas Regatta in Annapolis. All four teams arrived, and we were optimistic. Well, lets say we had some serious growing pains that first week. We had a broken mast, a boat with a hole, a boat that needed some rigging work and some bruised egos. John Faus and I were there that weekend, and I remember the discussion Monday morning. It went something like this..."What did we get ourselves into?"..."I don't know?"..."Is this going to work?"..."I don't know, I think"...This is when the program took its biggest turn. Bill, John and I got together and had a meeting with the mentors, after which we pressed on. It was smooth sailing from there.

## **RESULTS**

The program has had considerable success so far, including District Championships, winning the President's Cup at the NAs, along with numerous local events. It has also provided the Class with excellent exposure to the sailing world. One of the things I'm convinced it has done is bring the Class together for a common cause. It has energized everyone of us to help support our youth and keep them coming into our Class and sailing the boats we all love. The success of uniting our Class in this goal alone has been worth it.

Last year Colin Kirby was the first grantee to purchase his boat and stay in the Class. He has joined fleet 50 in Washington, DC. This is the trend that we are hoping to see and the beginning of what we anticipate will be the real fruits of our work.

The Boat Grant Program continues to be a great success and one that everyone in the ILCA should be proud of. I urge everyone out there to get that boat in your fleet that is not being used into the hands of a junior sailor. Support Junior Sailing in the Lightning. If you are interested in the program, we always need help and hope that everyone continues to support the program!



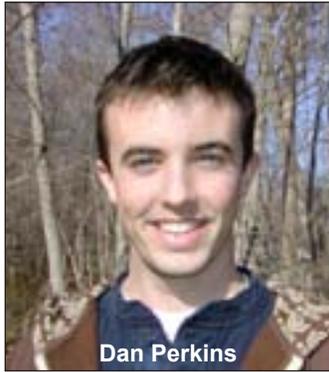
*Allan Terhune and Bill Fastiggi—awarded the Leadership Award by US Sailing for their work in creating and implementing the ILCA Boat Grant Program*



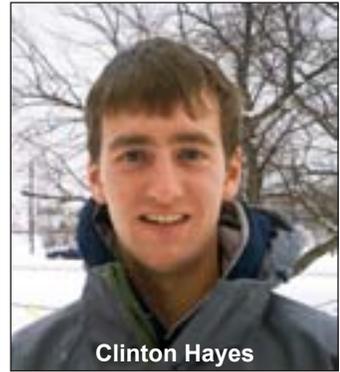
# BOAT GRANT



Justin Coplan

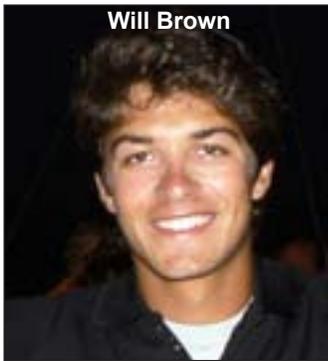


Dan Perkins



Clinton Hayes

## 2008 BOAT GRANT RECIPIENTS



Will Brown



Nick Farina



Collin Kirby

The second year of the ILCA Boat Grant Program was a tremendous success. Both Nickels Boat Works and Allen Boat Company generously provided the use of a new boat for the 2008 season, while two recent-vintage Lightnings were donated outright to the ILCA for use in the Boat Grant Program, and Steve Davis made one of his boats available to a Colorado team for the summer. North Sails, Quantum Sails, Vermont Sailing Partners, and members of the Class have all generously donated new sails and gear. "Individual donations have been really amazing," said Class President Brian Hayes. "Not just gear and parts, but dollars and hours of work. In 2008, we were able to establish a Colin Park Memorial Boat as well as a Bruce Goldsmith Memorial Boat. It's kind of like the future of the Class is connected directly to the Lightning's history."





## BOAT GRANT



### DAN PERKINS — MENTOR: BILL HEALY

As three Boston University students just completing our freshman year, we were excited to get the news that we had been selected as recipients of the Lightning Boat Grant Program. We were given the “Colin Park Memorial Boat” and were going to sail out of Niantic, Connecticut. This would prove to be a new experience for all of us, as we had little previous Lightning experience. We were eager for the challenge.

Our journey began in mid May as Ben and I headed to Maryland to pick up our Lightning. We had expanded our friendships at school with sailors that lived all over the country. This would prove beneficial, as we had a teammate who lived in the Maryland area that was able to house us overnight. Our trip was a success, and we made it back to Niantic. After spending the following weekend acquainting ourselves with the boat and readying it, we set off on Saturday, May 24, for our first race with the Niantic Bay Yacht Club Lightning fleet. We took many third-place finishes that weekend, out of seven, and were feeling good, but we knew we had a lot to learn. The Niantic fleet is very competitive and was a great source of inspiration and knowledge for us.

We were able to sail the Lightning at many different levels. Local, district and national events were on our schedule. The transition from dinghy sailing to Lightning sailing was a constant work in progress. We attended the Districts at Cedar Point, the 70th Anniversary Regatta in Skaneateles, the Governor’s Cup in Niantic and the North Americans in Newport.

The Lightning is a great design that is suitable for all ages. We experienced a lot over the course of the summer—triumph, frustration, patience. It takes real teamwork to sail successfully and a true commitment from all sailors on the team for consistency. In hindsight, there were things we would have done differently, but overall, the experience was rewarding, and we are extremely grateful to the International Lightning Class for establishing this program. It still is young and in the growing stages, but it has the potential to be a success. On behalf of myself, Dan Perkins, and my crew Ben Greenfield and Tripp Cashel (with honorable mention to Janel Zarkowsky who filled in as crew when needed), we thank the International Lightning Class for this experience.



### WILL BROWN — MENTOR: JOHN FAUS

The ILCA gave me a great opportunity this summer by making me a Boat Grant recipient. As a college student I would not have been able to purchase a new Lightning, but this program allowed me to sail one this summer.

This Class displays some of the best sailing in the world. It is one of the reasons that I have found myself drawn to it. But the thing that truly makes this Class great is the caliber of people that make up the membership. People are always willing to lend you a helping hand, give some advice and just enjoy their time both on and off the water.

I also must thank my mentor John Faus who has played an instrumental role in my growth as a sailor and within the Lightning Class. He has always encouraged my sailing, allowed me to borrow his boat, and even crewed for me. He has gone above and beyond to help me out, and it is people like him who make the Lightning such an amazing Class.



# BOAT GRANT

## NICK FARINA — MENTOR: STEVE DAVIS

When one thinks of Colorado, snowsports, hiking, climbing and other mountainous activities come to mind—but not sailboat racing. Since moving to Colorado three years ago, I have sailed borrowed boats, due to the kindness of Steve and Jan Davis, and more recently, thanks to the Lightning Boat Grant Program. This program allowed me not just to compete in regattas, such as the ACCs and NAs, but also to introduce some of my crew to the Lightning class. I have been teaching several young women to sail over the last few years in weekly fleet racing. Both my fiancée, Elizabeth Henry-Hooker, and fellow graduate student, Jenii Bernet, made the transition from beer-can mountain sailing in Colorado to big regattas on the ocean.

When submitting my application to the Boat Grant Program, I planned to have both a travel team of experienced young Colorado sailors and a local team of young women who have been sailing with me for the last few years. Of course, fate had a different plan than I did, and when most of my travel team had other commitments arise, I immediately asked these women if they would like to race in two big regattas. To my surprise, both Jenii and Elizabeth were eager to travel across the country and race.

Two days before the ACCs, Jenii and I left Boulder, heading to Rock Hall with three goals: 1) arrive safely, 2) teach Jenii how to trailer a boat, and 3) pick up our third, Ian McKenzie, in Baltimore. All were accomplished sans issue, and I prepared to drive a boat for two days instead of a car. We had our moments of brilliance, spending half of a race in third, only to pick the wrong side and drop back to the mid-teens. The rest of the regatta was practice—for me to get used to sailing with more than five boats, and for Jenii, how to do bow in pressure situations.

For the NAs, Elizabeth and my old skipper, Bretton Gardner, sailed with me. We had moments of brilliance, allowing us to qualify in the green fleet, but they were overshadowed by moments of hilarity. The last race of the qualifying series sums up the week. After a dreadful start, Elizabeth came up on the rail for a puff, and suddenly, all I can see are her feet pointing at the sky and Bretton trying to grab her. Luckily, the spinnaker halyard had wrapped around her foot and we were able to pull her in easily. However, this had pulled the halyard out of the mast so we had to drop the jib, switch halyards, race, drop, and switch again. Later



in the week, again in the middle of the race, I somehow hiked off the boat. It is surprisingly hard to drive a Lightning upwind while underwater. After these, we joked that it was Bretton's turn next. That almost happened on the last day after a tack when more than half of his body was over the side. Luckily, Elizabeth and I were able to grab on and pull him back in. All in all, we had an adventurous week and a good learning experience.





## BOAT GRANT



*Clinton at the NAs*

### CLINTON HAYES MENTOR: BILL HEALY

Now that the summers over, we are back to school in Vermont and have returned the Lightning back to the Class. The whole Boat Grant experience has been awesome. The Lightning Class is made up of so many nice people and talented sailors who are always willing to go out of their way to help. I enjoyed many conversations, both on and off the water, with many sailors. The other Boat Grant recipients are all awesome people. We became great friends and will stay in contact for years to come.

Our year started out at the Early Bird Regatta hosted by Cedar Point. We had never really sailed a Lightning before, so just learning what all the lines did was a challenge. The next regatta we sailed in was the 70th Anniversary. That was great because it truly showed us what the Light-

ning Class was all about: good sailing, good times, good people. After that, it was time to get serious and qualify for NAs.

The Corinthian Yacht Club hosted a great New England Championship. We did well in the one light air race on Saturday. On Sunday there was much better wind, and we sailed two bad races and two good ones. Unfortunately, we were OCS in one of our good races, so that dropped us down to ninth for the regatta. Good thing the top eleven qualified.

We decided to go to Rock Hall, Maryland, for ACCs after hearing what unique of a regatta it would be. Everyone was expecting light air, but the wind ended up being great on both days. However, our results were somewhat of a disappointment. We only had two clean starts, which is never a good thing, and our boat set-up was also way off.

On Saturday we attended a delicious BBQ at the Club where we talked to some other quantum sailors. We figured out that we were sailing with way too much pre-bend and not quite enough lower tension in the moderate to heavy wind and flat water conditions. Sunday went a little better. We had a decent first race in lighter, shifty conditions. In the second race we won the pin and tacked on the first lefty. Half way up the beat the wind went back right, and we lead back. Unfortunately, that righty was progressive, and we got hung out to dry on the left. Incidents like that are bound to happen, but at least we learned a lot about the boat.

The North Americans in Newport did not really go as well as we had hoped, but nevertheless, it was a fun, well-run regatta. Unfortunately, Tyler couldn't sail the event, but we got Matt Clark, another Vermont sailor, to step in. Two days before the event I came down with something and was really sick for the qualifier series. That definitely didn't help, but we also didn't manage the top third of our upwind beats very well and ended up getting bounced around in the middle too much, which lost us a lot of boats. We had a couple of pretty good starts in the qualifier series and sailed really fast downwind, but in the end, we couldn't put together full races. We had a 10th on the first day, but with the rest of our races in the high 20s or low 30s, we ended up in the yellow fleet. In the end, we sailed a consistent series in the yellow fleet and ended up third.

I would like to thank everyone in the Lightning Class who helped us out this summer: first off, the whole Boat Grant Committee for giving us this wonderful opportunity; our mentor Bill Healy and also Bill Fastiggi who sort of acted as a mentor as well; of course, Jan from the Lightning Class Office who handled pretty much everything; Brian Hayes helped us out a lot with a bunch of rig and tuning theory and getting our mast straight at the beginning of the season; Skip Dieball for donating a new set of Quantum sails; Geoff Becker and his team of Danny Raban, John Mollicone, and John Loe for helping us with tuning the Quantums and lots of other Lightning-specific things. It was a great summer and a once in a lifetime experience. Tyler, Steve, and I all loved the Lightning, so if anyone needs crew next year, contact one of us.

# BOAT GRANT



From Art Petrosemolo: "I was very impressed with Justin Copeland and his crew, and when I learned about the Lightning Boat Grant Program, I was even more impressed. Finally, a Fleet that is thinking ahead and not back. You would have gotten a kick out of the "old geezers" on the dock after the Sunday races just shaking their heads that they were beat (soundly) by a college kid and two high school crew. It was a hoot."



Justin winning at the Metro Districts

## JUSTIN COPLAN — MENTOR: ROBERT SENGSTACKEN

This was one of my busiest summers ever, thanks to the Lightning Class. It is still hard to believe that it all came together so smoothly. Throughout the season I sailed in eight Lightning regattas and competed in the Nyack Spring and Summer series. By the end, both my crew and myself came away much better sailors than we were at the start of the season.

At the start of the season we were a very rough sailing team. We found out at the first couple of regattas that our performance in a competitive field was very hit or miss. We first had one of those hit days at the Cedar Point Early Bird regatta where we had the boat very well tuned for the conditions and sailed two firsts. Of course, the previous day had been a miss day, landing us in fourth overall. If there was something that we had to do over the season, it was to nail down where that 'go fast' comes from in the Lightning and put together consistent regattas.

From then on we focused on increasing our consistency. This came down to changing our strategy to be more conservative. We worked toward getting into a good position and from there always trying to minimize losses. This basically came down to having my crew being on the lookout for when I was trying to do something stupid. We played the odds and made sure we beat most of the fleet, rather than looking to come out on the very top of each race. We found that usually our biggest loses and worst finishes came from when we tried to make big gains. Instead, we relied on our solid boat speed to make small gains on surrounding boats and let that add up over time. Of course, this doesn't work all the time, but it was a solid groundwork. It was at the Metropolitan Districts where our conservative approach really paid off.

In the shifty winds of the Navesink we came out on top of a competitive ten-boat fleet to win our districts. It was a great relief to know that we had qualified for the North Americans. From there the next regatta was the 70th Anniversary. This was a great time had by all. It was also a great opportunity for me and my team to meet more people in the Lightning Class, all of who were extremely encouraging and a great help in teaching us more about the boat.

Next up was the Atlantic Coast Championships down in Rock Hall, Maryland. We were very excited about this event because it would be the most competitive regatta yet, excluding the 70th. The conditions turned out to be a big surprise for us, and we weren't ready for the

strong winds that were served up. Throughout the whole prior season we had been generally been sailing in lighter breeze and we had no solid experience in de-powering in the stronger breeze. After the first day we got knocked around a lot on the upwinds and found ourselves no longer sailing smart. Once again the Lightning Class showed its colors, and the lab on Saturday night was very helpful. We learned how to better de-power the boat and were back up on our feet. The second day brought lighter wind we were better aquatinted with, and we posted a twelve and an eight.

Newport was one heck of a time. This was hands down the most competitive group of sailors I have ever sailed against. The qualifying series was a bit of a disappointment when we never found a groove to keep us competitive in the top of the fleet. We continued to struggle to get the boat going fast downwind. When all was said and done, we ended up in the green fleet. We would end up sailing much smarter in the green fleet than we had during the qualifying series, posting a worst race of an eleventh and coming out second. This was a wonderful way to end our season.

I would also like to thank everyone who made this summer possible. Specifically, I would like to thank the members of the Boat Grant Committee, Tommy Allen for donating a boat, and Todd Wake for donating a set of North sails in top condition. I also need to thank our home fleet, Fleet 75, for being so supportive of me, especially Bob Sengstacken and Joan and Gary Hurban. I would like to thank my team Fiona Gordon and Ellie Turk for being such great team players and sticking with it through the whole season. I know they both had a great time this summer, and we are all looking to get back on a Lightning as soon as we can.



Justin (bow 31) following Tito Gonzalez into the leeward mark at the North American Championship!



# BOAT GRANT



*Collin Kirby and Crew*

## **COLLIN KIRBY** **MENTOR: NABEEL ALSALAM**

My experience with the Boat Grant Program was amazing. I have met so many awesome people and have learned so much I couldn't have on my own. The experience that I gained from campaigning my own boat has been incredible and has definitely helped improve my racing.

I got the chance to travel to many regattas, as well as participate in my weekly local fleet races. At the regattas everybody there was so willing to help out with whatever I needed and offer all the advice they could.

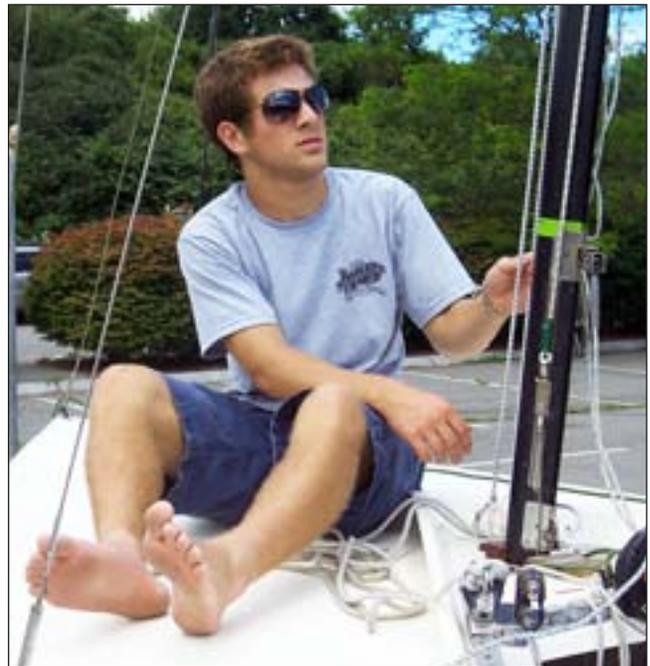
Although I can't name everybody that helped me, I will name some people that really had a positive impact on successfully campaigning the boat. Greg Fisher helped me tune the



*Bringing in the boat for the first time*



*Getting weighed at the NAs*



boat at the 70th and gave me a lot of helpful advice for the light air racing. Without his help tuning, I wouldn't have been able to do as well there as I did, finishing 11th in the white fleet. Bill Fastiggi also helped me at the 70th, offering up tips and advice as we sailed up to the course on the first day about boat heel and sail trim and pole height. It really helped out. He was also there for anything I needed at anytime throughout the course of my time with the boat and in sending me sails. I also learned a lot and was helped out by Allan Terhune. From offering advice and hooking me up with sails and hiking straps before I went up to Juniors, he was always there when I had any questions. And, of course, thanks to my mentors Pat McGee and Nabeel Alsalam for teaching me everything and mentoring me. It was very cool to get help from all of these guys and others that I really look up to and respect as sailors.

From this experience I also learned how awesome the Lightning Class is and how it's just like a big family. Jan and Steve were so supportive and helpful in sending me Measurement Certificates and helping me with everything I needed—and, of course, John Faus and all of the others involved in the program. At Juniors my crew and I were housed by the Baums who were so supportive and happy to house us and even made us lunch. They really made my stay in Newport an awesome time.

I have such a great time with the boat and learned so many things, like the importance of having the right tuning at Juniors and improving my starts and confidence skippering in a large fleet and heavy air. I am very grateful for having the opportunity to do this and will always be a member of the Lightning Class.

*(Collin has purchased the boat he used and will continue sailing with Fleet 50)*