



2019 Sail Nova Scotia Award Winners Bios

The 2019 Sail Nova Scotia Awards were handed out on Saturday, November 16 at the Saraguay House of the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron. More than 100 people attended in what is always a highlight of the boating season.

Here is the list of all the award winners with their accomplishments listed in order of awards presentation.

1 - Paul Tingley Perseverance Award – Marilyn Murphy, Petpeswick Yacht Club

The 2019 Paul Tingley Perseverance Award goes to Marilyn Murphy from the Petpeswick Yacht Club.

Marilyn has been involved at Petpeswick Yacht Club for 44 years and while not much of a sailor most of Marilyn's participation has been behind the sailing scene. Over the years she has held many Management roles, some more than once and most over many years. She has served as PYC Secretary, President of the Ladies Auxiliary, Director of Learn To Sail, Treasurer, Facility Rental Chairperson, and in 2018 she became Commodore.

She has run the coffee parties as fund-raisers for the Junior Sailing program, making all of the sandwiches. PYC hosts a Canada Day Open House, lobster suppers, Shearwater Races, and steak suppers. Many mid-aged sailors have very fond memories of tenting and sailing at the famous mid-summer regattas that ran at Petpeswick for many summers. Marilyn was there of course, working in the kitchen preparing food for them. Marilyn and her husband Tom billeted instructors from the city who taught at the club. She also supported her 2 daughters, Susan and Janet Ayles, when they were instructors at the Club,

Currently Marilyn is leading the club as we continue to make it more accessible to more people. Marilyn holds Club memories and background information regarding everything to do with the club. Her presence at Management meetings is invaluable.

2 – Sail Nova Scotia Legacy Fund Award – Allison Surette & Max Flinn

The Sail Nova Scotia Legacy Fund was established many years ago in memory of one of the best sailors NS has produced, Paul Thompson.

It was Paul's desire to help other sailors achieve their competitive best, boosting them to the national team level where they would have access to some funding and, more importantly, be

exposed to a variety of international and world class events, enabling them to have access to that same competitive edge.

Over the years the Sail Nova Scotia has added to this fund from the legacy of other notable Nova Scotia yachtsmen including David Forsythe and Alan McLean.

The 2019 winners are Allie Surette and Max Flinn. Allie and Max are Nacra sailors and have their sights set on qualification for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games. In 2019 they represented Canada at the Pan Am Games in Peru and also competed at the Olympic Test Event in Enoshima and the World Championships just a couple of weeks ago. This award will support their training up until the Olympic qualification event this winter.

3 – WOW Women on Water Pamela Lerch Cup Award – Sharyn Hiscock, Royal Western Nova Scotia Yacht Club

WOW! Women On Water was established in 2007 in memory of Pamela Lerch who passed away from breast cancer that year. In addition to the cup award, it has established three permanent bursaries, which encourage women's health and well being while increasing their expertise and knowledge of sailing.

This award is presented to a female sailing leader who demonstrates outstanding achievement in sailing education, leadership, mentorship and health promotion.

Sail Nova Scotia and the award selection committee are pleased to announce that Sharyn Hiscock of the Royal Western Nova Scotia Yacht Club in Digby is this year's recipient of the WOW! Women On Water Pamela Lerch Memorial Cup.

Sharyn has been a very active member of the RWNSYC since she relocated from St. John's in 2010.

Keith Amirault the Commodore of the club says "Sharyn's experience on the water began with going Cod fishing with her father off Bell Island where she grew up. She fell in love with sailing instantly on her pre move visit to Digby when we took her racing on a C&C 37. Upon her move she was immersed in keel boat sailing and racing with zero ease in and shone with her will to learn everything she could. An example of her trial by fire came early in her sailing life. In 2012 to encourage women to participate in racing the club was holding a woman only helm race. Never having helmed a race before Sharyn agreed to drive the C&C 37. When race day dawned, it was blowing 20+ knots. Out to the racecourse a wide-eyed Sharyn drove, and the rest is history! She drove an amazing race in very tough conditions including a final 3 mile windward beat with the wind against Digby's tide and has the trophy to reward her efforts. Sharyn's sailing includes by now hundreds of races in the Annapolis Basin as well as at least two victories in the Saint John to Digby race on board Dragonfly.

Besides the racing and sailing Sharyn has been steadfastly dedicated to our club's success. This despite the fact her sailing was mostly waylaid this year due to a back injury. Luckily it appears she will be back on the water next season including organizing our own version of "Women on Water" in which there will be a season long race series with woman only as helm.

“I can honestly say that our club would be a much-diminished place both on and off the water if it were not for Sharyn’s involvement, encouragement of others and perseverance”.

4 –Official of the Year - Chris Tully, Chester Yacht Club

Last year the winner of this award was international judge Warren Nethercote who was retiring after more than 25 years in the sport. This year the award goes to someone just starting his Race Officiating career, Chris Tully.

Lesley Taylor who has won just about every one of the Sail Nova Scotia Awards says “Incredibly, despite a full time job being the awesome head instructor of the Chester Yacht Club, and finding time to do some racing himself, Chris Tully found time to work or volunteer as a race committee member at no less than 8 regattas in Nova Scotia this year. He volunteered his time to be the PRO of ARK, and was a RO at Bay Wind and was part of the officials team at Sail Fest in Lunenburg. As part of his job at CYC, he was the PRO and Regatta Chair of the always popular Opti Jam. He also was a race officer at the Bluenose Championships, the RNSYS Club Championships, the Maritime University Sailing Championships, and the NS Opti Provincials.

We are incredibly fortunate here in Nova Scotia to be able to provide high quality, locally sourced race management to our youth and one design sailors, and it is thanks to people like Chris Tully being so incredibly giving of their time that this is possible. He is more than deserving of this award!

5 –Volunteer of the Year – Robert Stevens, Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron

The success of just about every sports program rests on volunteers. And this year the Sail Nova Scotia Volunteer of the Year award goes to Robert Stevens from the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron.

Robert has been an invaluable force developing sailing in this province for a number of years.

Head Race Coach of the RNSYS says “Just in 2019, from running Race Committee duties in our freezing shoulder season regattas, fixing coach boats, driving trailers, running measurement official, hosting team dinners, fixing boats to even being the event photographer so that sailors can take back great memories, Robert is always keen to make a difference for sailing in this province.

Robert is the volunteer you can count on going the extra mile and being on the details to make it a more enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

Many people wonder if this is his job, but Robert is also the kind of volunteer that also treats everyone very well, and is always trying to find a way as well to better support the coaches and take load out of their shoulders.”

6 – Regatta of the Year – Albacore Internationals hosted by Shelburne Harbour Yacht Club

In 2019 Sail Nova Scotia hosted National Championships for the J24, Club 420 and C&C 99 classes. All were a success and solidified Nova Scotia's reputation as a great place to host regattas. The province also hosted one international event and it was one of the best we have ever hosted.

The 2019 Regatta of the Year is the Albacore Internationals hosted by Shelburne Harbour Yacht Club.

Held in late August and featuring close to 50 boats from 4 countries, the Albacore Internationals featured a week of great racing under blue skies and a tropical storm, with social events each night and culminating in a Lobster Dinner awards banquet.

Paul Clifford is the Commodore of the Canadian Albacore Association and was a competitor at the regatta. "I have been to 4 Albacore International events, but there was something really special about the event this year in Shelburne.

"The sailing was excellent. Competition could not have been tighter at all levels of the fleet. We had all variety of wind conditions and directions, confounding many of the best of us at times. The spirit of Shelburne hospitality pervaded the whole experience"

It was the spirit of genuine volunteerism and down east hospitality that made the 2019 Shelburne International Albacore Championship outstandingly memorable"

7 – Instructors of the Year – Jeff Devoe, Northern Yacht Club and Sophia Josenhans, Lunenburg Yacht Club

With more than 100 sailing instructors here in Nova Scotia selecting one is always a tough task for the Awards Selection Committee.

This year we received a number of quality nominations, but two stood out and will be recognized here tonight.

The 2019 Instructors of the Year are Sophia Josenhans from Lunenburg Yacht Club and Jeff Devoe from the Northern Yacht Club in North Sydney.

Jeff Devoe has been sailing at NYC since he was 8 years old and for the past number of years has been the head sailing instructor.

The club says "It doesn't matter what coaching level he takes on- juniors or adults - his easy-going style of coaching creates a pleasant and open learning atmosphere where the students always have a really fun and enjoyable learning experience.

The coach/student relationship that Jeff created with these kids was truly amazing to watch. It is so, so easy to see that the kids are really enjoying themselves with Jeff. The way that he teaches and develops their boat handling skills, competition skills, tactics, etc creates a fun,

pressure free environment where they are all laughing, smiling, and having fun. This learning environment resulted in several of our older students expressing an interest to become instructors for next year! A big part of this was based on on Jeffrey's unwavering commitment to their learning and success.

Sharing this award with Jeff is Sophia Josenhans

Sophia has been an instructor at LYC for many years and a couple of years ago attained Sail Canada's Learning Facilitator level, teaching the next generation of sailing instructors for programs across Nova Scotia.

Rob Barbara, Learn to Sail Director at LYC says "Sophia is a true professional driven by a deep desire to help her athletes develop a lifelong love for the sport of sailing. She takes great pride in the progress of her program, her fellow coaches and her athletes - all of which improved greatly under Sophia's leadership. The Lunenburg Yacht Club's program grew significantly over the past three years and much of that growth can be attributed to the positivity with which the community regards the program, most of which can be rooted back to the great job the coaches did under Sophia's leadership.

Helena Gow who has been instructed by Sophia and now works with her says "Sophia has been one of the best instructors I've ever had. She has been my laser coach for three years and has taught me more technically than any other coach I have had in the past. She did a phenomenal job in improving our racing and boat handling skills, and for this, I am incredibly grateful to have had her as a coach."

8 – Coach of the Year – Max Seward, Bedford Basin Yacht Club

This year's Coach of the Year is Max Seward from the Bedford Basin Yacht Club.

Max Seward is an example of the type of coaching growth and development that we are trying to foster in the province. Over his years coaching the race team at BBYC, Max has developed from a novice coach into an inspiring, dedicated and conscientious coach. He has worked on his technical, tactical and coaching skills becoming someone our young athletes can build a solid foundation of skills from. He is always willing to work with other coaches and takes every learning opportunity very seriously. Beyond the time he dedicates to his team at BBYC, Max is one of the province's Learning Facilitators, teaching and coaching our future instructors throughout the province.

9 – Brian Todd Youth Sailors of the Year – Ryan Anderson, RNSYS & Gabby Rafuse, RNSYS

This year's Male Youth Sailor of the Year is Ryan Anderson from the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron. Ryan has been recognized with this award previously and is one of the top youth sailors in Canada.

2019 was a great year for Ryan. He started off the season by finishing 4th overall of 90 boats at the Laser Midwinters. This regatta was the Trials event for the Canadian spot for the 2019 World Sailing Youth Worlds and Ryan battled hard for the berth all event, trading the lead back

and forth with last year's selected athlete. It came down to the last race where Ryan came from being behind by 10 boats at the first mark, to passing Tayte right at the finish to take the lead in the trials and ultimately the berth. Ryan placed 17th at the World Sailing Youth Worlds in Poland, but showed his potential with 3 races inside the top 10 and winning race 2. Later in the summer, Ryan made the switch to the men's Olympic Class boat at the Canadian Senior Championships. In this first event in the senior men's event Ryan finished 13th overall just behind our national team athletes. Ryan had a strong finish to his youth career in 2019 and we are excited to see what the future holds for this promising sailor in the future.

The female Youth Sailor of the Year is Gabby Rafuse from the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron.

Gabby has been sailing the opti since she was 7 years old and is dedicated to spring, summer and fall sailing. This was Gabby's fourth year on the RNSYS Opti race team and she has taken a leadership role being a friend and a great role model to younger athletes. She always has a smile on her face and isn't afraid to try anything!

Gabby's recent regattas results show a real commitment to the sport. Of note, she was selected to the Canadian Opti team to represent Canada at the North American IODA event in Nassau this fall the only Atlantic Canadian to attend.

Major Regattas & Highlights

At the 2019 Canadian Opti Championships she finished 20th in the 120 boat fleet and won the Club 420 class at the Kennedy Cup with Molly Anderson.

10 – Hal Davies Offshore Sailor of the Year award – Durk Steigenga & Team MacIntosh, Chester Yacht Club

The 2019 Hal Davies Offshore Sailor of the Year award goes to Team MacIntosh skippered by Durk Steigenga.

Durk and Team MacIntosh from Chester Yacht Club aboard their Custom 44, with the boat and sails built by Durk himself, captured the PHRF 2 division of the 2019 Marblehead Ocean Race beating 23 other boats.

In 2005 Durk and his crew won the overall title in the Marblehead Race, the first time a Canadian boat has done so. Durk and his crew previously sailed extensively in Ontario.

Durk has been involved in sailmaking here in Nova Scotia for many years.

11 – Female Sailor of the Year – Jesleine Baker, Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron

The 2019 Sail Nova Scotia Female Sailor of the Year is Jesleine Baker from the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron.

Winner of Distance 4 at Chester Race Week 2018 and 2019, and winner of Bravo 1 in 2017, this is Jesleine's third year in a row of winning her very large and competitive fleet in Chester on her J30 Just Add Water.

Lesley Taylor says “I think this three-peat is an incredible accomplishment and deserves a major congratulations. She was also the overwhelming winner of the B Fleet Wednesday night summer series at RNSYS this year, and is almost always at the top of that fleet. My impression is that she flies majorly under the radar. I am always super impressed by her, and love that she regularly races with her family members.

12 – Male Sailor of the Year – Evan Petley-Jones, Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron

After a fantastic 2019 sailing season Evan Petley-Jones from the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron is the 2019 Male Sailor of the Year.

At the 2019 IOD Worlds he was 2nd. He won the J24 National Championships, and won the IOD fleet at Chester Race Week on his boat Bella beating 8 other boats. He also participated in the J24 US nationals (6th) and J24 Midwinters in Annapolis. Just two weeks ago Evan finished in 6th place overall at the 2019 J24 Worlds in Miami in the 79 boat fleet.

Mike Evans says that not only is Evan a great sailor he continues to give back to the sport in so many ways.

“It is just as important to note that he also enabled sailing for so many others at so many levels through selflessly volunteering his time and resources at such events and activities as:

- 1) Organizing the RNSYS J22 fleet so that the adult learning and competitive sailing programs could move forward for 2019.
- 2) Organized the J24 Canadian Championship, raced in it, and then won it!!!
- 3) Acted as the PRO, using his own boat and resources, for the North Sails One Design Regatta at RNSYS in October 2019.

Evan had a fantastic year in 2019!

13 – Sailor of the Year – Larry Creaser, Chester Yacht Club

This award is housed permanently at the Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame and is the only Provincial Sport Organization annual award to be on display there.

This year’s Nova Scotia Sailor of the Year is Larry Creaser from the Chester Yacht Club.

Larry and his crew on board his boat J100 YoungBlood won class at Chester Race Week and had lowest points with no drop in all fleets. He also won Charlottetown Race Week.

Larry’s sailing journey began in the mid 70’s.

His great friend Sandy MacMillan remembers the first time he met Larry. It was just after the 1976 Montreal Olympics and we were selling our soling. I got a call from a guy named Larry in Riverport who was interested in purchasing it. I’ll never forget Larry showing up in a black

Pontiac TransAm with a big gold firebird on the hood!. He liked fast cars so he wanted a fast soling."

"From the first time I went sailing with Larry I knew he had the eye and feel for sail shape, the wind and everything that makes a boat go fast".

Sailing offshore ocean races in Florida's SORC and locally at BORC Larry was a major asset to any program. As the saying goes he could hand, reef and steer plus navigate.

After some time in the Soling Larry moved onto Etchells sailing. He and his team were very successful in that highly competitive class against the big names in the sport.

Larry sailed with John Risley on a series of John's raceboats named NUMBERS in the IMS class at Key West Raec Week and Cowes Week This program garnered more success at the top level in the 1990's.

From there it was into the J29 class. In every boat he sailed Larry found success.

After a break from the sport for many years Larry was convinced by his friend Terry McKenna to try sailing once again. Modifications were made to his J100 so that he could sail with his sons and wife Janet following a diagnosis with MS.

Today Larry continues to win and what makes it most special is his crew is made up of his family and Creaser clan relatives and friends.

What is most impressive about Larry" says Sandy MacMillan, "is that not only does he have a great eye and feel for the boat but he shares his knowledge with so many others. He can sense the motion and balance on the boat when sailing and is able to analyze and then share that with others. He is always so positive which is a testament to his spirit and he is such a great ambassador for the sport"

14 – President's Award – Dean Baldwin, Northern Yacht Club

The final award of the evening is the President's award which is our version of the Lifetime Achievement award and has been awarded since 2015 to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the sport of sailing over so many years.

And this year the award is going to a member of the Northern Yacht Club, Dean Baldwin.

Dean was a member of Dartmouth Yacht Club before moving to North Sydney and has held a number of leadership positions in the sport including a term on the Sail Nova Scotia Board of Directors.

Dean is a lifelong sailor and had a very accomplished career in the Canadian Navy and is currently an instructor at the Canadian Coast Guard College.

Dean was very involved in the Race The Cape Regattas a few years ago and was Venue Leader for the Northern Yacht Club stop.

Dean sails on his boat Morgan D and works with his crew so they become better sailors.

“It was 2013 when I first stepped on Dean’s boat and while I had some sailing experience I still had lots to learn.” Says Kimberly Barrett-White. “Since I have been sailing with Dean I have learned a lot and now can do almost any job on the boat and in all weather conditions. Dean has improved my confidence and ability.”

John Anderson Commodore of the NYC says “Dean has contributed greatly to the success of Northern Yacht Club. He has run splicing and rigging courses for our members along with organizing so many events and providing valuable weather and tide advice.”

“If you talk to any sailor or boater at Northern Yacht Club you will hear stories of how Dean helped them in some way. It is stories like these that help us see the kind of member that Dean is and the impact he has had on so many.” says Sandra MacLeod-Powell.

Kimberley Barrett-Wright submitted an 11 page document supporting Dean for this President’s award. All of the testimonials talk about his support of new sailors, support of female sailing, and his lifelong dedication to making the sport a better experience for all that take part.

--END--