USSCA North Americans Recap and more!

United States Sunfish Class Association

March 23, 2021
On March 10, 2021, Panam Sports has confirmed that Panam Sailing’s proposal to replace our 1-person Dinghy (Open) event, historically held in Sunfish, with 2 events noted below has been approved:

- 1-person Regional Dinghy – Men to be sailed in the Sunfish
- 1-person Regional Dinghy – Women to be sailed in the Sunfish

The 2023 Pan Am Games are set to take place between October 22 to November 5 in Chile’s capital and largest city. Look for details to come about how to qualify for these games.
2021 Sunfish Race Week:  
83 sailors, 44 races, 8 days, 3 championships  
by Emily Wagner and Vicki Palmer

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Hosting is a big job, and doubly so in these times. Three cheers for Regatta Chair & Florida Region Rep Lynne Randall, who saved Midwinters from the vagaries of pandemic restrictions and snatched it from the jaws of all those demons that can plague regatta planning - and they all wanted a bite!

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2021 International Masters Championship
International Masters opened the week with a full capacity roster. But the 15-25kt winds (moderating very little through the event) kept some ashore and sent back several others with broken spars, halyards and rudders. The signal boat even suffered a parted anchor line, remedied without delay by the fast-thinking RC. Eugene Schmitt of New Orleans, couldn’t be caught and easily won both first overall and Apprentice Master division (40-49). In the hotly contested race for the rest of the Top 5, Doug Kaukeinen of Rochester, was second overall and first in Masters division (50-59). Mike Ingham of Rochester/Sarasota, scored third overall and second in Masters. Finishing fourth overall was ISCA President Rich Chapman of Lake Bluff YC, who placed third in the Masters division. The fifth place overall finisher was Dan Norton of Devil's Lake, MI, a trophy winner who sails at a high level of consistency in all Sunfish events. Top Female Sailor Gail Murphy-Heausler of Tampa took sixth overall and first in Grand Masters (60-69). Gail is also a 5-time Women’s North Americans champion.
2021 Sunfish Team Race

Team Racing is back with 3-on-3 matchups! Teams sailed 10 races apiece in two round-robins. Enthusiastic reviews from competitors on course (“This is SO MUCH FUN!” and “I can’t wait to do this again!”) seem certain to carry the event forward in the future. Of course Joe and Conner Blouin and Gail Murphy-Heausler will want to do it again - they won 9 of 10 and they’ll need to defend their win against the revenge of the “Filipino Sandwich” as the 2nd place combo of Lee Montes, Eugene Schmitt, and Caroline Young who won 8 of 10 and will surely be on the hunt to take the title. Brush up on your team racing and plan to join the fray next time!

2021 U.S. National Sunfish Championship

The US National Championship, another sell-out, featured competitors from as far as Guatemala. The light air racing required a very different set of sailing skills – and a lot of patience. When the wind is inconsistent, the results can be also, but Jose Hernandez of Guatemala made all the right decisions to take 1st place overall with an impressively consistent 2-1-8 scoreline. Jose’s bullet in the second race was especially notable - he finished 12 minutes ahead of the next boat! second overall was young
finished 13 minutes ahead of the next boat! Second overall was young newcomer **Ricky Welch** of Bay Waveland, MS, only 6 points behind. **Eugene Schmitt** won the final race to secure third overall, putting him on the podium in 3 out of 3 events. **Conner Blouin** of Mount Pleasant, SC, finished fourth overall with a bullet in the first race. Defending National Champion **Amanda Callahan** of Portsmouth, RI, was Top Female Sailor and took fifth overall. Other award winners included: Top Youth – **James Edwards** of Bay Waveland, MS and Top Master – **Rich Chapman**. **Lynne Randall** was recognized with a special award for her execution of a top notch event and her contribution to the class and local fleets. Thanks are also due to the PRO and RC who also had to deal with wildly differing wind conditions. Safety boats worked overtime during International Masters. And with conditions for Nationals threatening to skunk the entire event, RC was able to pull a few races out of the hat!

Thus begins a full year of fun and competition in the Best Boat Forever and we are all ready for it!

** Pack it Up & Be Ready to Sail **

The 2021 Sunfish North American Championship is less than 3 months away!

**Where?** Lake Norman Yacht Club – Mooresville, NC USA

**When?** June 9-13, 2021

In one of the most beautiful spots anywhere, Lake Norman is the largest man-made lake in North Carolina with 520 miles of shore line located about 20 miles north of Charlotte, NC. For typical weather conditions in June we could see temperatures in the mid-90’s making water activities the place to be.
In addition to some great sailing expected for this year’s North Americans, the Lake Norman area offers something for everyone: waterfront restaurants, shopping, galleries, hiking, biking and camping. There are also great camping areas on the Club grounds, a 34-acre property. LNYC is a member-run Club that has hosted many Regional and National Championships for several classes of boats.

The Notice of Race is posted and online registration can be done [HERE](https://sunfish.wildapricot.org/admin/emails/wizard/) where you’ll find this event in the Regatta Schedule.

This is an adventure no one in your family will want to miss – a great vacation for all!

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**The Father of Many “Sailing Sons”**

Meet **Guillermo “Willo” Cappelleti**, International Sunfish Class Association (ISCA) Vice President, Club de Regatas Lima

*Photo: Willow left in blazer*
(Editor’s Note: Coach, mentor, Sunfish advocate, Sunfish devotee and a highly valued member of the ISCA Board of Directors whose influence and advice has been invaluable. “The Father of Many Sailing Sons” was Willo’s own way to express the role he has played in Peru’s sailing community. We’ve come to rely on his advice and knowledge. His enthusiasm and love for the Sunfish Class has benefited us in so many ways. Meet Willo … )

Q. When did you get interested in sailing? Do you have any family members who are also involved in sailing?
A. When I was 9 years old, my father was a Sunfish sailor (there was no Optimist at that time in Peru, so the Sunfish was the smallest sailboat to start sailing), and he introduced my older cousins, then me and my youngest brother into sailing. Then my son got interested and he started with the Optimist and then the Sunfish.

I was involved in sailing Sunfish, Laser, Windmill, Lightning, J/24 and big boats during my 46 years sailing.

Q. Is there someone who helped you become a better sailor?
A. For sure, my father, cousin and all the older sailors taught me a lot, when I started sailing. Then I started to compete in international events and that gave me another push and helped me more learning about it.

Q. Someone you have helped become a better sailor?
A. In my club we started to promote the Sunfish sailing among the young Opti sailors, and started to prove that Sunfish was a good competitive option for them. Everytime we went to the worlds, we would travel with young sailors and took care of them during the trip, and trying to make them get involved in the class. I have a lot of “sailing sons.”
Willo with his son Stefano.

Q. Did you have a sailing program or sailing club that helped get you more involved with sailing? Youth sailing, for example? Regularly scheduled sailing events at a local Club?
A. I am a member of the Club de Regattas Lima, where I was first coordinator of the Sunfish Class, and then from 2002 until 2012, I was part of the boards of directors of the club in charge of the sailing activities (Nautical director). At that time we started to promote youth sailing and move our training program and competition to Paracas.

We have a sailing calendar that race the whole year around, with 8 to 10 mayor events for the annual ranking. I am also part of the Peruvian Sunfish Association Board, involved in the last 25 years.

Q. What was it about the Sunfish that held your interest in sailing?
A. The Sunfish sailors are like a family, everybody will help you when you need it.
The boat is a simple and economic, and that makes it more interesting to compete at a high level.

Q. Where do you sail most often? Where have you traveled to sail?
A. In Peru, we usually sail in Lima (Chorrillos, Callao, Ancón) and Ica (Paracas), those are the places where the clubs have their sites and the events take place in those 4 sites.

My sailing took me to different places around the world; USA (San Francisco/CA, Orlando/FL, Sarasota/FL, Galveston/TX, Hyannis/MA, Charleston/SC, St. Petersburg/FL, Lewes/DE, Brant Beach/NJ, Arapahoe/NC, Willmington/NC, Pensacola/FL, Panam City/FL, Miami/FL,), Canada (Lake Erie, Toronto, Winnipeg), Mexico (Puerto Vallarta), Puerto Rico, Bahamas, Dominican Replublic (Bayahibe, Boca Chica), Antigua, Saint Marteen, St. Barths, Anguilla, BVI, USVI, Martinique, Curazao, Venezuela (Maracaibo), Colombia (San Andrés, Tominé/Bogota, Cartagena, Guatapé/Medellín), Ecuador (Salinas, Manta), Chile (Quintero/Valparaiso), Brasil (Rio de Janeiro), Italy (Capri, Punta Ala), Spain (Barcelona).

Q. What are two of your most memorable sailing experiences?
A. The one I remember most is the first time I went to a World Championship with my son, Stefano, who was 13 years old (he came back with the youngest sailor award). It was St. Marteen in 2003. We went together to the 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2008 worlds.

The experience sailing with my son, were the ones that I remember most.

Another memorable experience happened in February 2004 when we were invited to the “Martinique Sailing Week” (2 Sunfish sailors and 2 Opti sailors), so we were traveling to Martinique from Lima via Miami.

The 2 Opti sailors were Nathalie and Alexander Zimmermann who were minors traveling under my supervision. In Miami’s Emigration, I got pointed as a child trafficker, and got send to the emigration room for verification with the 2 minors. After more than 2 hours, they decide to let us go, but we missed the connection to Martinique, and the next connection was in 2 days (which we will miss the first regattas). After a while dealing with the airline, they accepted to change the flight to another airline, via Port Prince/Haiti. Finally the next day we flew to Haiti to make the connecting flight to Martinique, and when we got there, Haiti was in the middle of a political
crisis, people in the streets protesting. We needed to change terminal (so we had to walk in the street for some meters with all the people outside) and finally entered to the other terminal. Our flight out of Haiti was the last flight out before they closed the airport because of the riots.

At last we got to Martinique and won the Opti and Sunfish championships that week. That was a happy ending to a disastrous start, which I can recall with a smile and laughter, but let me tell you it wasn’t funny at the moment it happened.

**Q. It seems that many of the South American countries travel with a sailing coach. What benefits do you see from someone having a sailing coach?**

**A.** It comes from the Opti Class, young sailors are used to travel and have support of the coach in the water, and it is important for them to have that support and feel comfortable.

When you are young, is important to have a coach that can tell you what you did wrong and what you didn’t see when racing. It is a good experience for sailors to improve their sailing.

**Q. How did you get involved with the International Sunfish Class Association (ISCA) and have now served as its Vice President for many years?**

**A.** I have sailed in 20 World Championships (1982, 1983, 1989, 2000-2010, 2012-2016 and 2018), were I meet a lot of good friends.

First I was in the Advisory Council since 2007 (I am not sure the exact year), and in 2016, Larry Mass ask me if I wanted to go as Vice President with him, which I accepted, and then Rich Chapman ask me to continue. I am very thankful with them to consider me in the position, and having someone from South America in the board.

**Q. What can ISCA do to help keep Sunfish sailing thriving in Peru and other South American countries?**

**A.** The first thing is to confirm important events in other sites outside USA. As more important events we have in the region (Central, South America and the Caribbean), more development we will drive to the Sunfish Class. This also works for European countries for having more Sunfish sailors in Europe.

**Q. What have been the most important sailing or rigging tips that have helped both you and any of those you have helped?**
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A. Sailing is having fun. Going into nature and dominate it is the most wonderful feeling you will ever get. If you don’t have that feeling you might change sport.

Competing in sailing is about hours in the water, more hours sailing, more confident you will feel with the boat and with yourself. Tips will come from experience, and you can get them from anyone, but experience is something nobody can teach you.

Q. What is your involvement with the Sailing Federation in Peru? Is there anything you have proposed that has made a positive impact on how the Sailing Federation is run?

A. I was involved with the Peruvian Sailing Federation from 2009 until 2016, first as Vice President (2009-2012) and then as President (2013-2016), helped by a group of people who support the development of sailing in Peru.

We started pushing the Sunfish Class in the regional games (Bolivarian Games, South American Games and Panamerican Games), with great success, especially in keeping the Sunfish Class in the Panam Games continuously since Winnipeg 1999 to Santiago 2023.

We also gave youth sailing a big impulse by helping the classes to develop clinics with local and international world class coaches.

Q. Some of our most talented and competitive Sunfish sailors are from Peru and other South American countries. What about sailing in your part of the world produces such great champions?

A. I think is the idea that not all good sailors can sail a Laser or an Olympic boat in an international level (biotype/budget), so we started to select those competitive sailors and gave them the opportunity to be competitive in the Sunfish Class, which had a big impact in the sailors who now have more options to go internationally and bring back results and championships, and get some help from the Government to keep sailing competitively.
The Capsize Club
Sunfish Fleet 749, Tempe, AZ
by Bob Naylor, Fleet Captain

On Sunday, February 28, many Sunfish competitors in this Sunday Series race joined the Capsize Club. I don’t think the wind velocities ever
reached the forecasted 22+ knots (the Windfinder log for TTL yesterday shows gusts of about 17-knots...and that’s plenty, but I think many of the gusts at the lake were higher (the Windfinder reporting station is west of the lake). But, velocity aside, those gusts were wicked - swirling, intense, out of different directions - probably the worst I've ever seen in 2-years of TTL sailing. One small gust was reported to hit the water at about 45 mph.

As Jeff Bryant, USSCA’s Western Regional Rep, noted, our Fleet 749 Capsize Club expanded significantly during this Sunday series race to include Jeff who got hit with a jaw-dropping gust that many of us watched cross the lake. Jeff said it lifted his boat up out of the water when it hit! Rick Keffer, new Sunfish Class member from Las Cruces, NM who is an excellent Sunfish sailor, got hit by two gusts from different directions. Another new Fleet 749 member saw his halyard cap on top of the mast being pulled off and the pin that holds it in place was bent 90-degrees - now that’s some wind!

An experienced sailor over 70-years old, but who had never sailed a Sunfish before, was doing great, hiking out holding on to his wooden tiller extension, which suddenly broke, sending him into the lake. At the end of the day, he decided he was too old for Sunfish sailing. We hope to get him back on a Sunfish when there’s not so much wind.

So, it was a really wet day. Not the typical 2-4 mph winds we typically see every Sunday on Tempe Town Lake. Although it looked like some great sailing - at times - I’m not feeling too bad about not getting launched.