

Windmill Class Association Annual Meeting August 11, 2017

The WCA Annual Meeting was held Friday evening August 11th at Colony Banquet and Catering in conjunction with our annual dinner and lottery.

President Ralph Sponar called the meeting to order; 30 active members of the class were in attendance including all 27 skippers racing in the National Championship. Presentations were made by all National Class Officers other than First VP Roy Sherman whose messages were passed on by the others.

Ralph Sponar noted the steady growth in support and racing activity. He reviewed the proposals (which are intended for a vote at the 2018 Annual meeting or at an earlier date by email) that had been discussed at the Governing Board meeting the prior evening.

- A) Modification of the bylaws to permit the tiller to be constructed of any material. Present tillers are either wooden or aluminum and carbon fiber is prohibited. Satisfactory aluminum is becoming harder to locate and the price of carbon fiber has come down. The Governing Board felt that no competitive advantage could be obtained from the nature of the tiller material. Rather than “allow” carbon fiber, the idea is to allow ANY material to be used, eliminating the need to “revisit” this issue in the future.

- B) Modification of the upper mainsail batten to allow a full-length batten. It was noted by Ethan Bixby that this would not provide for a faster mainsail but (to prevent just that) as long as some girth measurements (in addition to the existing mid-girth) were established for the mainsail, the size and performance would remain the same. No existing sail would therefore become outmoded. The two advantages are a more “modern look” and a cost savings related to longer lifespan of new mainsails. Current mains could be modified by sail makers if desired. The Governing Board felt that a one-year experimental period was appropriate, though all sails used in the 2018 Nationals (where an official vote could be taken) would have to adhere to the existing rules.

C) Use of a “gnav” instead of a vang (thanks to Ethan Bixby for the following): This device is located above the boom and is connected to the mast in a way that pushes the boom into the mast, thus creating a forward deflection of the mast at the gooseneck, much as done by the current vang. There is nothing in the present rules (bylaws, plans, etc) to prohibit such a device. Advantage would be in clearing the area under the boom for raising the board and crews changing sides when tacking while a small disadvantage might be a minor deflection of a small area of the mainsail. Again, it was suggested that this device could be installed now by those who wished to do so; it will likely be necessary for the rules committee/chief measurer to come up with some specifications regarding location of attachments on boom and mast. The gnav pushes down on the boom and actually tries to push the boom off the mast. It compresses and pushes forward on the mast where it attaches, i.e. further up the mast rather than at boom level. **CM Larry Christian** specifically pointed out that the “gnav” may only be used in compression and not as a topping lift which is forbidden by class rules.

One measure of increased class activity is that the Nationals represented the 5th event of 2017 with an entry of 10 or more boats, the first time this has been true in many years. These 5 events all took place in different locations (FL, OH, MD, OH/PA border and PA).

The class is also vested in promotion of new glass boats (Johansen builders in FL) as well as the sale of quality and competitive used boats to new members who have joined the class and raced with us.

One continuing challenge is to have both a re-drawing of our existing plans as well as an updating of our construction booklets. Easy availability of rules and plans for construction of top-quality foils is close to completion as well.

FIRST VP Roy Sherman: Roy was unable to attend this year’s event but has worked closely with other officers in reviewing possible changes to class rules & bylaws.

SECOND VP Alan Taylor: Alan maintains the class website and spoke about needing maximum support (reports of events, announcements of events as soon as possible) in order to maximize the benefit to the class. Alan works with Allen Chauvenet in updating information (boats for sale and similar items). It should be noted that anyone can post photos (please with captions) or create a photo album for the class.

SECRETARY Allen Chauvenet: Allen reported that 2017 will likely see a slight drop in membership (still the second highest in many years) entirely due to loss of west coast members. Other areas have seen new members and new activity. Approximately 60 members have raced in one or more of the regattas listed on the class website. Our new fleet 83 in Erie is sponsoring the 2017 Nationals and with 27 boats sailing we have shown an increase over the prior two years. Fleet 82 at the Rock Hall YC drew 18 entries to the District III Championship which is an all time record for the Rock Hall YC Invitational regatta. Fleet 59 (Fishing Bay YC, Deltaville, VA) has had its charter renewed with 3 active members, two new Windmillers joining long-time Windmill sailor Miles Booth. Allen made his usual plea for people to pay dues without reminders (>20 already paid for 2018) and to answer his emails!

TREASURER Lance Williams: Lance reported on the financial status of the class (it is good) and handed out and reviewed Comparative Statements of Revenue and Expense for the years ending 12/31/15 and 12/31/16 and well as Comparative Balance Sheets as of December 2015 and 2016.

It is noted that through the hard work of Sandy Sponar (and others) we are able to put on a great and rewarding event at the Nationals while essentially breaking even on cost. The class retains ownership of Windmill 5704 so as to have a hull “ready to sell” and we have hopes of selling this soon (perhaps to be replaced by another hull?).

CHIEF MEASURER Larry Christian: Larry discussed issues relating to construction and measurement of boards and rudders and also reviewed the three possible rules changes mentioned above. Larry finds that rudders are measuring in and

board are consistently having the slight modifications necessary to fit in the official measuring jig; his comments about the “gnav” are noted above.

Ralph Sponar then reviewed the Nominating Committee which will now consist of **Chris Demler** (OH), **Lisa Fath** (FL) and **John Deimal** (PA).

It was also noted that the 2018 Nationals are planned for the 3rd weekend in July at the Rock Hall YC and that we expect the enthusiasm generated this year to carry over and bring us >30 boats to that event!

All existing officers had indicating a willingness to serve for another year and were re-elected by acclamation. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned for the drawing and awarding of “prizes” which had been donated by a wide variety of manufacturers and included a Selden boom as well as numerous top quality life jackets, foul weather gear, sailing gloves. All contestants received at least one great gift and everyone appreciated the 3rd annual Kristen Sponar artwork that went to every sailor.
