

Who's Who

Hi All!

The August Edition features our very own LMSA vice Commodore Rich Gailey! Rich has become an integral part of the LMSA organization, leading the way for the future of the Club. The interview is a bit longer than the norm, Rich likes to talk, so I just sat back and listened. (Made my job easy☺). And I learned a few things about Rich along the way!

LMSA: Hi Rich Gailey could you tell us a little about how you got into sailing?

When I was growing up on the West Coast of Florida I would sail on Sunfish and Hobie's and then my parents bought a 22 foot Macgregor Venture. Once the Macgregor turned into a barnacle barge they allowed me to bring it over to Longwood to scrape off the barnacles and sail on Lake Monroe.

LMSA: Where did you learn how to sail? I learned through trial and error sailing Hobie's off Madeira Beach,



Sunfish in Palma Sola Bay in Bradenton and the Macgregor around Anna Maria Island. I basically could get the boats out and back without too much damage to either me or the boats.

LMSA: Who are some of your mentors and how did you come to sail at LMSA?

In the mid 90's I was introduced to the club by members taking pity on me after watching me sail aimlessly around the Lake Monroe with loud luffing sails. I would venture into a club race from time to time without any knowledge of the race rules.

That's where Willie would graciously yell to me that He was going to split my boat in half if I did not get out of his way! Lol

That was when I decided that I needed to learn more about racing and that I had a slow boat. I crewed a few times for Al Pivonka on his San Juan 21. Then I sunk my "unsinkable" Macgregor in Lake Monroe while taking my nephew out for a sail. I did not check to see if he had the main halyard secure before shoving off and the main dropped in the middle of the lake on a windy day. I gave the helm to my nephew and told him to keep the boat pointed to the wind. He did not understand the importance of those instructions on a windy day and as soon as I

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hoisted the main the boat fell off just when a major wind gust filled both sails with my weight at the mast as we flipped over. That's when Sea Tow pulled the boat off the bottom of the lake snapping the mast since the forestay was not released before the tow. So I stored the boat in my backyard and focused on learning how to be a better father and businessman than I was a sailor. For some reason my wife was not keen on me taking her children out on the sailboat after that, so it sat.

As for mentors, there have been so many since I came back to the club a few years ago. Larry Harrington would be my first since he was willing to keep letting me crew on Wicklow Way for a year. Little did I know that he was setting me up to buy Wicklow Way so that he could get permission from Nancy to buy Crack'n. Irishmen are good salesmen once they get a few dark and stormies in you. The great thing about LMSA is that there are so many good sailors who are willing to give you advice on how to improve your sailing skills. Fisk Hayden, Steve Hayden, Andy Forrest, Scott Marriott have always been willing to give advice at the breezeway or out on the water before the start of a race. I've also learned from being able to sail with Larry, Allister James, Bill Holstein and Bob Fellingham on their boats to see how they sail. I've been fortunate to have Jerry Eller sail with me on Wicklow when I first bought the boat from Larry. I have also been really fortunate to have Catalina 22 National Champions like Randy Pawlowski, Doug Thome and Joe Waters sail with me and teach me how to tune the boat and sail faster.

LMSA: What's your most memorable race?

The 2020 Mid-Winter's and Florida State Championship for Catalina 22 is probably the most memorable race for



me. It was my first one-design and we took 2nd overall in both races with past national champions in the race. This is where I learned a lot as Joe Water's showed me how to sail the boat on the first day while he was at the helm and I was crewing alongside and under Jim Goempel (as I took a swim in the middle of one of the races). On the second day I became a tiller monkey and did what Doug was telling me to do and listening to Jim tell me what was happening with the wind. I did a great job of acting like I knew what was going on.

I also consider it a memorable race when I am close enough to see the stern of a boat with at least two Haydens on board.

LMSA: What are your future sailing goals?

I would like to sail with our LMSA guys in some off shore races around Florida. I just bought a C & C Mega 30 with a retractable keel to show some of these hoity toity clubs around the state what a bunch of trailer sailors can do. I envision guys in blue blazers handing us trophies at their regattas.

LMSA: Where do you see yourself sailing in the next 5 years?

I still see myself sailing in LMSA club races with the lovely and gracious Lisa since we live on the north shore of the lake. I think we would also like to cruise around the Bahama's and Caribbean at some time in the future.

LMSA: Your Boat Name/alias is _____ how did you earn that name?

My boat alias is Soggy since I had the misfortune of falling off the boat during mid-winters while Jim Goempel was on the boat.



Rich and crew sailing his Catalina 22 Wicklow Way off into the sunset.

Comments from the Reporter:

Rich and his wife Lisa have become a very welcome and fun addition to Lake Monroe Sailing association over the past few years. Rich now serving as Vice Commodore and co-chair for the upcoming Sailfest Regatta in December is not only becoming a fast sailboat racer, he is a key figure in the day to day operations of the Club. His Catalina 22 is the displacement boat to beat at the Wednesday night Rum Races. Thanks for the interview Rich and your efforts at the Club, see you on the start line!

2020 LMSA Reporter

Jim Goempel

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