



Youth Sailing Programs

The Yacht Club Prepares Tomorrow's Sailors Today

Chapter Ten



IF YACHTING IS DEFINED AS RECREATIONAL BOATING AND RACING FOR PLEASURE, then Santa Barbara's young people have been yachting for some time. In the era before even the breakwater was built (around 1915 – 1925), the young teens in Santa Barbara would fashion their own unique watercraft — canoes made from bike tire rims and painted canvas! It was said that boys around the age of fourteen had been inspired by the free-spirited sloops out in the channel, and began building their own fleet of 8-foot long canoes. Their favorite early water sport was to surf into the seawall on West Beach, touch the wall and paddle back out to return again.

In the 1920s, with the arrival of the Sea Mews, the kids' first sailing experience was in these local cat-rigged boats, and more than a few Yacht Club members learned to sail in a Sea Mew. (Like cat-boats, they were *gaff-rigged* – the upper edge of the mainsail was supported by a gaff or spar.) Sea Mews were followed by Moon boats, which were small sailing dinghies made by Charles Lindwall and popular in the 1930s.

Through the years, the youth have been attracted to and competed in numerous classes of boats: Flatties (Geary 18), Mercurys, Sea Shells, Kites, Snipes, Windward Sabots, Naples Sabots, Sandbars (built by Harry Davis), and Lasers. Through the years, local crews and skippers have found energetic young people eager for ocean racing and cruising.

Sea Scouts 1920s-1940s

Royal Navy Admiral Warrington Baden-Powell, (brother of Boy Scouts founder, Thomas Baden-Powell) started the Sea Scouts in 1912. Whereas the Boy Scouts used camping

as the foundation of its programs, Sea Scouting used boating and nautical skills to foster confidence, teach management, develop leadership and instill character. Warrington believed that small boats and the water were a natural attraction for teen-aged boys to learn about responsibility and teamwork as well as mastering the maritime arts, all the while building their confidence.

In Santa Barbara, the Sea Scouts were known to have been active from the mid-1920s to 1940. W.B. Salisbury, a Navy recruiter, headed the scouts during some of the early years, working with Walter Collinge (son of Yacht Club's famous photographer/member J. W. Collinge), Stephen Harberts, Joe Regner, John Mendenhall, Chester Tubbs, Warren Whitford, Evans James, Stanley Tingstrom, and Lawrence Church.

The man whose name was most synonymous with the Sea Scouts was Tom Crawford, an active Yacht Club member and later commodore. One of the best-known sailors in the state, Tom came to Santa Barbara after serving in WWI. (Scottish-born Crawford was a Lieutenant Commander in the Royal Navy).

LEFT: Santa Barbara Channel, circa 1950. Bob Kieding (later owner of The Chandlery) embodies the young sailor enjoying his craft, racing Flatties. Courtesy: Kieding family



Opening Day, SBYC skipper Tom Crawford inspects the Sea Scouts as they line up for duties at the Santa Barbara Yacht Club clubhouse on the wharf.

Tom exemplified the subtle ways but significant impacts Yacht Club members have had in their Santa Barbara community through sailing.

As head of the local Sea Scouts, Tom taught and tested his teens on knot tying, boat handling, rowing, and boxing the compass. They learned what to look for in the weather or the ocean and how to take care of their boats. When a boy joined up, he was told he would have a month to prove himself with the group; after that he would be voted in or hazed out by being thrown overboard or made to climb the mast. This way, a boy knew right from the start that he was to take his job seriously (and there were no known rejects!).

Tom involved the teens in many of the activities at the harbor and with the Yacht Club (i.e., Tom's Sea Scouts performed the flag-raising ceremony at the opening of the regattas in 1931).

The Sea Scouts utilized two boats. One was the 40-foot yawl *Alert* (after a dismasting, the Sea Scouts rigged it as a sloop). Under Tom's firm but popular leadership, the Sea Scouts membership grew. To accommodate the larger group, Tom got hold of a 30-foot Navy surplus lifeboat and rigged it as a sloop. Sea Scouts Bert Remmer and Morris Cook called the motor-sailer

the *Muskateer*, and the gang of boys who worked on it were the Muskateers.

Several times a year the Sea Scouts went on trips to the Channel Islands. They had to raise \$5 for their excursion – a considerable sum during the Depression years, when the 10¢ dues were even difficult to pay. Aboard the *Alert*, Tom would escort the scouts on their *Muskateer* and then leave the Sea Scouts for two weeks on the islands in the able hands of the more accomplished boys, like First Mate Clark Smith. It cost \$1 a day to go camping on the island. Five to eight boys would go at a time to Santa Cruz Island, staying at Fry's Harbor. They learned to cook, eat and sleep on their boat. To help them pay for the trips, Tom Crawford had his Sea Scouts earn money by parking cars for the baseball games at Pershing Park. (There was only one field then, and the boys had to park the cars in the dirty horse arena.) In 1935, the open 30-foot *Muskateer* sailed to Catalina and back.

In 1934, the *Los Angeles Times* twice reported that the Santa Barbara Sea Scouts entered their little yawl *Alert* in the Trans-Pac (the yacht race across the Pacific to Hawaii) – against a number of large Southern California yachts, including C.F. Hoffman's 85-foot schooner *Fandango!* Since there is no record that they actually participated once the race got underway,



Santa Barbara boys got their first taste of sailing – and the discipline, craft, and camaraderie that went with it — through the Sea Scouts program, which was led by the Yacht Club's Tom Crawford. Photo courtesy: Santa Barbara Historical Museum.



Young Alex Funke learns the ropes in the 1930s. The experience stirred his enthusiasm and launched his sailing career: he became commodore of the Santa Barbara Yacht Club in 1951.

perhaps Crawford just started out on the open sea for a few miles with the lads before returning home. Nonetheless, in spring of 1936, the Sea Scouts did enter the Anacapa Island race with the *Muskateer* and won the Spaulding Trophy. (This cup was previously won by sailors of stature Charles Wiman and J.J. Mitchell on the *Patolita*!)

During the annual Sea Scout jamborees held in Newport Beach, Tom's scouts would pretty much sweep all the prizes - whether in the competition for

swimming, water safety, life saving or racing sailboats.

The most difficult competition was the "breeches buoy." This contest highlighted the simple rope-based rescue device used to make single person evacuations from wrecked vessels, along a line from ship to shore, similar to a zip line. The breeches buoy competition used a bucket of water to test the scout's ability to keep their transport secure and steady. While other teams struggled to keep the bucket from sloshing or

tipping over, "T. C.'s boys" never failed to deliver a full bucket of water safely to shore. Hearing that "T. C.'s boys were coming" to a jamboree always struck a note of competitive terror in the other teen sailors.

Tom taught many local boys not only sailing, but also seamanship - including discipline and pride in their appearance. They wore black shoes, tropical white uniforms, and smart white sailor hats with the Sea Scout logo. Their discipline, skill and knowledge were well known throughout the state. In fact, the boys were so well trained that visiting yachtsmen would call on Tom for a Sea Scout to help them when sailing up and down the coast. Yacht Club member Major Max Fleishmann regularly used the Sea Scouts as side boys for his *Haida*.

A number of the Sea Scouts went on to the California Maritime Academy in Vallejo. To help pay the entrance fees to the Maritime Academy for the ambitious young sailors, Tom personally arranged for their financing. Although he was a man of modest means, Tom worked in real estate and knew the angles to cultivate with his wealthy associates to assist the boys financially. Because of Tom's pull, his teen scouts nicknamed him "John D." (as in Rockefeller).

So many of Tom's Santa Barbara scouts went to the academy and were so accomplished that they were given the unofficial designation "TCN" by the Academy: "Tom Crawford's Navy."

Tom's Sea Scouts were a credit to their mentor, and in turn, many of them credited him with the training that led or helped them in their careers, including:

Howard Mollenkopf – California Maritime School; Port Captain for Orient Lines

Clark Smith – Merchant Marines in WWII; built Liberty Ships in San Francisco

Dick Ludwig – Captain for TWA

Tom Kelly – Master Mariner; Captain of Pac Towboat and Salvage

Harlan DePue – California Maritime Academy; during WWII he served in the Navy in Saipan and Japan, and was beach master on Okinawa

Dr. Charles Franklin – noted physician and graduate of the Maritime Academy

Jim Common – World War II tugboat captain in Europe; later L.A. harbor

Bill Irvine – Boat Pilot

Lt. Josh Harp – Santa Barbara Police Department

Bert Remmers – went into maritime retail, specializing in canvas sails

Morris Cook – served in the Navy; later was a sail maker

Bill Warnercross – attended California State Nautical School

Bob Kallman – U.S. Navy Captain WWII; Santa Barbara County Supervisor

John Merritt – U.S. Navy Surgeon; Santa Barbara orthopedic surgeon

Norm Hazard – crewed for *Soliloquy* (Arthur Stewart); Navy WWII; Santa Barbara mailman

George Guntermann – went into scouting professionally

Brothers Reggie, Jim, and Earl Glahn (Earl was principal of Santa Barbara Junior High)

Tom Crawford, Jr. – Professional skipper



Tom Crawford (Commodore 1952) and John Edwards (Commodore 1911) ready ten Sea Scouts as "side boys" to be of service to a local yachtsman, early 1930s. Some boys identified: on left Daryl Poreman, Tad Howard, and on right Alex Witmer, (unidentified), and David Theles. Photo courtesy Santa Barbara Historical Museum.

THE SIDE BOY

Side boys stem from an 18th century British tradition in which crewmembers are assigned to render honor to dignitaries visiting a ship. Side boys must have an impeccable appearance – well-groomed with polished shoes and an immaculate uniform.

They are stationed on either side of the route across the quarterdeck taken by arriving and departing dignitaries (civilian or military) making official calls to the ship.

The number of side boys is determined by the relative rank of the officer or dignitary (i.e. - ambassadors rate eight side boys!)

Side boys salute on the first note of the pipe and drop the salute together on the last note.

Girl Mariners shown in uniforms: Barbara Demaree, Barbara Butler, Margaret Rodriguez, and Ellen Hogle put together the Girl Mariners manual. This national program started in Carpinteria in 1931; Yacht Club members assisted with the program and equipment. Courtesy of Santa Barbara Historical Museum.

Carpinteria Girl Mariners – 1930s

At this time, only boys were allowed in the Sea Scouts. However, an interesting side story can be told about a parallel group, comprised of about 50 young ladies from Carpinteria – the Girl Mariners.

It was not too surprising that the Girl Mariners would have started in the area. The tremendous focus the Yacht Club had brought to the waterfront boating activities over the previous decade provided the environment for the community's interest in and support of an organization such as Girl Mariners.

The group was founded in Carpinteria in 1931 by Mrs. Frank C. Wymond and Miss Jean McKenzie. Jean was a National Girl Scout worker who was inspired by the Canadian Sea Guides and American Sea Scouts.

The Carpinteria Girl Mariners was comprised of young women aged 15 to 19 who were members of the Girl Scouts but earned their badges from watercraft expertise. The girls needed to be strong swimmers before they could join, and they had uniforms – the sailing uniform consisting of midy blouses with white trousers.



Their program was modeled after the Sea Scouts, and that meant both talking with the national director and tapping the local talents of Yacht Club Skipper Tom Crawford for guidance.

Within two years, Mrs. Wymond's Carpinteria organization became established nationally. In addition to the Pacific Coast (Carpinteria, Ventura and Pasadena), "National Girl Mariners" programs were begun on the Atlantic, (New Rochelle, New York), the southern rivers (Birmingham, Alabama), and the Great Lakes (a lakeside suburb in Chicago.)

Carpinteria was the flagship organization, which held title to "Ship #1." This boat was a trim little open-decked 24-foot whaleboat rigged as a schooner. It was donated by Lora Knight (Mrs. Wymond's sister), who had bought it from Yacht Club member Sam Dabney,

the 1933 commodore. (In a previous life the boat had reportedly served as a rumrunner!) The young women scraped, caulked and painted their boat a dark blue with light blue gunwale trimmings. They sewed the red canvas sails themselves as well as their own set of International Code signal flags, and named their craft the *Jolly Roger*.

They took two trips to Ladies' Harbor on Santa Cruz with Yacht Club member Tom Crawford serving as captain, along with First Mate Phyllis Carter and Skipper Mrs. Frank Wymond on Cleighton de Mott's *Navigator*.

In addition to being trained in all aspects of sailing, the girls spent hours on their own self-imposed community service projects. Additionally, the Carpinteria "sailorettes" wrote, edited and raised the money to publish their "Mariner Manual." They next started



Santa Cruz Island: Girl Mariners with the Yacht Club's Tom Crawford. Crawford was one the best known sailors in the state and he lent a hand to develop the Girl Mariners program. Photo courtesy: Carpinteria Historical Museum

a “Mariner’s Nature Manual,” with chapters on sea life: sea-weeds, sea birds, coast flowers, freshwater fish, etc., which they wrote and illustrated.

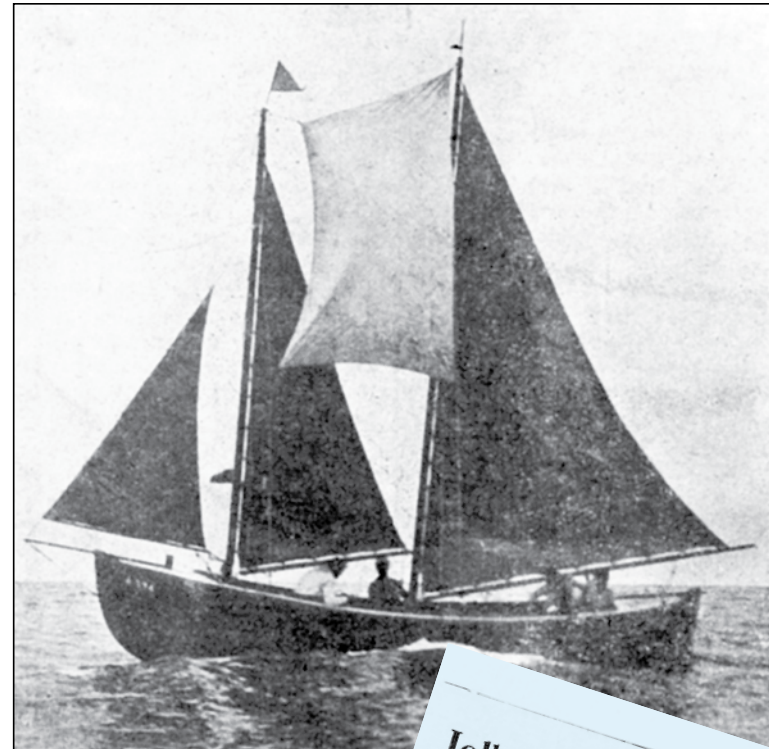
Their Honorary Commodore was Miss Joan Lowell, author of “The Cradle and the Deep,” one of the most wildly popular books of 1929, which chronicled her young life adventures traveling with her sea captain father. Lowell flew the “sailor-ettes” flag on her own *Black Hawk*.

The Girl Mariners even attracted the attention of a Hollywood studio, and in 1932 a motion picture feature short was made about the Carpinteria Girl Mariners! The Santa Barbara Yacht Club set up the Girl Mariners at their site on the wharf for the filming, and lent a hand behind the scenes. Warner Brothers filmed the Girl Mariners in uniform going through their drills and first aid demonstrations at the Yacht Club clubhouse.

After two years, the Carpinteria crew then decided to rename their boat the *Ayacucho*, after an old clipper ship that sailed into the Santa Barbara Channel a century earlier. (The original *Ayacucho* was engaged in the hides and tallow trade and was mentioned by Richard Henry Dana in his *Two Years Before the Mast* as “the best sailer in the Pacific”!)

By 1938, the group had become an official division of the Girls Scouts known as the Mariners, and subsequently were called the Girl Scout Mariners.

Yacht Club official Tom Crawford helped the Girl Mariners develop their program, provided special trainings, and reportedly served as “ballast” when the girls sailed over to Pelican Bay – earning him the tribute of “Honorary Girl Mariner!”

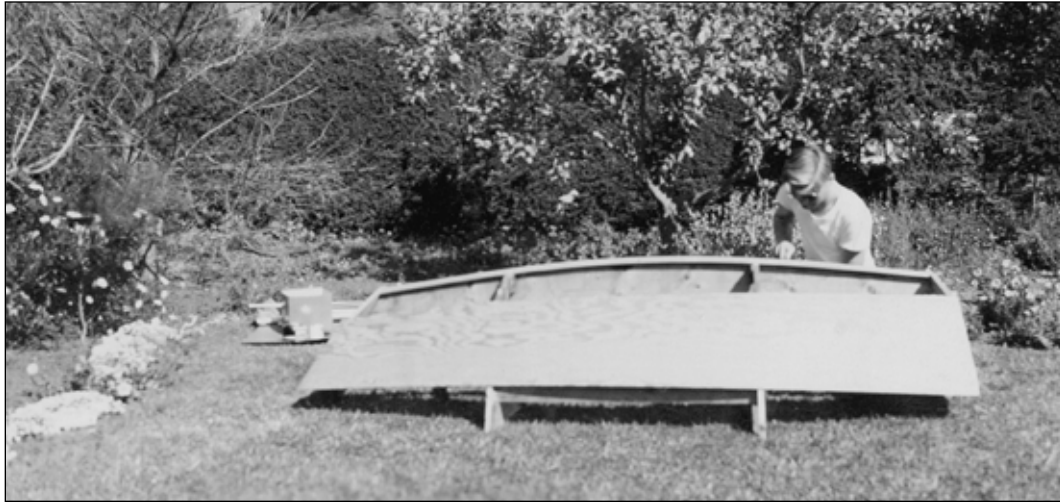


The Girl Mariners’ first boat was the *Jolly Roger* (originally owned by Yacht Club member Sam Dabney) and was rigged as a schooner. Photo courtesy: Carpinteria Historical Museum

Jolly Roger Becomes First Mariner Boat

The *Jolly Roger* a twenty four foot whale boat, has been given to the Carpinteria Mariners by Mrs. Lora J. Knight of Montecito. The boat was formerly owned by Sam Dabney.

The *Jolly Roger* is rigged as a schooner, and has red sails, Marconi main, and gaff fore. It is equipped with a Star motor, and has a combing built around the edge. It is painted dark blue with light blue gunn’l trimmings.



Dick Kieding assembling his new Sea Shell in 1952 from a kit his father ordered. Photo Bob Kieding

Sea Shells – 1948

During the 1940s, the Sea Scouts program waned across the country as adult leadership was diverted to war efforts. (Even 50-year-old reservist Tom Crawford returned to active duty on a tanker in South America!) So, other programs or activities emerged which met the changing needs and interests of young sailors.

In 1948, Yacht Club member Ray Kieding was looking for sailing opportunities for his two sons. Ray had been a Great Lakes sailor, and his first boat was a Flattie, but he was looking for something different for his boys Dick (14) and Bob (11).

Ray did some research and focused on the Sabot class of 8-foot pram sailboats. They were a bit expensive, so Ray located a plywood do-it-yourself 8-foot pram kit. It was produced by the Haggerty Company and Ray could order it through Bill Smart's Chandlery – a one-room marine center at the harbor.

The Kieding boys put the Sea Shell together, and had a grand time sailing it around the harbor. Soon other fathers and sons were interested in getting Sea Shells. Ray Kieding was successful in attracting others and soon there was a little fleet of six Sea Shells. In 1948, the Sea Shells became an official racing fleet, competing in the Santa Barbara West Beach harbor where Marinas 2 and 3 are currently. (At that time there were only 200 moorings and no slips).

Initially there was only one class, even though many of the Sea Shell owners were adults. The A, B, and C classes were organized later. As the fleet grew, it gravitated to being a youth sailing program. However, the tradition arose that the last race of the day would be sailed by parents. The outcome was that the parents were always motivated to be with their kids in the harbor.

After several years, the local sailors decided they could save more money by using local lumber. Northrop Ellis did

the technical work, making templates of the parts, and soon Sea Shells were being tooled and constructed entirely locally. It was a great program of kids working under the direction of their fathers and other sailors, feeling the pride of accomplishment of the finished craft and then experiencing the thrill of the sail.

The popularity of the Sea Shell Club soon grew into an active and independent fleet of some forty boats – the largest and most successful sailing fleet in Santa Barbara maritime history. It had the support of many Yacht Club members who participated both as youngsters and later as parents. Among the trophies for the Sea Shell races were the Grim Trophy (donated by John Grim, Commodore 1939 -1940), the News-Press Seamanship Award, the Curletti Trophy, and the Forbes Trophy.

The Sea Shell fleet had both boys and girls involved as skippers, and included future commodore Les Baldwin and future rock star David Crosby!

Toward the close of the twentieth century, wood construction was becoming outmoded both in terms of economics and efficiency. Fiberglass Sabots could be made less expensively and performed better. Nonetheless, the fleet continued to be called the Sea Shells, regardless of the boat sailed.

Interestingly, Bill Smart's Chandlery – the little shop where the Sabot kit was first purchased – stayed a harbor tradition for more than half a century. Ray Kieding's young son, Bob, later worked there as a teen on his summer vacations, and eventually became the owner of The Chandlery as it grew into the largest marine center on the central coast!

Junior Skippers 1930s+

Over the century, the “Junior Skippers” were essentially a classification of younger Yacht Club members who gathered together in pursuit of certain activities. Traditionally, Junior Skippers were children of members, although a few other interested community youngsters involved in sailing were also included (i.e. kids who crewed for members’ boats).

During the 1930s, the Junior Skippers were comprised of grammar school and high school boys involved in racing moon boats. (Two such young men were future commodores Stan Darrow, Sr. and Noel “Pinky” Cooke.) Their first “ocean race” was held in July 1935 and involved more than a dozen brilliantly hued sailing skiffs. The “Miramar Moon Race” started off at the Yacht Club, went down East Beach inside the kelp line (convoys by the judges’ boat and the *Miramar*). After passing David Gray’s Pavilion (today’s Cabrillo Arts Pavilion), Booth’s Point (near the Bird Refuge) and the Biltmore beach, the young racers turned at the old Edgecliff Club (at Montecito Creek) and finished at the Miramar Pier (with a barbecue hosted by Harry Doulton of the Miramar Hotel).

From the mid-50s to mid-60s, as the Yacht Club reorganized and stabilized after the war, the Junior Skippers group was reconstituted, this time with more of an emphasis on social activities.

The Junior Skippers were open both to boys and girls, ages 12 -18, and they had an identical structure to the Yacht Club. They elected flag officers from their membership and organized social



activities and work projects. Dances and meetings with nautical guest speakers were regularly held, as well as periodic movies and nautical talks. Junior members and friends regularly gathered after Sunday sailing. They met in a corner of the old clubhouse just inside the entrance to partake of snacks and conversation, as did their elder counterparts elsewhere in the Yacht Club. When the new clubhouse was built in 1967, the Fleet Room on the first floor was designated as the gathering location for junior members.

The Junior Skippers had a small but dedicated cadre of adult sponsors, in particular Mrs. Ned S. (Beth) Porter and Robert Battles. Commodore Wilmot “Pops” Hughes (1956) was fondly remembered for helping to foster the camaraderie of the young people.

Another favorite was Eric Graham, a classic old sea salt from Sweden who regaled all the teens with his life stories about going to sea as a youngster

in the final days of the tall ships. (He had sailed around the Horn in a square-rigger.) He taught a lot of “marlin-spike” seamanship – highlighting the days of heavy maintenance when a young skipper would have to spend hours on the waterfront sanding, varnishing and brass polishing.

At one point, the Junior Skippers did special projects for the Yacht Club – principally by taking charge of the parking lot. Periodically they would clean it up and repaint the lines as an all-day activity.

Bill Wilson (Commodore 1965) had a particular enthusiasm for young sailors interested in racing. He loaned his *Rascal* to the Junior Skippers (under the direction of teenager Kevin Connelly) to race against the “seniors” with Bob Alexander at the helm of the *Akamai*. The Juniors at one point raised *Rascal*’s spinnaker upside down. When the mistake was caught and was being corrected, one Junior Skipper was heard saying,

“Well, gee... it sailed better with the wrong-way spinnaker.”
(Nonetheless the Junior Skippers won the race!)

Bill Wilson also generously gave his financial support to encourage many of their programs. In 1963, when the Junior Skippers held their Scholastic Regatta (an annual event held during Christmas vacation), it was Bill Wilson who stepped forward to fund magnificent trophies to inspire the Junior Skippers.

This older youth element in the Yacht Club started to fade in the early 1960s as these Junior Skippers and Sea Shell fleet members were now heading off to college.

A much younger crop of members’ children were seen skipping into the clubhouse as the littlest Baby Boomers became part of the Yacht Club and part of the community.

A new program would soon be launched for the Pepsi Generation.

1960s

Around 1965, Fred Schenck joined the Yacht Club. A former national Snipe champion, he was known locally for sailing in a tuxedo – with the pants cut off to shorts length! Fred was a yacht broker from Newport, where there was a big youth program.

An enthusiastic and outspoken man with a great sense of humor, he began talking up the idea of a junior sailing program to anyone who would listen. He caught the ear of another Yacht Club member, Carl Robinette, who began to think about creating a program for all interested young sailors.

Carl Robinette was not only a visionary, but also an organizer, and he pulled around him like-minded individuals who could help him make things happen.

In order to fund the expenditures necessary for the initial summer instructional program, Carl donated money and persuaded friends to help advance funds to jumpstart the program. John Noble donated his sloop *Chalupa*, which provided the financial resources for acquiring training vessels and hiring qualified instructors.

Within a year or two, Carl realized if he created a foundation, he could more easily attract people – with donations of cash or assets (boats) – to support the youth programming. He decided to formalize the program and support it with a foundation.



Above: Champs from the Yacht Club’s Youth Sailing Foundation continued on in sailing later in life: Steve Curran (later Commodore Santa Monica Windjammers Yacht Club), Gary Weisman (later headed up North Sails), and Kevin Connelly (founder Connelly Sails), with their Youth Sailing Foundation president, Bill Craig.

Left page: Junior skippers Fred Hayward (right) and Bob Kieding ready their boat for Flattie racing at Lake Arrowhead in the 1950s. Photo courtesy: Kieding family.

The Santa Barbara Youth Sailing Foundation: Learning Through Racing

In the spring of 1967, a group of Yacht Club members — Bill Wilson, William Gerard, and Gordon Butcher — gathered at the office of Carl Robinette at 345 Pine Street in Goleta to create a foundation to serve the new student sailing program.

The initial idea was to promote the instruction of and training in the basic skills of sailing to local children to make them competent sailors. Another goal was to interest and motivate these children to become proficient enough to represent their nation in the Olympics and other national and international competitions.

However, the unique aspect of this youth sailing organization was its unabashed emphasis on racing. The cornerstone of the program was the race. Teaching sailing through racing resulted in a high learning curve compared to simply conducting sailing lessons. It also created teamwork and an incentive to excel. All of these were sound principles for youth to learn not only about sailing, but succeeding.

Thus the Youth Sailing Foundation was formed by members of the Santa Barbara Yacht Club to meet the need for a youth sailing program in our community. The Santa Barbara Youth Sailing Foundation was originally incorporated as the “Santa Barbara Yacht Club Youth Foundation” on May 18, 1967. The “Youth Foundation” was created as a non-profit corporation (501-c-3) separate from the SBYC, but originally included SBYC in its name, reflecting the infor-



The local press caught the story: the Santa Barbara Youth Sailing Foundation proved its mettle at the 1968 North American Dragon Championships and Olympic Trials.

mal but close association. In 2006, the name was changed to the Santa Barbara Youth Sailing Foundation to more accurately reflect its mission.

The original elected officers of the Foundation included President Carl Robinette, Vice President Mary Minah, Secretary Joseph Nida, and Treasurer Edward Haagen. Other founding board members included Irving Harris, Gordon Butcher, William Gerard, Charles Stearns, and Anthony Gunterman.

Carl Robinette was the prime mover and in its first two decades, the program was run by Carl, Bob Kieding, Bill Wilson, and Bill Gerard. Sheridah Gerard also assisted in supervising the sailing program and instructors.

All those involved in the Foundation’s management were SBYC members volunteering their time. The Yacht Club has supported the program by providing boat and gear storage space, and the use of the Fleet Room for meeting and instruction.

Sailing classes are conducted by qualified U.S. Sailing certified instruc-

tors who are paid for their services. Unlike most yacht club sailing programs, which train students on their own family boats, the Youth Sailing Foundation is provided with boats to use for instruction. In this manner, students who do not own boats or have no related experience on the water develop both an appreciation for sailing and the hands-on skills to be able to sail. Originally, the fleet consisted of Naples Sabots, Kites, and Snipes, with six boats in each class; later the program was conducted exclusively in Lasers. After about 1985 Sabots, Lasers, Lido 14s, CFJs, and 420s were used.

The format of the program was then as it is today – a sailing school for youngsters under the age of 21, open to any youth who wished to participate.

The purpose of the Santa Barbara Youth Sailing Foundation is to develop in young people, through the sport of sailing, attributes of self-reliance, responsibility, teamwork, and sportsmanship, together with a constant awareness of the requirements of safety.



The Youth Sailing Foundation's local race team is active on the national and regional level. Photo by Vernon Vincent

1968 – The Youth Sailing Foundation Makes Its Mark Nationally

Two significant regattas were taking place in 1968. The North American Dragon Championship in San Francisco, which served as a kind of “tune-up” regatta for the Olympic trials at the Houston Yacht Club in Galveston Bay.

When Carl Robinette noted that the Olympic trials and the North American Championship were to be held that summer, he determined that the Youth Sailing Foundation should send its best young sailors.

His young people would need not only training, they would need a boat. Carl did not have his own boat to lend out, so approached his friends Bill Wilson and Dean Brown, a quiet but tireless supporter of the Foundation.

“I am getting a boat to get those teens over to Texas,” Carl began. “But if we had *two* boats, we could send *two* teams to Galveston Bay...”

Dean Brown thought it over and decided to get in on the action. He loaned the *Gay Maid*, which was to be sailed by college kids Steve Curran, Kevin Connelly, and Gary Weisman.

Another under-35 sailor was Bill Gerard. When he located a Saville-built Dragon in San Diego, Carl purchased *Gay Lady* through the Foundation for Gerard to sail. Bill Wilson pledged to make a third boat available if needed.

The young men drove to San Francisco for the North American Junior Championships in June. Steve Curran placed second and Bill Gerard placed in the top ten for the North American Dragon Championships.

Two months later, two 30-foot Dragons along with two teams of young sailors went off to Texas, where a most fascinating occurrence took place at the Olympic trials. The *Gay Maid* was raced by Steve Curran, Kevin Connelly, and Gary Weisman, and the *Gay Lady* team was made up of Bill Gerard, his wife Sheridan Gerard, and Gordon Butcher.

After seven races in the Olympic trials, the two Santa Barbara boats not only tied, but had the precise same score (which is remarkably hard to do because Olympic scoring is so complex, involving decimal points for different finish positions.) Since they took fifth out of 30 boats, the Santa Barbara skippers represented their hometown very well. Furthermore, Steve Curran and Bill Gerard placed in the top six for the Olympic elimination trials.

Carl Robinette’s goal was to put Santa Barbara Yacht Club and the new Youth Sailing Foundation on the map via this sponsorship. Carl achieved that recognition and the spark from this Olympic effort allowed the Foundation to grow and bring attention to youth sailing in Santa Barbara and throughout the United States.

The following year, Jon Andron was given his father’s boat, the Cal-40 *Argonaut*, which he entered in the Trans-Pac. Jon,

24, took Jay Aranjo, 38, as navigator, and gathered around him other Youth Foundation guys as his crew, including John McCoshan, 20; Gary Weisman, 17; Bob Sanford, 22; and Jimmy Smith, 17. This Trans-Pac had the biggest fleet in history and the students won both overall lowest corrected time and fastest elapsed time. Additionally, the *Argonaut* triumphed at the 1969 Trans-Pac with the youngest winning crew in its history— a record which stands 40 years later.

Several of these young men worked at Norm Bacon's Seacoast chandlery. After the Trans-Pac, Norm Bacon bought a bare hull boat and paid the boys to build the boat. The student who worked on the mast and sails, Gary Weisman, later became president of North Sails! The following summer of 1970, Bacon skippered his finished *Widgeon* in the Tahiti Race, and took the young men as crew: Kevin Connelly, John McCosham, Gary Weisman, and Gary Gordon.

The race was another adventure of a lifetime for any sailor, let alone a kid in college.

This was the largest fleet to Tahiti in the race's history, and *Widgeon* won the 9,000-mile race. The college boys took off to Tahiti three days after school ended. After winning the race, they toured the adjacent islands and came back home just two days before fall term started!

Two years later, the *Gay Maid* crew from the Santa Barbara Youth Foundation went on to become the alternate boat for the U.S. Olympic Team in the 1972 Olympics in Kiel, Germany. The college kids trailered their boat across the country to Virginia Beach, where it was transported by a Navy ship across the Atlantic. In Germany, the Santa Barbarans sailed every day for 10 days... and won all the "rehearsal" races against the Olympic team!



A charismatic and dynamic leader, Carl Robinette had a vision for youth to learn sailing through competition. This led to the creation of the Yacht Club's Youth Sailing Foundation.

CARL ROBINETTE (1911-1989)

Carl Robinette was an all-round amazing individual: quietly driven, professionally accomplished, dynamic but selfless in his personality, and tremendously generous to others.

Trained in navigation in the Navy in WWII, Carl went to officers' candidate school and became lieutenant commander; later he attended law school in Ohio.

Carl, with his wife and their two little boys, Roy and Carl, Jr., moved from Cleveland to Santa Barbara. When Carl's brother and sister-in-law were killed in a plane crash, Carl and his wife adopted his two little nieces, Lynn and Laurel, giving them a family of four children under four years of age. He owned ServiceSoft, a water softening company in Santa Barbara.

A natural entrepreneur, Carl was interested in toys and was often tinkering with designs and creating things, from build-it-yourself model sailboat kits to ballpoint pens in the shape of Disney's Pluto.

At a trade show featuring model trains on a track, he was inspired to develop a scale model car on a slotted track. This led to Carl's designing and licensing "slot cars" – specifically the Model Motoring range for Aurora, which was first introduced around 1960. With only a modest advertising budget, the car took off and became an absolute runaway success, especially with boys who clamored for it for Christmas that year. A few years later, Aurora made a larger scale slot car based on the same slot car system. Robinette sued for royalties and lost, but around 1966 Aurora bought out his rights, anyway.

Carl Robinette was a big sailor. Well known locally as a superb celestial navigator, Robinette was tapped for both the Trans-Pac and Tahiti races. He went traveling in exotic places with Leighton and Adelle Wilkie and their friends Dick Richards, Don Dalzell and William Casper, Jr. Although not wealthy, Carl and his wife were frequently included in the local society circles, and his wife was involved in community activities.

He was very popular and served his community as a Santa Barbara city councilman during the 1950s. (Interestingly, he was asked to run for mayor, but was not interested. Nonetheless, he received many write-in votes!)

Carl was a uniquely charismatic man who was dynamic without being egotistic, and accomplished without being self-congratulatory. He never wished to draw attention to himself, just his activities, and he had the ability to stir up other people to follow his passion. He was truly the idea and the driving energy behind the Youth Foundation, and his enthusiasm brought in a terrific team of other dedicated volunteers.

1980s - Some Changing of the Guard

In the 1980s, the organizational structure of the Foundation was changed, including the reduction of the number of board members from 25 to 5. Some long-term board members took over the reins of the program; Guy Turner stepped in to lead after Robinette, while Fred Rice and Wayne Rogers continued to deliver significant assistance.

Also during this period, the Youth Sailing Foundation held a very special fundraiser. They sponsored the visit of the America's Cup to Santa Barbara (which had recently been won by Dennis Connor for the San Diego Yacht Club).



THE CARL ROBINETTE

After Carl Robinette passed away in 1989, the Santa Barbara Yacht Club named the Fleet Room in honor of this tireless founder of the Youth Sailing Foundation. Carl Robinette's tremendous service was also memorialized by a perpetual trophy awarded each year in his name. Then, with financial support from Bill Wilson, the Yacht Club acquired a Bertram 22 powerboat, and christened it the *Carl Robinette* in time for Opening Day in 1990. It was used for many years as a Yacht Club race committee vessel.



In 2003, the Youth Sailing Foundation Board named their floating facility the "Turner Youth Sailing Dock" to honor Guy and Catharine Turner. Guy had served as president for 25 years. Photo by Hank Boehm

YOUTH FOUNDATION FLOAT

Yacht Club members worked to acquire adequate water space at the beginning of Marina One for the Youth Sailing Foundation program. Originally in the harbor before the marinas were built and boats were on mooring cans, there was an old city float that served as the primary docking space for harbor vessels to load and unload.

After Marina One was constructed, this float was no longer needed and was moored in a sunken awash state in the outer harbor. The Yacht Club members, working with the Youth Sailing Foundation, made arrangements to acquire this float, and it is still the main floating structure used by the Foundation today. Later, new floats were purchased that presently surround the old city float to expand the racks, storage, and landing areas.

In 2003, Youth Sailing Foundation Board President Guy Turner stepped down having served for 25 years. Guy, who first joined the board in 1977, was excellent at working with the young sailors and getting them involved and motivated. In recognition of their years of service to the Youth Sailing Foundation and their devotion to the program, the floating SBYCYF facility was dedicated "Turner Youth Sailing Dock" to honor Guy and Catharine.



Members of the Youth Sailing Foundation formed the nucleus that helped run the rowing venue at Lake Casitas for the 1984 Olympics. Here are Debbie Wieder, Susan Kieding and Linda Kieding.

1984 Olympics

An important chapter in the history of the Santa Barbara Yacht Club and the Youth Sailing Foundation was the role they played in putting on the 1984 Olympics.

Three years before the Olympics, SBYC member Bob Kieding was president of the Santa Barbara Rowing Foundation, which promoted competitive rowing for UCSB as well as individual masters rowing. He was contacted by the Olympic Organizing Committee to help run the rowing venue for the 1984 Olympics to be held at Lake Casitas. SBYC member Barry Berkus was the overall head of rowing for the 1984 Olympics.

Bob mobilized other SBYC members to organize a group of forty young men and women, ages 14 to 18, to actively

assist with the staging of the Olympic races. The Youth Sailing Foundation formed the nucleus of this group to assist the participants in the Olympic rowing and canoeing events.

Their responsibilities included handling competitive equipment, docking and departing, and aligning and holding the boats on the water at the starting line - not easy to do, since some of the boats were 60 feet long.

In one race, the boats were very fragile. The Youth Foundation students wore radio headsets and were lying on the deck holding the sterns in place with their fingers. The starting official would look down the line of contestants and call for corrections through the headsets, "Lane 7...two inches back. Lane 4...forward four inches."

To train for these responsibilities, Youth Foundation members had traveled for three years to locations throughout California, performing these duties at competitive events, including inter-collegiate races, Crew Classic in San Diego and the women's regatta in Oxnard.

When the Olympics finally started, Youth Foundation youngsters were ready for, and up to, the task. They performed well and were televised worldwide doing their essential duties. More importantly, they had an experience of their lives in meeting, assisting, and getting to know Olympic athletes from all over the world.

Foundation Competition Fund Sponsors Champs

To encourage young people to compete in the National Championships, Olympics, and other events, the Youth Sailing Foundation's Competition Fund helps with fees and travel expenses. In 1989, the Youth Sailing Foundation provided major financial sponsorship to Eric Arndt and his crew, which allowed them to compete in the J24 World Championships in Kingston, Ontario. In 1990, the Foundation provided major financial sponsorship to Larry Harteck and Matt Wilson to allow them to compete in the NACRA World Championships.

1990s – School Programming

The Youth Sailing Foundation administers a two-pronged year-round sailing program open to all young people ages 11-21 years: a summer program and a high school sailing program.

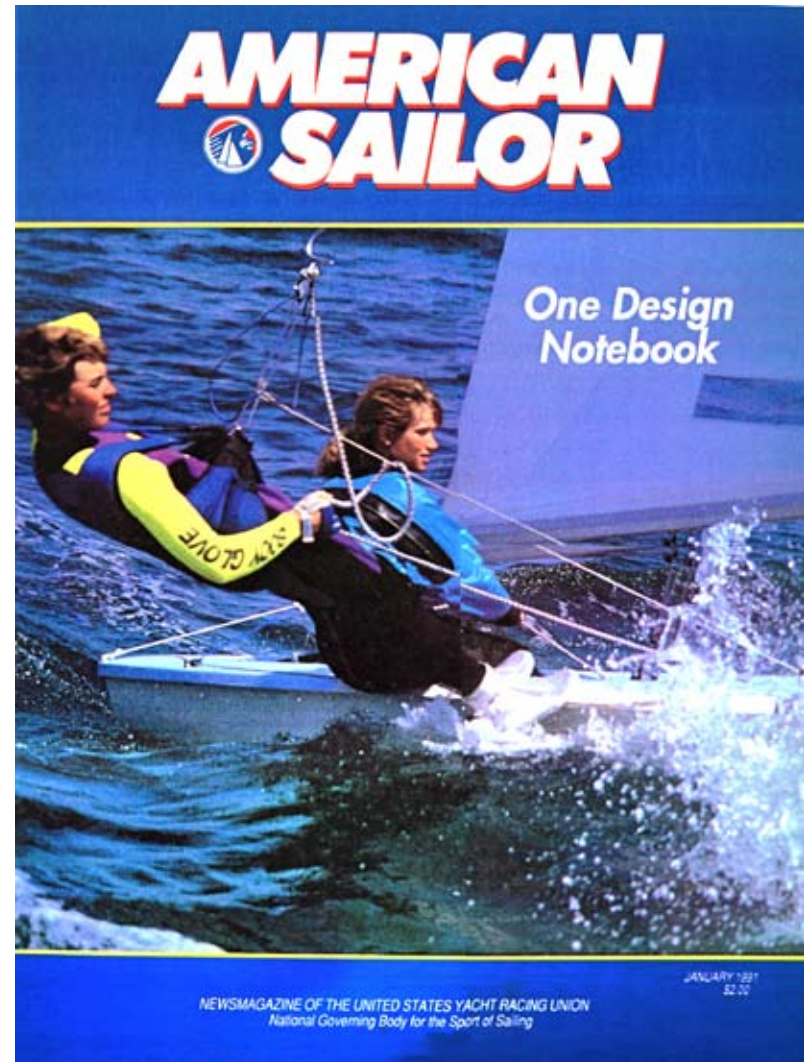
The original “Summer Learn to Sail Program” is still a 10-week summer session in which up to 150 youth learn to sail, or further develop their sailing skills. This program consists of 5 two-week sessions with 25 youths participating at one of three levels utilizing Sabots, Lasers, CFJs, and 420s. Classes are full and intensive: six hours a day, five days a week.

The Youth Sailing Foundation initially took some college programs under its wing, in particular the UCSB Sailing Team as it was getting off the ground, however, the primary focus remains with the junior/senior high school program.

In the 1990s, the Youth Sailing Foundation’s original 10-week summer instructional sessions expanded to become a year-round program when many California high schools began developing high school sailing programs. In 1993, the Youth Foundation incorporated a high school sailing program for San Marcos, Santa Barbara, Bishop Diego, Carpinteria and Cate high schools. Students enrolled in the Youth Sailing Foundation High School Program receive independent study physical education (ISPE) credit for high school sailing.

The Youth Sailing Foundation provides the instructors, capital equipment, and facilities that would otherwise be unavailable through the school system. This program encourages daily practice sessions and interscholastic competition for both boys and girls at local, regional, and national levels. This program is coordinated with the Pacific Coast Interscholastic Sailing Association (PCISA) of which there are more than 70 active high schools on the West Coast. The Foundation also sponsors several informal sailing clinics to prepare students for the intense summer racing schedules.

With the increased popularity of the Sea Shell, Sabot and Optimist classes, opportunities for Junior Sailing grew very quickly. From 1995 through 2002, schools from Santa Barbara competed in sailing for the National High School Championship in the single-handed (Cressy) and double handed (Mallory) divisions. San Marcos High School became the first local high school to qualify for the Interscholastic Sailing Association’s National High School Championship. In 1999, the San Marcos High School sailing team finished 4th in the U.S. for the Mallory Perpetual Cup.



American Sailor Magazine featured on its cover Santa Barbara’s Leslie Deardorff sailing a 470 in the Alamitos Bay Olympic Classes Regatta in 1990 (Jackie Golison is the skipper).

In the new millennium, Santa Barbara High School became the regional powerhouse in high school sailing and participated in the National High School Championships. Then, in 2002, the Santa Barbara High School sailing team also took 4th place in the nation for the Mallory Perpetual Cup!

The Youth Sailing Foundation added a middle school sailing program during the fall and spring. These young sailors were encouraged to compete in the U.S. Sailing sponsored championships.





Left: Miss Lauren Sheffield nailed the Outstanding Junior Woman Sailor Trophy.



Right: Santa Barbara Youth Sailing Program. Photo by Dennis Friederich

Finances, Funding & Scholarships

Tuition generally provides about one-third of the revenue needed for operating and capital expenditures (costs of instructors, boats, sails, and equipment). One hundred percent of any funds received – both tuition and donations – is used for direct program expenses.

The primary source of funds for the Youth Sailing Foundation has been from selling boats donated to the non-profit foundation. The first boat was donated in the 1960s, when John Noble turned over his sloop *Chalupa*. Major vessel donations during the 1970s included the *Vendetta* – a 40-foot racing yacht designed by Doug Peterson.

These proceeds were used to support the initial UCSB Sailing Team. Significant vessel donations during the 1980s

included a large catamaran named the *Double Dolphin*; a 57-foot motor-sailer, the *Mystic*; a 30-foot sloop called *Rampage*; a J24 sloop called the *O.K.-J*; Don Hughes' *Quintessence*; and *Red Shift*, a Choate40. During the 1990s, some of the donated boats included Jack Morehart's 1917 motor-sailer, *Ranger*, and Edmund Harrison's 22-foot Grady White powerboat, *LPII*. During 2004 alone, four donated vessels were sold by the Foundation to fund the programs, including Commodore (2007) Bud Toye's *Aquaries*.

In addition, another organization – Santa Barbara Yacht Club Women – made the Youth Foundation its major fundraising and support project.

Because the Santa Barbara Yacht Club members felt it was important to help underprivileged youth, they established a scholarship program to accommodate all students who wished to participate.

Not infrequently, the applicants were children of single mothers who were trying to provide good role models and “father figures” for their kids by placing them in the successful sailing school

One condition of the scholarship was that the student had to pay some part of the cost, even if it were only ten dollars. This was part of the character building philosophy: sacrificing and saving taught the students more than getting something for nothing. It was important to help students establish self-esteem through motivation, endeavor, self-reliance, and accomplishment.

In 1997, the Foundation established the Deardorff Scholarship Fund to help students with program fees. The scholarship was in memory of William Deardorff (Commodore 1990) and the support he had given the Youth Foundation and youth sailing programs.

The Vendetta, one of many boats given generously to benefit the Santa Barbara Youth Sailing Foundation, was donated by Charlie Isaac for the use of UCSB's Sailing Team. Vendetta was one of the top 2-ton racers in the country, and won many trophies. Seen here with the Youth Foundation-sponsored UCSB Sailing Team in the San Francisco Big Boat Series in the late 1970s, where it won its class. Photo by Bob Kieding

The international Optimist dinghy is the largest one-design fleet in the world and quite popular with youth sailing. The Youth Sailing Foundation got their first fleet of 10 boats in 2006, where they are used in training several different sailing classes for youngsters between 8 and 14 years old.



2004 – Year of Revision

When the Youth Sailing Foundation had been in existence for almost 40 years, the directors took a hard look at their financial picture. The tuition and fees only covered about a third of the cost of the programming. There was still a \$50,000 shortfall that needed to be raised to cover instructor salaries, insurance premiums, dock fees, equipment, and regatta expenses.

When the board of directors found it was not able to meet the payroll for the coaches at the end of 2004 (the Yacht Club covered it with an emergency \$5,000 loan), it became clear that their financial position needed major adjustment.

Kent Pierce stepped up to the plate (Commodore 2001) to become president and saw that the organization needed to take a new direction. First, he determined to bring an increased awareness of the Youth Sailing Foundation both within the Yacht Club and within the community. The effort paid off as they saw their annual contributions increase from \$15,000 to more than \$55,000. But this annual fundraising was just to make ends meet. Leftover debt and funding for capital expenses and major contingencies needed to be considered. There was no financial security for the Foundation.

Kent and his board believed that the program should be made affordable and did not want to increase the fees. They also did not want to cut corners – the Youth Sailing Foundation had been developed over nearly four decades and was now a finely-honed, successful program. Finally, the directors also recognized they were spending too much of their time raising money, rather than focusing on programming.

To address these issues, an Endowment Committee was formed in 2005 by Staff Commodore Dennis Friederich (2004) along with major players Victor Atkins, Elsbeth Kleen, Barry Schuyler, Tony Papa (commodore 2008), Tom Goodson, and Roger Chrisman (commodore 2010). Their expressed purpose was to raise \$1 million to establish a firm financial footing for the organization. Remarkably, the volunteer committee raised the money in less than three years!

With the yearly fundraising burden eased, the board of directors was free to concentrate on expanding the program with an emphasis on reaching children who would otherwise not have the opportunity to participate. The board focused on accommodating underserved youth and partnering with other local organizations such as PAL (Police Activities League).

Within twenty years of its establishment, the Youth Foundation had already taught the basics of sailing to more than 2,500 local students.

As a testament to the vision of its founder and the dedication and skill of its instructors and supporters, the Santa Barbara Yacht Club's Youth Sailing Foundation has sent out young accomplished sailors who have achieved national and international recognition:

- | | |
|--|---|
| Eric Arendt | 1990 World Competition contender in J24s |
| Alex Bernal
& Ted White | U.S. Team 29er World Championships |
| Kevin Connelly | Three-time National Champion Olson 30s,
established a sail-making company anchored
in Santa Barbara for 30 years. |
| Steve Curran | Olympic Trials contender 1968 |
| Leslie Deardorff | J24 World Championship; 1 st place 1989
Rolex International Women's Keelboat Championship; 9 th place 1989
Olympic Classes Regatta 470, Top Women 1990 (with Jackie Golison)
Olympic Trials contender 1992 |
| Scott Deardorff | U.S. Men's Mallory Cup National Champion 1990 |
| Bill Gerard | Three time Star Lipton Cup Winner 1970, 1980, 1997 |
| Larry Harteck | Won the World Championship NACRA Catamaran Class 1995 |
| Gary Weisman | One of the most accomplished big boat sailors in the world,
Now president of North Sails |