

SCOWLINES

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION FROM THE INLAND LAKE YACHTING ASSOCIATION



Volume 15, Issue 66----- December 31, 2020

William Bentsen - February 18, 1930 – December 25, 2020

In 2020, the ILYA lost many greats - Past ILYA Commodores, lifelong sailors and now at the close of the year, we mark the passing of one of the kindest, fairest gentlemen the sport has known. The rules by which we all sail are in large part due to the work of Bill Bentsen and other most wise, knowledgeable and methodical thinkers like Bill. Many years ago, the sailing community recognized the need for a simplified approach to the RRS. US Sailing asked for a YRA to "beta-test" the concept and Bill brought the Experimental Rules to the ILYA. The rules you use today are a result of that year of testing.

Bill continued to serve as a Protest Committee member during our last three-year stint of the ILYA Championships at Lake Geneva. The photo below shows Bill and Dr. Tom Hodgson discussing the intricacies of a rule at Lake Geneva.



His calm, organized approach to adjudication will long be remembered and modeled. Bill was named one of our Heroes and Legends at the three-year ILYA Championships endeavor. He is one of the earliest ILYA and Sailing Hall of Fame inductees.

As you will note below in a more formal remembrance from Lake Geneva, Bill was an Olympic Gold Medalist along with lifetime friend Buddy Melges and the then-youngster Bill Allen. There are many stories of the ardor of this team and also the shenanigans. I, for one, am going to recall Bill Bentsen for his kind, fair heart. I will dismiss those shenanigans to the company he kept in those days of accomplishments! Our condolences to Ellen Bentsen who

in her own right has contributed to the promotion and celebration of our sport.

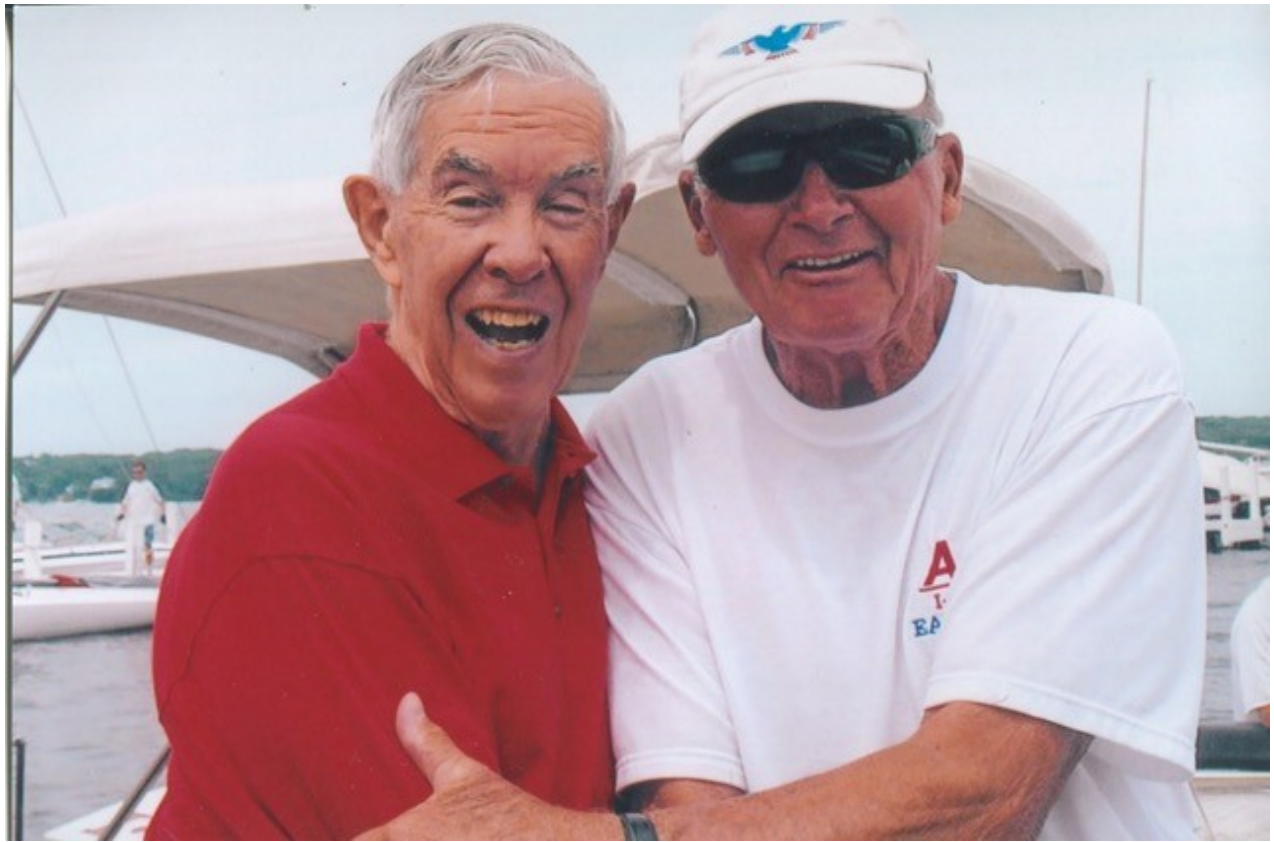


Photo above is not the Olympics but two octogenarians celebrating the ILYA A scow championship when one of them was 83. It was Buddy Melges who still made Bill smile.

Lake Geneva Yacht Club Remembrance

Bill Bentsen, Olympian, National Sailing Hall of Fame Inductee

William Bentsen, Olympic medalist, National Sailing Hall of Fame inductee, and an internationally respected expert on the racing rules of sailing, died on December 25 at his home at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. He was 90 years old.

In the 1940s at Lake Geneva Yacht Club, Bill raced a junior boat called a Cub in a fleet that included Buddy Melges, Jane Wiswell (later Pegel), Bill Freytag, and Bill Grunow, and during the following decades he competed in most of the scow classes on the lake as skipper or crew. In 1963, Bill won the M20 Class National Championship, and in 1969, 1970, and 1971 he won the M20 Inland Lake Yachting Association Championship titles. His usual crew in the M20 was Ron Frankel; his crew in one Inland was Jack Brellenthin.

In 1960 and 1961, Bill was the director of the Geneva Lake Sailing School.

As crew for Buddy Melges, Bill Bentsen won a Bronze Medal at the 1964 Olympic Games in Japan (Flying Dutchman Class), a Gold Medal at the 1967 Pan American Games in Canada (Flying Dutchman), and, with third crew Bill Allen, a Gold Medal at the 1972 Olympic Games in Germany (Soling Class). In 1966, Bill finished first in division, elapsed time, in Yachting magazine's One-of-a-Kind Regatta, sailing a 38-foot Class A scow. He also raced iceboats, initially competing in the 12-foot DN Class and then in a 42-foot Class A stern-steerer that he owned with Walter Larkin. Don Frankel was his usual crew; later, Erich Schloemer crewed. Bill was a member of the Skeeter Ice Boat Club.

Bill Bentsen became keenly interested in the racing rules as a college student when he fouled out of a race at the Chicago Yacht Club and the protest committee chairman, Clare Udell, took the time to explain, word by word, the intricacies of the rule he had broken. The incident

inspired Bill to study the racing rules with great care, and in the decades that followed he became a major contributor to their interpretation, revision, and simplification. When Janet Baxter was president of US Sailing, she dedicated The Racing Rules of Sailing 2005 – 2008 to Bill in recognition of his work. “Bill has generously given back his time and expertise to our sport,” she wrote. “He recognizes how rules impact the way we sail and he has always pushed hard to get simple, clear words on each page.”

At the national and international level, Bill Bentsen was a member from 1972 to 2008 (chair, 1979-1988) of the United States Sailing Association Racing Rules Committee, a member from 1984 to 2015 (chair, 1998-2002) of its Appeals Committee, and a member from 1979 to 2004 of the Racing Rules Committee of the International Sailing Federation now known as World Sailing, the international authority of the sport, based in England. He also served as a national judge for the Royal Yachting Association from 1995 to 1999 when he lived in England. Over the years, he served as a jury member at world and continental sailing championships, the 1979 Pan American Games, and the 1988 Olympic Regatta.

At home, Bill Bentsen was a member of the Lake Geneva Yacht Club Race Committee for various years from 1962, was Chief Judge and a Senior Race Officer, and chaired the club's 2009 Bylaws Review Committee. Within the Inland Lake Yachting Association, he was a member of the Racing Rules Committee in the 1960s and 1970s and later a Senior Race Officer.

Bill Bentsen was the author of *The Yacht Racing Rules Today* (Dodd, Mead, 1974) and numerous articles for American, British, and Australian periodicals about boat speed and tactics, course design, scoring, and the racing rules. From 1963 to 1969, he was a contributing editor to *One-Design* and *Offshore Yachtsman* magazine.

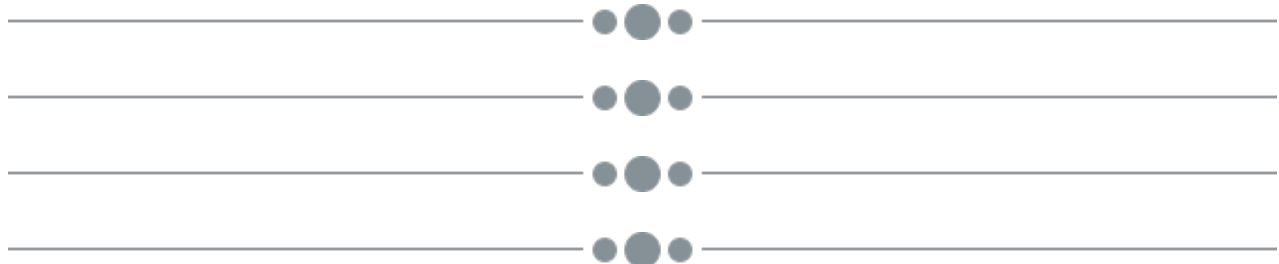
In 1994, Bentsen received the Nathanael G. Herreshoff Trophy from US Sailing in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the sport. In 2008, he received that organization's Harmon Hawkins Trophy for his work in the field of race administration. In 1972, he was named to the Inter-Collegiate Yacht Racing Association College Sailing Hall of Fame; in 2008, to the Inland Lake Yachting Association Hall of Fame; and in 2017, to the National Sailing Hall of Fame. In 2007, US Sailing's Judges Committee named him Judge Emeritus in recognition of his distinguished service as a competitor and sailing official. In 2009 and 2016, Bill Bentsen was the recipient of Lake Geneva Yacht Club's Marie Kramp Award for Outstanding Service.

In 2009, Bill Bentsen was honored to receive World Sailing's Beppe Croce Trophy from the president of the organization, Goran Petersson of Sweden. The award recognizes outstanding voluntary contributions to the sport.

William Bruce Bentsen was born on February 18, 1930 in Chicago, Illinois, was educated in its public schools, and entered the University of Chicago College at 16 under a program that enrolled qualified students after two years of high school. He later transferred to Denison University, earning a bachelor's degree, then a master's degree in economics at the University of Minnesota, and, after service in the United States Marine Corps, a doctorate in economics from the University of Wisconsin. He joined the faculty of Beloit College in Wisconsin as an assistant professor of economics and business, was associate dean of the College, and later worked for the Associated Colleges of the Midwest, the United States Yacht Racing Union (now US Sailing), and the Art Institute of Chicago.

Bill Bentsen was preceded in death by his parents, Holger and Elden Bentsen, and his sister, Beverly Spear. He is survived by his wife, Ellen, and two nieces.

Gifts in Bill Bentsen's memory may be made to the Geneva Lake Sailing School. No services are planned.



Tentative Regatta Schedule for 2021

April

24-25 Island Bay Springfield C regatta - CONFIRMED

May

1-2 Cedar Icebreaker C --- CONFIRMED

8-9

15-16 C/MC Cedar, WI - CONFIRMED

22-23 Labelle Tuneup - CONFIRMED

Geneva E - CONFIRMED

29-31 Memorial Day weekend

June

4-6 Orlando Webb Regatta - Lotawana, Missouri - CONFIRMED

5-6 Wawasee E Regatta - CONFIRMED

11-13 **2020 (Yes, that's right)** E Nationals – Little Egg Harbor- CONFIRMED

12-13 MIR C -Delavan - CONFIRMED

WI MC Champs – Monona (tentative date);

18 AJH X Regatta – Cedar - CONFIRMED

18-20 C Nationals – Muskegon, MI - CONFIRMED

22-23 TRAP - X at Pine - **TENTATIVE CHANGE in DATE**

26-27 A Nationals- Pewaukee - CONFIRMED

MC Nationals – Clear - CONFIRMED

28 LBSS Opti - Beulah - CONFIRMED

July

1-2 Lake Country Beginners X Clinic

6-7 Quad Lakes – Nagawicka CONFIRMED

8 TRAC Green fleet - Cedar CONFIRMED

9 TRAC RWB Fleet - Cedar CONFIRMED

9-11 ILYA MC Invite – Okauchee; PRO Mark Prange

ILYA E Invite – Mendota; PRO Mark DeGuire

12-15 Dinghyfest X Mon-Tue; Opti Wed-Thu, Melges 14 O'pen Bic Fri - CONFIRMED

17-18 ILYA C Invitational – Minnetonka PRO Blake Middleton

19-20 Oshkosh Xtreme - CONFIRMED

24-25 WYA X – Delavan - CONFIRMED BY BYLAWS

26 No Tears Opti - Cedar - DATE CONFIRMED BY BYLAWS

28-31 ILYA X Champs – Pewaukee; PRO Senior Mark Tesar; Junior Chip Mann

WMYA Championship -- Spring Lake

August

1-3 ILYA Opti Champs – Beulah; PRO RWB David Porter; Green Candace Porter

5 Pram Power – North CONFIRMED

6-8 WYA C – Okauchee - CONFIRMED BY BYLAWS

8-10 Opti RWB Chip - LaBelle CONFIRMED

13-14 X Blue Chip – Cedar - CONFIRMED

15-21 ILYA Championships – Okoboji; 16-18 As and MCs; 19-21 Es and Cs; Bilge

Pullers 18th CONFIRMED

September

10-12 **2021** E Nationals - Torch Lake, MI - CONFIRMED

11-12 Dorn MC Regatta – Beulah - CONFIRMED

Fall C and MC – Maxinkuckee
18-19 C Blue Chip – Okauchee - CONFIRMED
North Lake Fall Classic - CONFIRMED
24-26 E Blue Chip - Pewaukee CONFIRMED

25-26 Nan Norris C Challenge – Beulah - CONFIRMED
USODA Midwest
Polar Bear MC and C – Davenport, IA

As your dates become clear, Scowlines is happy to mark the event as confirmed. A little positive thinking and LET'S SAIL!

Support Our 2021 Olympic Contenders Roble - Shea, Olympic hopefuls Barnes - Dallman- Weiss and the continued efforts of Melges - Rowe

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