



USA FINN CLASS

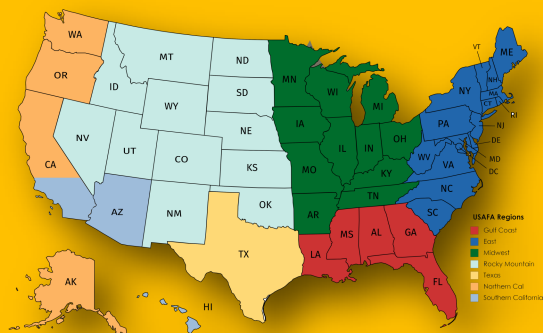
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www.finnusa.org

SOLO Newsletter



Image by Robert Stevens



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Featured articles

- ◆ Paralyzed by the Prospect
- ◆ How we Stopped Worrying and Learned to Love the Travels
- ◆ Tuning Guide Refresher
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Stay Six Feet Apart - Sail FINN

Robert G Stevens

SOLO Newsletter is a non-profit official publication of the USA Finn Association and distributed to its members and other interested parties free of charge.

Send your articles to the USAFA secretary, we are always looking for interesting content.

Editors

Rodion Mazin & Peter Frissell

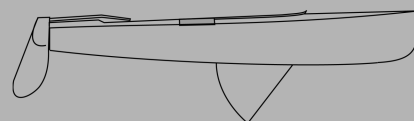
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FINN

THE classic power dinghy



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

First of all, I hope all Finn Sailors, families, and friends are safe and protected during this unexpected crisis. This is certainly uncharted territory for all of us and it will be a changed world when we come out the other side. We are learning how interconnected we really are, never expecting that a transaction in an open market on the other side of the world could have such an enormous effect on our individual lives and the population as a whole. It is easy to focus on recent mistakes with 20/20 hindsight (2020 must be the year for it) but we need to keep looking forward. Below is a well-known path that people follow when dealing with crisis induced



change:

We, as individuals and as a class, will need to adapt to the new world, in whatever form it may take. In the short term,

class leadership is regularly reviewing the situation for the Nationals, North Americans, and Masters.

Although we don't know what longer term challenges we may face, we will do whatever is possible to help facilitate and rebuild the sport we have come to love.

We would like to recognize the event organizers and volunteers who have put in a tremendous amount of work only to be faced with cancellation.

The class now has official 501c3 status and meets the new legal requirements of a non-profit. This has taken many hours and the class was not charged for any legal or accounting work.

And finally, be safe and protect family and friends. If you are going to quarantine yourself on your Finn please remember it is a time for exercise and mental release and always follow the social distancing rules. Stay safe, wash your hands, and wear a mask to protect yourself and others.

Hope to see you on the water soon.

Peter Frissell
USAFA President



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2020 Schedule

Due to a lot of uncertainty associated with the pandemic in the U.S. and Canada, as well as constantly evolving situation and governmental rules, we will not be posting the schedule in this edition of the SOLO Newsletter. Please visit:

www.finnusa.org/event-calendar/

for the most recent version of the schedule.



It took me too long to learn that going two to one downwind is a thing in a Finn. During my first windy race I noticed that the guy passing me to leeward on a reach wasn't one to one, and was also taking the sheet straight from the boom. I figured he must therefore have much better steering and pumping technique than I did. The spray in my face and the exhausted frustration made it hard to see the details as he disappeared down the reach. As far as I could tell, my moves were similar. Maybe his centerboard was just a little higher? Would that explain how much faster he was? I didn't know. Didn't seem like it, but what else was there? I finished the race, and licked my wounds. And then I blew it.

Here's what I should have done: found the guy after the race, asked him how the rest of the race went for him, complimented him on his reaching speed, and asked him what kinds of things he was doing to go

so fast reaching. I didn't do that. Of course, he might very easily have assumed I already knew about two to one (how could I not?) and never mentioned it. I would have had to drill down on why his pumps were so effective, or maybe shared how flaccid mine felt. I would have had to really connect with him. I would have had to be vulnerable. Instead, I was paralyzed by the prospect of outing myself as a clueless newb in a new class. The impulse to not admit to myself that I didn't know something was very strong. I was still young enough to sometimes mistake that for confidence.

I remember the light bulb going off – weeks later! – when I noticed his mainsheet knot at his ratchet block as we dropped sails next to each other near the ramp. I said “thank you!”, got the very strange look I deserved, and re-hoisted and went reaching around the harbor until after sunset. And I kept pumping, two to one, over and over and over. And I kept saying to myself while I flogged the guy who was too proud to ask a question of someone more experienced, “Which hurts more? Which hurts more? Your arms now or the memory of how weak-minded you were a few weeks ago after that race?”

I wanted to make sure it sunk all the way in. I wanted it to be in my body, how painful the hindsight of false pride can be. I wanted to never forget the day I vowed to learn to learn smarterly, one new question at a time. Working harder at doing things the old way, just isn't that hard, in comparison.



The Golden State Blues



by Glen Selvin

Southern California, encompassing both Long Beach to the North, and San Diego to the south with two different Finn fleets, continues to be Finn sailing mecca, at least these past few months. Maybe that's because we have no snow?

Last Fall saw nine boats sailing at Alamitos Bay Yacht Club's iconic Turkey Day regatta, sailing three races on Saturday and three races Sunday, with the famous turkey dinner Saturday night with all the fixin's. Champagne conditions with sunshine, nice breeze but not too much, and just wonderful sailing with Mike Dorgan leading the pack, followed by Robert Kinney and Andreas Siggelkow.

December 19th saw eleven boats turn out for Mission Bay Yacht Club's always fun, always inside the bay Hot Rum regatta, making so many of us remember why we live here in sunny Southern California! Just beautiful sailing, with wonderful camaraderie on shore after the racing.

San Diego Yacht Club sailed their annual New Year's regatta pursuit race, with six boats turning out on New Year's Day to sail inside the bay, enjoying sunny skies and flat water during this harbor tour. Mike Dorgan was the lead dog, followed by Mike Entwistle and Brian Thomas.

Mission Bay Yacht Club held our SCYA Midwinters in February with a whopping fifteen boats turning out to sail in the ocean off of Mission Beach. It took Kyle Martin, from the Canadian Olympic Team, to knock Dorgan off

of his podium with Kyle in first, followed by Mike Dorgan, Rob Coutts, Greg Morton, and David Ryan. Talk about some tough competition!

Both San Diego Yacht Club and Mission Bay Yacht Club have been holding their club racing, with Finns always invited. SDYC held their free One Design Weekends in both January, and February, and MBYC has been holding both their Club Races and Single Handed Series throughout the winter as well. Always great times out on the water for casual fleet racing that is always a pleasure for a day or a weekend of no cost, no hassle racing.

Moving forward? The word “cancelled” seems to be attached to all regattas moving forward during these times of Coronavirus so it'll be interesting, and

sad, to see where this all takes us as we wonder how long we'll all be social distancing and out of sailing. During these months? Give your boat a good bath and attend to its issues that you never seem to get to. Controversial is going out sailing with friends because while we're on our boats by ourselves, we're still helping one another dolly out, roll up sails, put on bottom covers, or slide dollies onto trailers. A few weeks ago, Jim Lawson, Andreas Siggelkow, and I went out for a wonderful afternoon, but now that things are heating



up here in SoCal, I'm a little bit loathe to go out again. I'm sure we're all debating between sailing and staying indoors, but in any event, your boat needs love during these Covid-19 times. Replace a few lines, clean up all the dock marks that have accumulated, or just give it a longing look. Stay safe out there!

Finn sailing blossomed this winter in Miami with over 11 racing days with regattas including the World Sailing Cup-Miami OCR, the inaugural Finn Winter Series at Coconut Grove Sailing Club, and the introduction of the Finn at Miami Sailing Week based at the new Regatta Park.

This season began the first week of January when Rockal Evans from Bermuda, with his

ed his Finn sailing a few years ago in a borrowed boat as part of Team Rice Krispies, sailed well-enough to earn his first medal race spot.

The event also marked the return to competitive Finn sailing of Stephen Smeulders, former Sunfish and Force 5 champion. He sailed a boat that the USAFA and Jibe Tech built ten years ago with the molds that

MIAMI WS Cup and other Finn events

by Charles Heimler



coach Ed Wright, arrived to begin training for the last Olympic spot representing North America. Juan Ignacio Perez with his coach in tow, Luca Devoti, arrived a few days later to contest for the berth, in the showdown at the weeklong World Cup that saw Mexico earn its first trip to the Olympics in two decades.

Devoti and Olympian Facundo Olezza of Argentina, in a chartered U.S. 2012 Devoti, supported the Mexican effort. Kyle Martin of Canada, who borrowed a 2013 Devoti and Ireland's Olympic campaigner Oisin McClelland, who arrived last minute and used a borrowed 2003 Devoti shared the top finishing spots with United States Sailing Team compadres Caleb Paine and Luke Muller.

Alexey Selivanov, who is now the manager of the Russian Sailing Team, sailed what must've been his tenth Miami event. A newcomer to the Olympic campaigners is Ukraine's Georgii Paches, who shipped a 2015 Fantastica over from Europe. The mast broke in a super high wind day, but a 2003 Wilke was provided to him to complete the event. Eric Andersen, who start-

Vanguard donated to the USAFA via a grant arranged by Gus Miller through the Finn Foundation.

As it was, the World Cup event was also the second stage of the selection for the USA's representative to Tokyo; Caleb's winning the regatta and Luke's third place finish narrowed the gap that Luke enjoys over Caleb, the 2016 Bronze medal winner. The decider was to be the Gold Cup in Spain in May, but that will have to be re-scheduled when U.S. Sailing sorts it all out.



Miami Finn Fleet Winter Series
1st Place

World Sailing's future is in transition, and the scuttlebutt is that they want to host future World Cup events on the West Coast. The World Sailing Cup contract with the University of Miami Sports Medicine department, which has in the past provided physical therapy for the sailors, was not renewed. This year's event was run by the network of Olympic Class Regatta veterans based in Miami, who assured everyone that some form of the Miami OCR will continue in future years. And the Miami Finn Fleet based now at Coconut Grove Sailing Club is working to assure that the Finn legacy continues on Biscayne Bay. Dave Martin has brought the CGSC along to be a residence for the Miami Finn Fleet.

Next year will be awesome! The Miami Finn fleet submitted a bid to host the 2021 North Americans—along with the Miami OCR, Miami Winter Series, the Miami Sailing Week, and the Sarasota Midwinters. A full sailing schedule is planned.

That's 16 regatta days in January, February and March.

Why sit in the snow and cold next winter when you can race 16 days in Miami! Make your plans now for Miami—boat storage is plentiful, AirBnB rentals are reasonable, and several quality hotels are within walking distance of the boat park. There are several boats available to borrow there, as well.

Finns and Stars by Dr. Jim Revkin



the first two above, they attract the best competitors on the planet. Sailing is one of the few sports, perhaps the only sport, where you can enter a competition as a complete Corinthian, old or young, and literally be on the same starting line as past Olympians and current world champions.

First a disclosure as there are many people more knowledgeable about Stars and Finns than I, and there are certainly

For those Finnsters who aren't familiar with the Star it is the oldest one design class out there. It was first designed to be sailed on Long Island Sound in 1911. Like the Finn, it

which currently, one need not apply the weight formula, is the Bacardi Cup held in Miami, Florida. Yes, size matters.

Given the above, let me focus on the elite of elite - the history of those who have sailed both the Finn and the Star. For whatever the reason, perhaps it's the level of fitness required to sail the Finn, or the advantages of youth, or perhaps the presence of the anti-capsizing device of a 408 kg keel, but those previously successful in the Finn tend to migrate to the Star. Also, 2012 was the last year that the Star boat appeared in the Olympics. It has been replaced with the Star Sailors League, a pro-circuit with a ranking system, many of whom compete in the SSL Finals in Nassau every December for a purse of 200 Swiss francs. I should point out that in the SSL events, free pumping is permitted if there is enough wind, and because of this, Finn skippers are very much in demand by Star crews. The races are presented with live video footage on the internet and it is arguably the most exciting online event that one-design sailors have ever been able to view from their couches.

Here is a table of some of today's Star top dogs to give you an idea of the talent that any of you readers can compete with, as skipper or crew, if you can get on a boat. And let me say perhaps the biggest drawback of a Star is the need to find a physically large, strong, and coordinated person who knows how to sail from A to Z. All Finn sailors are qualified to get onto a Star.

Now for my own personal story about Finns and Stars, and how to keep these classes going. My son, Joshua, began crewing in the Star Class at the age of 14 for old friends of mine in the Mid-Connecticut Star Fleet out of Milford, Connecticut. It was about that time that he became interested in the Finn, perhaps because he had grown out of the Laser, or perhaps because I had books at home about the Finn, or maybe it was recommended to him by Alan Pritchard, a Milford Star guy, who once raced Finns in upstate New York. In any case a boat became available and at the age of 16, shortly after he got his driver's license, he towed his Finn out to Gull Lake, Michigan where there was a Finn Regatta. The Volvo he was driving, which had about 300,000 miles on it, broke down and he was offered

Top Star Sailors Backgrounds and Results

	Finn Olympics	Finn Gold Cup	Star Olympics	Star Worlds	SSL Finals
Brian Ledbetter	3 ('92)	2('86), 3('87)		3, (16)	
Fredrik Lööf	3 ('00)	2 ('93), 1 ('94), 2 ('95), 3 ('96), 1 ('97), 2 ('98), 1, ('99)	1('12)	1 ('01), 2 ('03), 1 ('04),	2 ~14)
Xavier Rohart		3 ('97), 3 9"98)	3 ('04)	3 ('97), 3 ('98), 3 ('02), 1 ('03), 1 ('05), 3 ('06), 2 ('07)	3 ('15), 2 ('16), 2 ('16), 2 ('19)
Mateusz Kusznierewicz	1 ('96), 3 ('04)	1 ('98) 2 ('99), 1 ('00), 2 ('01), 2 ('02),		1 ('08), 1 ('19)	2 ('13), 3 ('14),
Pascal Rambeau			Crew 1 ('03)		
Ian Percy	1 ('00)		1 ('08), 2 ('12)	1 ('02), 3 ('03), 3 ('04), 3 ('05), 3 ('07), 1 ('10), 2 ('12)	1 ('19)
Jorge Zarif		1 ('13)		1 ('18)	1 ('18)

many people who have been more successful than I. However, I am not sure there are people who are happier than I have been on the water and to have made as many friends in both the Star and the Finn.

First the boats. One of the reasons the Finn and Star appeal to the same sailors is that they are both overpowered and have flexible rigs, and the understanding of which pays dividends on the water. Second they are both physically demanding boats. I have called the Star a floating Nautilus machine while sailing the Finn is more like competing in a triathlon. Third, because of

was once an Olympic sailing class. Here are the specs of the two classes. Given these parameters it is evident that to sail these boats on their lines one needs to be massive in size with respect to height and weight. The Star class has a formula which defines the maximum weight for skipper and crew and ideally the results more or less float around a total of about 200 kg. Perhaps the most famous Star event for

	Design	LOA	LWL	Beam	Draft	Weight	Mast	Main	Jib
Finn	1949	4.5 m	4.34 m	1.47 m	0.17 m	107 kg	6.66 m	10.6 m ²	
Star	1911	6.9 m	4.72 m	1.73 m	1.01 m	≥671 kg	9.65 m	20.5 m ²	6.0 m ²

Star and Finn specs differences

a place to stay by Jon VanderMolen. Jon, a Star sailor, who ultimately became the US builder of the highly acclaimed P(ickel) Star and founder of the Star class Vintage Gold Cup where old wooden Stars are raced. Josh continued to crew for my old Star friends, and sometimes skippering our own Star, while competing and driving around to various Finn events. It was at Gull Lake where he met Darrell Peck who took Josh under his wing. Josh trained under "D" at the Gorge in Oregon and participated in the San Francisco Gold and Silver Cups where he met the likes of Luke Lawrence, Caleb Payne, Henry Sprague, and all the other folks from Miami, to Mobile Bay, to Cazenovia. On one of those winters he trained with Luke on the river, near Stuart, Florida, where Luke's parents and Josh's grandparents lived. He went over to Russia for the Finn Silver Cup where he got to meet Alexey Selivanov, a young Star Sailor from Azov on Don. A few years later, during the Sail for Gold Campaign, Josh raced at Kiel in a borrowed Finn of Alexey's where on the way back in during a phenomenally windy day, Josh capsized and could not right his boat. Alexey spotted my



son, now hypothermic, and after pulling Josh into his own Finn, he jumped in to right his loaned turtled Finn. It was at that moment that I now had an adopted Russian son who had saved my American son's life.

So the irony of all of this is that I ended up getting a Finn and had these new bonds with some of the young Finnsters. Josh went on to become a well known Star crew and invited Luke Lawrence and Alexey to skipper his Star, a well-known battleship gray boat that had once been Doyle sailmaker Jud Smith's, at various events in Miami. In 2019, at the first ever Star Junior World Championship, I lent Luke as skipper, and Alexey as crew, my Star. I knew from the moment they cast off from the dock that they would win the inaugural event,

which they did. Biscayne Bay is Luke's backyard and he's an incredibly gifted sailor.

Lastly one other bit of irony. I have enlisted my Russian "son," Alexey (who is now a manager and coach for the Russian sailing team), to "collude" with me as crew, in the Star, from time to time, on both coasts of the USA, and in the EU. The best moment Alexey, Josh, and I had on the water was in Troense, Denmark in 2017. Eivind Melleby/Josh Revkin and Lars Grael/Samuel Conçaves were vying for first place. Alexey and I had our best finish with a 13th place out of 70 boats, finishing just in front of the Brazilian boat. I looked ahead to see Eivind and Josh, with Josh grinning, as they crossed the line in 10th, helping move them ahead to win their first world champion-

USAFA Treasurers Note

USAFA, encompassing both the U.S. and Canadian sailors is financially healthy. We're holding our own while the overall state of dinghy racing seems to be in decline.

With plenty of money in the bank, specifically \$17,790.97, most of our expenses revolve around:

- IEA dues — \$2718
- Solo expenses — \$1028
- U.S. Sailing dues — \$400
- Boat transport and grants — \$1,500
- Admin Expenses* — \$300

* Admin Expenses include, stationary, mailing expenses, wire fees, PayPal fees, and other expenses needed to successfully operate 5 01c3 non for profit organization.

The USAFA 2019 total income was: \$9,893.66

The Finn Class Board remains frugal with your money, while also looking for ways to promote and grow the class, as well as giving back to our members. My job is merely keeping track of the money!

Glen Selvin

USAFA Treasurer

How we stopped worrying and learned to love the travel

by Rodion Mazin

The struggles of the racing sailing community are pretty much the same anywhere in the world, it is impossible to find a dedicated and competent crew, it is expensive to transport the boat to the venues, it is hard to fit regattas into the busy schedules, and it requires vigorous planning to be able to spend as much time traveling as racing during the competition.

Back in the days, we sailed Lasers. The lasers were cheap! Cheap to buy, cheap to store, cheap and easy to travel with, easy to find the fleet even in the middle of nowhere. So we

traveled around the Midwest, North-east, and South. There were three of us from Chicago who collaborated; we had two boats on a trailer, and one on the roof rack. We had a bit more time and quite a bit less money. The cooperation helped to split the expenses, ease the long-distance trips, and make it more fun.



Of course, there is nothing new about travel collaboration. Clubs are doing it all the time. Coaches pulling 15-boat trailers with 420s, Lasers, and Optis are common. National Sailing Teams doing something similar. Darrel Peck dragging Finns around the country, however, may not be as common. Unfortunately, when you grow up, it is pretty hard to find a program that will support middle-aged men's passion for dingy sailing. Between 2018 and 2019 my brother Nikita and I dived back into sailing. "Iron board" Laser sailing was fun for a while, but the time came to step up the game and switch to something more reliable. It took over 100 phone calls and over 100 e-mails and another 100 hours of reading and online research to figure out what would be the best Finn/mast combination for us. Finally, we both had our boats and established the home base, at least until 2022 in Buzzards Bay, MA. And just like that, we were back to that same problem majority of the fleets experience within and outside of the U.S., if we wanted to compete we had to travel and travel far.

At the end of the last season, we were back to square one, with one major change, we now had a bit more money and much less time. The solution was pretty obvious, we had to have a car or a van that we would be able to leave in the general vicinity of the venue before or after the regatta. Additional-

ly, we would split the driver duties, which in turn would ease the strain on our schedules. Now we had to choose the fitting model and our budget. Our transport vehicle had to have at least 8 passenger seats to accommodate family vacation/sailing combo, medium roof heights to accommodate a boat on top and still have at least 11ft clearance, enough space to have 2 small beds, enough space for our sails, and a 6-cylinder engine.

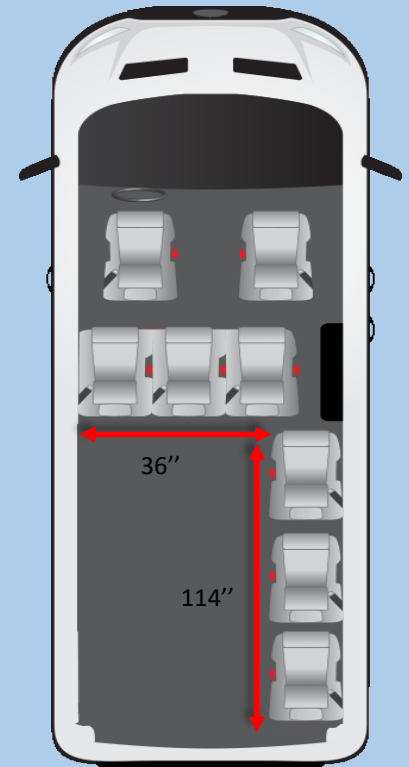
With all of our requirements in mind, we started to look for the right vehicle. And finally, we found an option that was just right for us, 15 Passenger, 2015 Ford Transit 350 XLT with a medium roof. Here is what our tab looked like in the end:

- ◆ 8 seats
- ◆ Medium roof
- ◆ 2 small beds
- ◆ Enough space for sails
- ◆ 6-cylinder engine

- Vehicle – \$13,725
- Registration and tax – \$2,074
- Tolls and the hitch - \$350
- Hitch wiring - \$55
- Roof Rack - \$310
- Expandable Ladder - \$60
- Total - \$16,574

We took out 7 back driver's side seats to have enough room for our sails, tools, and to have a place to sleep. Unfortunately, the well-known virus ruined our 2020 plans, and both our trailer and our boats got stuck in Miami, so we were not able to finish the project. The next step is to finish our six boat trailer and equip our travel vehicle into a sailing camper as soon as we can pick it up and deliver back to our home base. Now the van looks more like a hobo shelter with a

bunch of sails and tools inside. We are optimistic about the future and will keep on keeping on. Collaborate and cooperate, together we will be able to build a stronger fleet and have more fun on and off the race-course.



Total tally
\$16,574



Darrel's Guide to Success by Coach D

(The more comprehensive guide can be acquired during private or class organized clinics)

Although the Finn has strict one design standards for the hull, rig, and blades, it can be customized to fit an individual sailor's size, technique and style. The hiking straps should be adjusted to allow the skipper to hike all day without complaints (too much, at least). The straps

should be moved outboard enough to keep the straps from pulling on the toes. If the straps are too far outboard, they will have too much leverage and the skipper will get sore knees from hiking on the joints instead of the muscles. The hiking pads and risers can be adjusted to fit the skipper's leg length and hiking style.

Centerboard:

The centerboard fore and aft position is the most often overlooked Finn adjustment. The balance of the boat is determined by the distance between the centerboard (which lives in the most dense medium) and the sail plan's center of effort (mast rake and position). Keeping the board forward allows more bite and a tiny bit of weather helm when the boat is flat (perfectly flat). It makes the boat feel stiffer and more lively. Sliding the board aft in the boat, will decrease weather helm and make the ride softer. It is much easier to 'put the bow down' while keeping the boat flat in this mode. The aft end of the range should be set by the size and hiking ability of the sailor combined with the stiffness of the boat. The board should be lowered out of the trunk a little and the measurement taken from the aft edge of the



sailor or someone with a really stiff boat should optimize the range of movement -- aft. A heavy sailor or someone with a soft boat should optimize the range of movement -- forward. Going too far forward may damage the trunk. The class rules allow 2cm of adjustment forward from it's most aft position. The hole for the pin should be filed

accordingly.

Mast Butt Position:

These measurements are taken with the board in its most aft position, in heavy air mode. This adjustment will determine the amount of weather helm the driver feels while hiking the boat flat. If the skipper cannot hold the tiller extension easily with just the thumb and 2 fingers, there is too much helm and the rudder will act as a brake. There are many different ways to measure this. However, with 4+ different boat manufacturers, the easiest way is to measure the distance between the centerboard pin and the aft face of the mast at the butt. This way you will be measuring the position of the center of effort of the sail plan versus the centerboard, and the brand of boat won't matter. If the boat is getting wound up or feels tight, or the boat feels too stiff, or the sailor can't maintain hiking the entire race, the distance should be increased.

The Finn is fastest when the boom is on the deck. Regarding the traveler adjustment the most accurate way to describe the distance from the center line is by using where the boom is hitting the aft deck.

Medium wind settings have the widest range. Basically it covers anytime while the sailor is hiking but isn't being overwhelmed by power with the boom on the deck. So, in smooth water, these settings can be carried to nearly 20 knots. The traveler can be adjusted so the boom is as much as 4 inches inside the gunwale at the aft end, in small waves, with a small period, maybe until 14 knots. This will

be greatly determined by hiking ability for the entire race.

In winds between 6 to 10 kts the goal is to get into medium wind

mode as soon as possible. The boom will be on the deck at the corner of the gunwale or eased up as much as 8 inches. Anticipation while driving is key. Smooth water will allow the boom to be kept on the deck, well inside the gunwale. Waves or slop should be anticipated with the boom eased up 8 - 10 inches. With a stiff mast the mainsheet can never be cleated in these conditions.

When the wind drops below 5 kts and the sailors are sitting on the traveler bar, the goal is to get the boom parallel to the water without an absurd amount of leech tension. There is no backstay to bend the mast and remove "the bag". The sailor may have to hold the traveler down with a knee. Some sailors pull the vang on but this only works in smooth water. In rough conditions, with the



vang on, the rig has a tendency to bounce around and remove all flow from the sail. If the sail won't "fly" and hold its shape, extreme leeward heel will be required. Remember it could be worse, you could be in a Laser.

In heavy wind the goal is to keep the boat flat and moving fast. If you can't get the boom to go well outside the gunwale at the deck, it is OK to ease the boom up a few inches. However, this will make the sailplan fuller so care should be taken. If you do keep the boom on the deck, as the end goes outside the gunwale, the boom will drop vertically lower. This means you should rake the top of the mast aft (butt forward) so you don't end up increasing leech tension an undesirable amount. In puffy conditions easing the mainsheet a couple inches is actually bad and only makes the sail more baggy. Aggressive steering is better, and if you have to blow off the mainsheet, release 16 inches of sheet so the boom goes out instead of just up. The centerboard can be pulled up a few inches to ease weather helm and allow you to really "put the bow down".



board to the transom. The class minimum is 2050mm which is measured with an end for end jig. So, don't try to go aft of 2051 or it most likely will be illegal. Instructions for measuring this can be found in the class rule book. A lightweight

Where Legends Are Made

by Simon VanWonderen



Terry Neilson & Larry Lemieux – these were the Canadian Finn sailors I looked up to when I first started sailing the Finn. In my 16th year and already too big for a Laser these Canadian Olympic legends inspired my move into the Finn. Thanks to the Ontario Sailing Team program a handful of sailors including Mark Lammens, Derek Mess, myself and others were afforded loaner Finns (Abbott built Finns for the '76 games). I'll never forget my first international Olympic Class event – sailing a Finn at CORK against top Canadians and Americans in a 40 boat fleet. Decades later and I continue to be addicted to the class for much the same reasons - the physical and technical challenges, affordability and flexibility of a solo program, and of course the possibility to line up against the legends. And while there is still the thrill of starting against Olympic level sailors, such as Canadian Tom Ramshaw at CORK '18, it is the comradery and duking it out to the finish

against the Masters and weekend warriors that I now look forward to most.

The Starclass holds much the same allure for me as a racing sailor. At the Bacardi Cup this last spring there was no shortage of talent to race against in Miami - attracting international superstars like Paul Cayard and past Finn medalists such as Mateusz Kusznierewicz and Brian Ledbetter. The Star is generally regarded as a natural progression for a Finn sailor and Mateusz and Brian are just a few that have successfully made the jump. Others include Richard Clarke, Freddie Loof, Xavier Rohart and Jorge Zarif as helmsman, and Josh Revkin, Phil Tooth and Dave Martin as crew. If you have medals around your neck or enough dollars in your pocket you can choose the back of the boat, while mere mortals like myself are relegated to the front of the boat to demonstrate the splash taking and "hike till you drop" skills honed in the Finn. In truth, Finn sailing skills compliment both skipper and crew positions in the Star.

Both the Finn and the Star benefit from a long history of class development and worldwide fleet presence. Star class owners join and identify under a local fleet, which combines with other nearby fleets to form a District, often across Nations. This structure has proven successful in encouraging local sailors to compete in their Fleet or District level. More motivated racers go on to compete at Continental, East or West Hemisphere, or World levels. For the elite there may be an invitation to compete in the exclusive Star Sailor League for prize money. Last year the class introduced a U30 Worlds event that attracted top sailors from around the globe and paired them with pro crews. Interestingly, the Star class has been able to maintain its membership numbers despite having lost Olympic status after the 2012 London Games. The strong class structure has much to do with this success, as well as the evolving spirit of the Star makes it future ready.

The modern Finn is a different boat from when I first stepped into it, the carbon rig and reduced weight have been game changers. Like the Finn, the Star has been able to responsibly bring evolutions that have kept the boat interesting to the pros and fleet sailors alike. A combined all-up skipper and crew weight limit brought in years ago and has broadened the weight ranges. The 250+ lbs ex-football player crews that were once the crew ante is no longer. The Star class is now experimenting with the free pumping and rocking at pro and final medal race events. *Honoring the Past, Leading the Future* is the Star class slogan.

What does the future hold for the Finn class after this next and perhaps last Olympics? The



Tokyo Trials Standings

answer depends on who you ask. For me, I hope the North American Finn class can look to the success of the post-Olympic Star class for guidance and example. Strengthen the local fleets, like at Mobile, Denver and Toledo, foster new fleets like Toronto and Boston, plan accessible National events, and promote, including through participation by legends old and new. Continue to responsibly advance the evolution of the class, while being mindful of the affordability and fun factor for local sailors. Maintain the excellent level of racing that champions like Darrell and Derek and Roddy bring to the NA fleet. I look forward to the season ahead, though likely shortened, watching the Olympics in 2021, and bigger stronger fleets as we grow in North America.

N_f = √ by Peter Frissell

When I first got into the class I had heard some of the Olympic people talking about how stiffness affects the responsiveness of the boat. Having sailed in other classes for decades and seeing things like sail zippers go in and out of style I figured this hocus-pocus was in their imaginations. My first Finn had a very bendy Latini mast that I have been able to sail in rather extreme conditions and stay upright. Years ago this 175 Lb. Grandpa chartered a boat & mast that turned out to be extremely stiff. I was really fast in light air and thought I survived the heavy air and big waves out in the ocean pretty well. So, I bought the boat thinking I would be fast at inland lake regattas. The result, in the puffy inland lake conditions, was I simply could not keep the boat upright and earned the nickname "Flippy". Something was seriously wrong. The epiphany struck a few months later at work when I was preparing a seminar which included a discussion on natural frequency which is a way to define responsiveness. The higher the natural frequency the more responsive and less controllable a boat is, as physics dictates:

$$N_f = \sqrt{\text{(Stiffness/ Mass)}}$$

Or, in other words, the stiff mast coupled with my light weight resulted in a boat that was too responsive for me. To a degree, as a lightweight, I need to use a flatter sail to de-power and a softer mast to say upright. I've found that 10mm difference fore-aft bend in the 12kg mast test is enough that I can feel the difference in responsiveness. Amazing one can feel a

10mm difference (2% of the 500mm total bend).

When it comes to the feel, the amount of weather helm is pretty easy to understand and fix. One must move the mast forward and centerboard back to decrease weather helm to get the neutral helm described in the tuning guides. As wind increases it may be advantageous to raise the centerboard to reduce weather helm. One can raise the board till the boat starts to feel "mushy" and then drop it slightly.

I'm still learning to master the feel of the helm as one separates the mast and centerboard. I've heard the word "pancaked" applied when sailing in light air with too much separation between the mast and centerboard. Knowing how a well-tuned boat feels relative to one that is "pancaked" is one of the goals for the summer.

I purchased my first Finn in 2004 because I thought sailing it would improve my steering. I've learned an amazing amount and found the process to be both fascinating and most importantly a lot of fun working together to further our knowledge and our mutual skills.



Gordon Stevens'

by Robert Stevens

By the time Gordon was 16 he had outgrown the Laser. In the winter of 2016 our journey into the Finn Class began with a call to John Dane who had a Finn for sale. I had a long conversation with John where he extolled the virtues of the boat and how it was a perfect fit for Gordon. He sold me on the class but the complications of customs and duty made his boat not the best option for us. A month or so later Martin Robitaille's boat came up for sale. He had just finished first in the 2016 US Nationals and he was bringing the boat back to Montreal. I negotiated a deal with Martin for his boat, paid for

it and then told Gordon we are going for a drive to Montreal to pick up a Finn for him. Up until this time Gordon was not aware I was thinking about getting him a Finn and it was a very pleasant surprise for him. Martin had left for Europe to continue the Olympic Qualification process and we met his Dad at the Royal Yacht club to pick up the boat and trailer. After an uneventful fourteen-hour drive, we were back in Nova Scotia, with the Finn unloaded in our back yard for a quick cleaning and polish before starting spring sailing at our club.

Pursuit of Happiness



ROBERT DEAVES



With support from local former Finn sailors Gordon was able to begin sailing his Finn. Having never sailed a Finn before we sought the help of these friends and others in our sailing community that had experience in Finns. Gordie Anderson, a former successful Team Canada Finn Sailor from the 1980's, took Gordon out for his first few sails and taught him how to sail a Finn. Brian Todd, who sailed Finns in the 1970's and a retired Team Canada National coach, also spent some time coaching Gordon. Brian also connected us with Brendan Wilton, a more recent Finn sailor from our region. Brendan gave Gordon some help with rigging the boat and took him out for a few sails, passing on some more tips and guidance on sailing a Finn. As the spring progressed, Gordon continued training on the Finn with help from Brian Todd and our club's head coach Augustin Ferrario. Gordon continued to train in the Laser and participate in the Laser regattas on our club's race team schedule.

The spring and summer progressed, with the pinnacle of our race teams schedule, the CORK International and Youth regatta in August arriving. We made the trip to Kingston for the CORK regattas. As the pre-regatta training and preparation for the Cork Youth regatta in the Laser commenced, the Finns started to arrive for the OCR regatta. I introduced myself to Darrell Peck and Kyle Martin while they were unloading Darrell's charge of Finns. I explained I had a son, who was new to the Finn and could use some help learning how to sail it. After Gordon got in from his days training on the Laser I introduced him to Darrell and Kyle. Kyle offered to connect with Gordon and let him go out training with him the next day.

Over the next few days the rest of the Finn sailors arrived at CORK, rigged their boats, and started training. Gordon sailed the CORK Youth regatta in his Laser and when he got in from the day of racing he would rig his Finn

and join the Finns training for the CORK OCR. Following training we found a great pasta restaurant (The Pasta Shelf) to refuel and debrief. Once the OCR began Kingston brought some of its typical conditions with good wind and waves. Kyle won the regatta, Darrell finished third behind Rockal Evans, followed by Jim Cameron in fourth, and Gordon only two points behind in fifth. From our experience at CORK with the boat and the members of the class we knew the Finn was the boat for Gordon.

We returned to Halifax with our goals set for the Finn North Americans in Pass Christian which was couple months later in October. While Gordon continued training in Halifax I thought we needed to make a plan so he can train with other Finns. I found a nice lightly used 2006 Classic in New York during September and brought it home with the intentions of having some other Finn sailors come train with Gordon. Now with two modern Finns, Gordie Anderson was asked to help Gordon prepare for the upcoming North Americans. Gordie Anderson was a very accomplished Finn sailor, having finished third at the Gold Cup in 1988 and was the Canadian alternate in the Finn Class at the Seoul Summer Olympics. With some boat on boat training with Gordie, Gordon further refined his boat handling and boat speed in preparation for the Pass Christian North Americans.

October arrived and we made the three-day drive to Pass Christian, Mississippi. When we arrived we were met with the awesome hospitality of the Pass Christian Yacht Club members, management, and staff. It was at this regatta that we truly understood that the Finn class was like a family. All the class members made Gordon feel welcome and helped him train and prepare for the regatta. As a par-

ent I was also treated very well by the Dane's, with John Dane arranging for me to go out on his family's boat to watch the regatta. Up to this point I had not seen Gordon in an actual race with his Finn, only training. I really appreciated this gesture from John Dane and his family. The regatta went well for Gordon where he finished fourth, and at age eighteen was also the top youth. After his success in this regatta the Lauderdale OCR in December was the next regatta on our list. Once again John Dane helped us out by renting us some space in his inside warehouse to store until the Lauderdale regatta.

Upon returning to Nova Scotia Gordon continued his training on the second Finn we had acquired a few months earlier. Brian Todd also provided some on the water coaching and a couple times he actually got to sail the Finn which was something he hadn't done since racing in the 1978 Gold Cup in Manzanillo, Mexico. When Brian mentioned he was going to the World Sailing Annual Conference in Barcelona I asked that if he sees anybody from the Finn class if he could enquire about Gordon attending the Dinghy Academy in Valencia. Brian happened to be seated with Corrine McKenzie at one of the social events and was introduced to



Luca Devoti. After a conversation with Luca and Corrine, it was decided Gordon would be a good fit for training at the Dinghy Academy that next summer.

The 2017 Lauderdale OCR was the next regatta on the schedule. The Nova Scotia Sailing team was there with the Lasers and we had some support from the Provincial Coach, Lisa Ross. Once the regatta started, Ken Dool, Canada's director of high performance, arrived and took over for Lisa while she worked with the Lasers. With some help over the phone from Tom Ramshaw, Ken helped Gordon with setting up the boat and provided coaching and support on the racecourse. Gordon finished third, with Alexey Selivanov in first and John Dane in second. We took the boat home to Halifax and began planning spring training and the trip to Valencia.

At this point Gordon was a senior in High school so regattas like the Miami OCR were out of the question as it conflicted with school. While planning for the summer and the Dinghy Academy, I noticed the 2017 Dinghy Academy cup coincided with Gordon's March school break. I contacted Luca who found a boat for Gordon and airfare was acquired. This regatta was a good chance to get familiar with Valencia and to plan better for Gordon's summer training there. From the experience of a week in Valencia training and the regatta we came to the conclusion that for the summer Gordon would need his own boat and a mast better suited to him. Over the next few months I searched for and managed to charter a Fantastica for the summer and found a mast to purchase.

As spring of 2017 and the departure to Spain approached, we worked on funding this summer campaign. Most of it was just funded through our



savings, which is the way of a lot of youth sailors get funded. We also sold the second 2006 Finn, as now the plan was to train in Spain. Our Provincial sailing federation provided some funding to help with the Silver Cup, as it was a Youth Worlds, and the Corinthian fund of our yacht club, the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron, provided a small amount to help with the expenses too. In addition, a friend who I sail with arranged to buy Gordon a WB Classic sail for the Silver Cup, funded by their business, Charm Diamond Centres, along with some co-op funding from Citizen Watch Canada. Gordon Finished high school, went to the Prom, and a few days later was off to Valencia for his three months with the Dinghy Academy, culminating with the 2017 Silver Cup on Lake Balaton in Hungary. After the Silver Cup Gordon flew home to start his first year of University, missing the frosh week because of the late August, early September dates of the Silver cup. Our chartered Finn was returned to the owner, who then loaned it to a Dinghy Academy sailor to use for the Gold Cup that started across Lake Balaton, immediately after the Silver Cup.

The fall of 2017 was taken up with adapting to University life and training on the Finn. Gordon was at a local University and was staying at home, which saved some funds and allowed him to still train on his



ROBERT DEAVES

Finn. In November he was given a grant from the Sail Nova Scotia Legacy Trust to help him pursue the qualification for the Aarhus Worlds. The next regatta was the North American's in West Palm Beach in December, which he finished fourth in and was to under 23. The boat remained in Florida and Gordon next competed at the Miami OCR in January of 2018. He finished twenty second in the OCR, just behind Kyle and qualified for the Aarhus worlds.

The qualification for the Aarhus Worlds, opened up more support from our provincial sailing association and another contribution from our club's Corinthian fund. Charm Diamond Centres and Citizen Watch Canada also provided the funds to buy another WB sail, this time a NEO. Gordon began his training once again in the spring of 2018 and once University was over he packed up and once again started training at the Dinghy Academy. The spring and all of the summer of 2018 was filled with the uncertainty of World Sailing dropping the Finn from the classes it would present for inclusion in the 2024 Olympics. This added to the stress for the younger sailors like Gordon, who was only 19 and not expecting to qualify for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, having set his sights on 2024. This stress was reflected in the training and ultimately the results for him at the Aarhus Worlds and later at the 2018 Silver Cup in Koper.

In Aarhus Gordon was given support from Sail Canada in the form of coaching and on the water support. He was able to join Tom Ramshaw and Kyle Martin under the coaching of Larry Lemieux. Tom went on to qualify Canada for the Olympic berth. For the Silver Cup in Koper, Slovenia, Milan Vujasinovic provided support and coaching for Gordon. For both Aarhus and the Silver Cup the Dinghy Academy helped with the logistics of moving the boats. Using the Dinghy Academy's Van and trailer to make the long journey back to Valencia, Joan Cardona Mendez with Gordon as a co-pilot made the long journey back from Koper to Valencia. Upon their arrival to Valencia Gordon had to immediately fly back for University in Canada and avoid overstaying the ninety-day limit in Europe.

It was now September 2018 and the drama of World Sailing; the Finn and the 2024 Olympics was in full play. Gordon was back at University and continued to occasionally train in his 2007 Devoti. It was not looking good for the Finn staying in the Olympics. I thought we should make the best of a bad situation and made a plan to attend the 47th Christmas Regatta in Palamós, Spain. We would do this as a family; Gordon sailing his Finn and Matthew would sail a Laser Radial. To help pay for some of this I suggested rather than pay to get our house painted that fall we would as a family paint it ourselves, limit the amount of Christmas gifts, and use the funds save towards the trip. In November the Finn was voted out of the slate of equipment for the 2024 Paris Olympics. We knew this was probably the end of Gordon's aspirations in the Finn.

The trip to Spain in December of 2018 was a great adventure for our family. Up until this time we had only seen Gordon sailing in North

America. His previous trips to sail in Europe were done solo and we could only follow along by watching any posts on social media by the Dinghy Academy or the regatta sites. We arrived in Barcelona where we rented a minivan that had side rails to take roof racks and set off for Valencia. In Valencia we rented a wonderful three-bedroom AirBnB at a very reasonable off-season rate. Gordon gave us a quick tour of Valencia on our way down to the Dinghy Academy where we finally got to meet Luca Devoti and the rest of Gordon's Dinghy Academy teammates. Luca suggested Gordon train for a few days there before we packed the boat up and headed to Palamós. We spent a few wonderful days in Valencia. I managed to get out with Luca and Ahmad to shoot some photos from the coach boat. After four days of sailing and fine food in Valencia we loaded the Finn for the drive to Palamós.

The Christmas Regatta in Palamós was a fun adventure for the whole



family. The accommodations were once again very reasonable because of the off season. The sailing was boom or bust. On Matthew's first training day in the Laser Radial it was gusting over thirty knots and huge waves. For the regatta the wind let off a bit but most days were in the twenty-knot range with big seas but with one day completely calm. I volunteered to take photos for the Finn Class and did this from a rescue boat which gave me excellent access for photos. Once again we had the opportunity to meet some of the great members of the Finn Class, both young and old. When the regatta ended we arranged storage for the Finn with Renting Ribs. They picked the boat up at the venue while retrieving the Ribs they had out on rental and took it back to the warehouse in Barcelona where it would remain stored until we found a way to get it back to North America. We finished our vacation spending Christmas in Barcelona and flew home a few days later.

The final Finn regatta for Gordon was the 2019 Miami World Cup. As I think back I can't really remember why we did it, maybe because he was invited or that we thought perhaps the Finn wasn't truly done for the 2024 Olympics. I also joined Gordon for this regatta and shot a few photos for the Finn class. After Miami we took the Finn home, Gordon continued his studies at University and started looking for a summer job.

When the summer of 2019 came around the Finn got little use as Gordon was working full time coaching disabled sailors six days a week. He also coached adults three evenings a week. Little time was available for him to sail the Finn and there was little hope by then that the Finn would return for the Paris Olympics. Having seen the masters sail the Finn at Cork and Palamós I decided to sail it a bit myself. Our club experimented with some Portsmouth handicap races for dinghies and I participated in all of them. CORK was approaching again and this time I brought the Finn for one of the Miami master to use, as I had to be there anyway with my youngest that was doing the Radial Worlds. After CORK it was sold and that was the end of Gordon's Finn sailing career for now.

Come Hike With Us in San Diego! *By John Reiter*

Finn sailors from across San Diego sailed on an amazing Southern California weekend on January 18-19 hosted by SDYC. Our home playground of the Coronado Roads gave us nearly Champagne conditions for the Finn on Saturday with 10-14 knots and light chop. Mike Entwistle was strong throughout the day with a 2-2-1 for the lead, followed closely by S/C Reiter and James Buley just behind. Your scribe found some speed upwind and wants to share that it was the new-to-him technique of droop hiking – all balled up over the rail the entire time vs. straight leg hiking. Turns out the benefit to staying over the rail is that you don't shake the wind out of the sail each time you come in, and the same goes for the foils in the water. When the boat stands up in the light stuff, you first dump the outhaul to power up the sail plan, and/or raise the traveler a bit. Finn North American champion Darrel Peck helped with the idea last fall and it paid off nicely as the wheels were trued better than ever before (at least upwind). It's certainly harder, but you sure get the benefit of having heaps less weather helm. It's definitely like being a Star crew (not that I'm an expert there...) dipping in the water once in a while, but seemed worth it for the speed and height VMG trade-off.



Saturday night was the first-in-recent-memory SD Finn Fleet awards banquet hosted by Fleet Captain S/C Mike Dorgan. The venue, F&B, and company were spot on as a whole mess of trophies were awarded including the Spring Series win to S/C Mike Dorgan, Summer Series to Lee Hope, and Fall events to S/C Dorgan and others. Mike capped off the year by winning the coolest trophy you'll see in the case this year – a replica of the power source from the Iron Man movies worn by the lead character and designed & built by James Buley. It even lights up! Your 2019 Finn Iron Man was

no surprise – our Pied Piper for the Finn fleet sailed more than anyone and dominated just about every event he entered to boot, Staff Commodore Mike Dorgan. In 2019, a total of 43 Finn sailors competed for the Ironman Trophy-a record in SoCal! Afterward, the all-Finn band of Gary Mitchell (lead & vocals), Lee Hope (mouth organs), Rich Wright (bass) and Jim Hecht (skins) wailed away with a wonderful set to both Finn sailors, concerned onlookers, and active passersby. Lisa Reiter reminded the band of their encore, and arguably tightest song, Folsom Prison Blues by Mr. Cash, and all went away merrily into the rest of their evening plans.

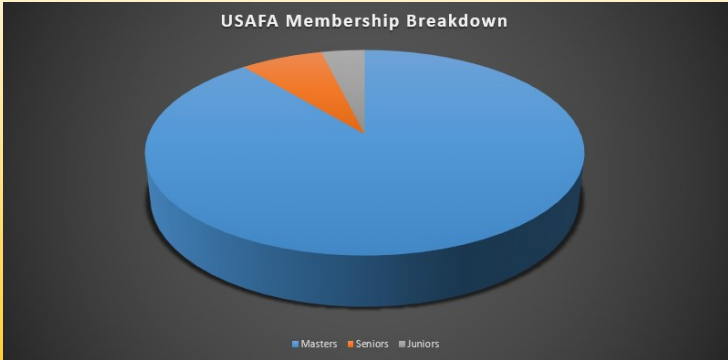
Sunday’s forecast was weak and it started out just that way with 0-5kts out of everywhere. PRO and Dr./Dir. Alli Bell quietly calmed things down and found us 6-8kts out of 190 degrees and away we went. NHYC Finn stalwart Robert Kinney came to town for the day and led the most important leg – the last, and won race one. James Buley took a perfectly timed flyer to the left on race two, leg two and sailed his way back into the game as the breeze slowly died. It was enough to pull out the win, followed by Lee Hope with your author in third. This charging finish pulled James into the top spot for the weekend and a well-deserved weekend win to take the lead in the Iron Man standings for 2020! S/C Reiter 2nd, Entwistle 3rd.



The USAFA goal for the future is not only to expand the attendance at the major regattas, but also to draw a new blood into our ranks. The data we have collected is pretty gruesome, the backbone of our class is the masters fleet standing at impassive 89%. Only 7.2% of our fleet are the seniors ages 24-40, and less than 4% are the juniors younger than 23 years old. We have to make a major push towards the crowd of folks 28-40 years old. These people should be the back bone of the class. This is an age when people are more financially stable and can afford a Finn. One way to do so is to open the programs not only to those who are younger than 23, but to everyone who is younger than 40 and didn’t reach the masters age. If we are not going to do so, our fleet will literally die out from old age.

You participation matters!

As of today, we have 104 members, 63 made payments for CY 2020 or otherwise eligible for the membership. We are still waiting for another 41 to complete their payments. Please remind your friends to complete USAFA membership payment. We are Looking forward to seeing you on the Race



Course. Remember, we need you to promote Finn sailing in your area, this is the only way we can grow as a class!



Dinghy Racing USA is the North American importer of Finns and all Finn accessories. We currently have several entry-level and near new Finns ready to sail. We have covers, rigging, blocks, rudders, tillers, scales, and many other parts you need.

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North American Finn Championship, Lauderdale YC, 2006