



## **2008 Clagett Regatta**

### ***Inkiala Skippers to Win of 2008 Blind Sailing National Championship***

### ***Tricky Breeze Challenges Sailors in Paralympic Classes***

NEWPORT, R.I. (August 20, 2008) – Luck was on the side of competitors yesterday for the opening day of the 2008 C. Thomas Clagett Jr. Memorial Regatta as a cold front went through Narragansett Bay with fierce thunderstorms that fortunately split north and south to bypass the area. With predictions for breezier conditions today, racers in the three Paralympic classes who were joined for the first time at this event by the blind sailors racing in J/22s, went back to work on-the-water as an up and down northerly with an ebbing current made for a challenging day.

Luck, however, was not a factor in determining the 2008 Blind Sailing National Championship which was won by skipper Sengil “Inky” Inkiala (Watertown, Mass.) and crew Nancy Jodoin (West Brookfield, Mass.), sailing with sighted guides Ken Legler (Reading, Mass.) and Harry Berman (Hull, Mass.). “A great amount of our success comes from the sighted guides,” said Inkiala who has sailed with Legler (the head sailing coach at Tufts University) for over 10 years. “Communication is important and when he gives me a command I know [exactly] what he means.” Jodoin, however, had only practiced one time with Inky prior to racing this event with him. “He called me on the phone last week so we could get some communication over the phone,” she said. “His advice was to ‘be calm.’” The win of the national championship

marks the “fifth or sixth” time Inky has claimed the title -- with this one earned on his 51<sup>st</sup> birthday. “It was more fun to be with The Clagett,” Inkiala added. “Each time we went out from Sail Newport Ken was giving us info on the other boats [racing]. We loved it!”

Inkiala’s team started the day with a two-point lead over the team helmed by defending champion Matt Chao (Boston, Mass.). Chao’s team -- crew Deborah Keating (Woburn, Mass.) and sighted guides Peter Frisch (Swampscott, Mass.) and Tom Winston (Charlestown, Mass.) – were able to win only one race on the final day of the series to the four bullets posted by Inkiala whose worst finish -- a fourth in race nine – was dropped to give his team the championship title with 12 points to the 20 collected by Chao’s team. Jason Wallenstein (Quincy, Mass.) with Mark Bos (Gloucester, Mass.) and sighted sailors Bill Rapp (Rockport, Mass.) and Lisa O’Connor (Hull, Mass.) finished third overall with 22 points. Duane Farrar (Watertown, Mass.) and Mitsuhiro Iwamoto (San Diego, Calif.) with sighted guides Patrick Schule (Boston, Mass.) and Bob Costello (Medfield, Mass.) were fourth with 33 points. Nina Kagan (Boston, Mass.) and Bruce Howell (Needham, Mass.) sailed with sighted guides Arthur O’Neill (Needham, Mass.) and Peter Harrington (Newton, Mass.) to a fifth place finish, followed by the California team of Alan Spector (San Francisco), Danette Davis (Berkeley) with visually impaired sailors Philip Kum (San Francisco) and Walter Raineri (Belmont).

Next March the teams helmed by Chao, Wallenstein and Raineri will represent the USA at the 2009 Blind Sailing World Championship in New Zealand. At the world championships, the vision classification of the skipper determines in which division each four-person team will compete. Chao, who has been totally blind since birth, will compete in the B1 Division; Raineri, who has Retinitis Pigmentosa, will sail in the B-2 Division; and Wallenstein, whose vision loss is due to complications from Diabetes, will race in the B3 Division for sailors who are the least visually impaired.

Lucky would not be the term used today by the USA’s 2008 Paralympic representatives in the Sonar class after a collision with a submerged concrete slab damaged their boat and put the brakes on the lead they held after day one’s five races. Rick Doerr (Clifton, N.J.), Tim Angle (Somerville, Mass.) and Bill Donohue (Brick, N.J.) placed 2-3-2 in today’s racing while the Canadian Paralympic team helmed by Ken Kelly with crew Don Terlson and Mark Shaw (all Victoria, B.C.) won all three races to move into first overall in the four-boat fleet. The two teams are now tied at 10 points each heading into the final day of this event.

In the SKUD-18s, day one fleet leaders Scott Whitman (Brick, N.J.) and Julia Dorsett (West Chester, Penn.) remain in first overall despite the consistent sailing of John McRoberts and Stacie Louttit (both Victoria, B.C.). Canada’s Paralympic representatives opened the day with a fourth-place finish and then won the final three races to end the day with 13 points – two points out of first – to set the stage for an all-out battle in tomorrow’s final races.

In the 2.4 Metre class, Canada’s Paralympic representative Paul Tingley (Halifax, Nova Scotia) won the first three races and followed with two second-place finishes to retain the overall lead with 11 points. The USA’s Paralympic representative, John Ruf (Pewaukee, Wisc.), has 15 points after finishes of 2-2-2-3-1. Charles Rosenfield (Woodstock, Conn.), who also won a race today, remains third overall with 19 points.

Competition for the sailors in the three Paralympic events concludes Thursday, August 21. Complete results are available at: [www.ussailing.net/Clagett/](http://www.ussailing.net/Clagett/)

**About the C. Thomas Clagett Jr. Memorial Regatta** – With a stated mission of providing sailors with disabilities the opportunity to hone their competitive skills, “The Clagett” incorporates a one-day clinic and follows with on-the-water coaching with a goal of preparing sailors for future success. Hosted by Sail Newport, Rhode Island’s Public Sailing Center, since its inception in 2003, the event has grown from offering racing in Sonars (2003-2004), to include 2.4 Metres (2005), and Skud-18s (2006) – all classes selected for the 2008 Paralympic Games. In 2008 the addition of J/22s broadened the field of participants to include sailors who are sight-impaired. Serving as the Blind Sailing National Championship, the event attracted six teams of four – two visually impaired sailors who race with two sighted guides.

The C. Thomas Clagett Jr. Memorial Regatta honors the late Tom Clagett (1916-2001), a U.S. Navy World War II veteran who learned to sail on the Chesapeake Bay. As a youngster he suffered temporary paralysis as the result of a bout of meningitis; it was an experience that left him with a deep respect for the accomplishments of people with disabilities, especially athletes.

Background on the event is available online at [www.ussailing.net/Clagett/](http://www.ussailing.net/Clagett/)

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