

History of Fleet 43

Fleet 43 was chartered in 1975 by three members of the Coos Bay Yacht Club. They were Tom Stamper, Kurt Homan, and Steve Herman. They picked up their new San Juan Mark II's from the Clark factory in Kent, Washington.

Kurt Homan and his wife Ute, purchased the very first San Juan to be in Fleet 43. Kurt and Ute, who could sail any boat to victory, won the Coos Bay Yacht Club championship the very next year in their new San Juan. In 1978 Kurt sailed to a second place standing in the San Juan mid-winters held on San Francisco Bay where they were caught in a storm with winds officially clocked at 72 mph! Kurt and Ute named their boat Zena, after their one year old daughter. Kurt Homan was the CBYC commodore in 1980-81. Kurt and Ute are currently CBYC associate members and reside in Bend, Or. Zena, hull #1505, was sold to Paul Burgett around 1980. Paul sold Zena to John Griswold in 1988 and in 1990 John sold her to Tom Kyle and Tom Benz. Tom and Mary Benz enjoyed sailing the San Juan so much that they sold their Buccaneer and bought Kyle's share of the boat. In 2003 Tom and Mary traded the mark II San Juan to Butch Gulseth for a newer mark III. Butch then sold the boat to its present owner Richard Rudder. Hull # 1505 has been in Fleet 43 for over 28 years and is still racing.

Tom Stamper was elected the first Fleet captain in 1975. Tom and his wife Joan were obviously fast learners in their new boat because they won the CBYC club championship the very first year they had their San Juan. Tom was also the Coos Bay Yacht Club commodore in 1975-76. Tom and Joan sold their boat to Mike and Carol Miller, who later sold it to Mike McCormick who then sold the boat to its present owner Bob Mason. Tom and Joan

named their boat Osprey and are currently associate CBYC members living on Osprey lane in North Bend, Or. Osprey has been in Fleet 43 for over twenty eight years and is still an active participant in the Coos Bay Yacht Club racing schedule.

Steve Herman and his wife Joyce also picked up their new San Juan (hull #1541) Crazy H, from the Clark factory in Kent, Wa. Steve and Joyce sailed Crazy H to club championships in 1979 and again in 1981. Steve and Joyce sold Crazy Horse to John Wood of Woodburn, Or. John renamed Crazy H to Impulse and sailed the boat on Fern Ridge reservoir. Crazy H was the only one of the three original San Juan's to leave the CBYC and Fleet 43. Steve Herman was commodore of the Coos Bay Yacht Club in 1983-84 before he passed away from an illness of cancer. Joyce, now remarried, lives in Big Canoe, Georgia.

In the first 7 years after the introduction of the San Juan 21 they had won 4 club championships. Thus the existence of the San Juan 21 and fleet 43 became well established and grew rapidly to the largest San Juan fleet anywhere.

The next three boats, listed below, to join Fleet 43 were purchased from the Clark factory in 1978. All three are still in fleet 43 and are still active some 25 years later.

Howard and Margaret Watkins purchased hull # 1834. They named their new boat Margarita. Howard and Margaret sold Margarita to Craig and Shari Main who actively race with fleet 43.

Dave and Bonnie Morgan purchased hull # 1835 and named their new boat Leo Lady. Dave and Bonnie liked to cruise in the San Juan Islands as well as race with Leo Lady. They sold their boat to John Gjerkson who then sold it to Jon and Kathy Richards. Jon

and Kathy raced to a third place finish in the 2003 fleet 43 standings.

Nick and Glenda Nickson purchased hull # 1836. They actively raced their new boat Rocking Chair with fleet 43. Even after Nick had an illness that left him with a serious handicap he modified the boat and continued to race. Nick was CBYC commodore in 1967-68 and club champion in 1982. Nick also loved woodworking and made the working sails perpetual trophy for the Western Region. The boat has been passed on to their daughter and son in law, Rick and Lynnae Biasca, who have removed the modifications and kept Rocking Chair sailing in the fleet.

There are 26 active memberships in fleet 43 making it the largest San Juan 21 fleet in North America. We are a very active and proficient racing fleet and will host the San Juan 21 North Americans at the CBYC in 2004. In 2003 fleet 43 placed 9 boats in the first 10 finishes in the working sails class at the San Juan 21 Western Nationals on Huntington Lake. Due to the shifty and gusty winds and the short legs of our course on Ten Mile Lake the fleet only races in the working sails class. It seems remarkable that 5 of the first six boats in fleet 43 are still actively racing in the same fleet well over 25 years later.