



## Remembering Hobie

“They first time we took the Hobie 16 prototypes to the snow, he, Phil, Paul, & I went to Vail Lake. I had a Hobie 14, but I’d never been on a trapeze. Hobie said, “Get in this little butt bucket, clip onto the wire & just hang out.” I said, “You gotta be kidding!” Finally, I gave in. Then Hobie started to fly the hull & I screamed, “What are you doing? Stop!” Hobie replied, “Mary, for God’s sake, who would you rather be sailing with?”

Phil was on one 16, Hobie & I on the other, & it was who could get the hull up the highest. We were practically at 90 degrees when the dueling hulls & the pylon caved in on the boat & the whole thing kind of pitch-poled. I went flying around the whole boat tied to this thing & hit everything you could possibly hit, & then the boat came crashing down on top of me. I mean, it was a full blown disaster. I was black and blue from head to toe, & from that day on, every time I saw Hobie, he’d say, “Trust me, I’m Hobie.”

—Mary Edwards

## *A Conversation with the “Hobie Cat 6”*

### **Part 2: Promoting the Hobie Cat**

by Donna Jost



#### **FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE:**

Robbie: Art Hendrickson was a business guy and Hobie was an artist.

Wayne: Art was a real estate mogul. He made a lot of money, good businessman, but his vision was get in there, make it cheap, and sell the company. Hobie’s wasn’t.

Paul: The truth is, Art ran the company, and that let Hobie go do what he wanted to do most; prototype, prototype, prototype, and he prototyped everything in the world. It was a good marriage. It really was.

*(Cont. on Page 5)*



## 2016 Donations

### THE HOBIE MEMORIAL FOUNDATION RECEIVES 501 (c) (3) STATUS

Contributions to the Hobie Memorial Foundation are now tax deductible. On February 23, 2016, the Hobie Memorial Foundation received an exclusion letter from the IRS, which recognizes it as a legal 501(c)(3) tax exempt charitable organization, with effect retroactive to September 17, 2015.

To make a tax deductible contribution to the Foundation, go to [www.hobiememorial.com](http://www.hobiememorial.com) or send an email to us at [hobiememorial@gmail.com](mailto:hobiememorial@gmail.com).

**ONE HOBIE.  
ONE GOAL.  
GIVE  
BECAUSE  
YOU CARE.**

[www.hobiememorial.com](http://www.hobiememorial.com)

## *Jeff Canepa* Hobie Cat World / National Champion



*Jeff Canepa on Phil Edwards' Prototype*

Three years after R. Paul Allen won the inaugural Hobie Cat 14 Nationals in Del Mar, California, 18-year old Jeff Canepa took first place in Surfside, Texas. Following in the wake of former champions—Allen, Cappy Sheeley, and Richard Loufek—the one thing Canepa had in common with his predecessors was that racing a Hobie 14 had everything to do with their skills as sailors, which was the foundation for One-Design.

There are two primary methods of competition in sailboat racing: One-Design and Handicap. The former refers to a racing class that consists of just one model or design, where the first boat to finish wins the race. Handicapping adjusts each competitor's elapsed time over the course by a factor based on the handicap figure for their boat.

The One-Design idea goes back one and a half centuries to 1887 when it was created by Thomas Middleton of the Shankill Corinthian Club located south of Dublin, Ireland, proposing a class of double-ended open dinghy called the Water Wag. The idea was quickly adopted by sailors in Ireland, England, India and South America.

The following is Jeff's story in his own words.

### **The Beginning**

In my youth, I crewed on my Dad's Shark Cat, designed by Dick Gibbs, which was very fast, but complicated. Then the

P-Cats came out. This boat excited the Southern California surfers who needed a good ride when there weren't waves. That's when beach cats started to surface. I remember sailing on one of the first P-Cats with Jack O'Neill where they regularly surfed Steamer Lane, but it too was heavy and clumsy and not what I wanted. By 1970, the Hobie 14 was just hitting the Northern California scene and ideal for my 145 pound frame. In Santa Cruz, long time surfers and local watermen, Jim Foley, Don Snyder, Howard Spruit, and small boat racers Jack Halterman, Rob Wade, and Don Radcliff all started racing Hobie 14's.

I soon started getting a lot of exposure in California, winning local races and traveling to regattas with my Dad, Angelo, a Lincoln Mercury dealer, who was an active Santa Cruz Yacht Club member, sailor, and racer. In the early 70s, he financially backed a local sailboat dealer, who had Morgan, O'Day and Jensen Marine that made 'Cal' boats. Jensen was the only manufacturer based out of Costa Mesa and used a successful Southern California naval architect by the name of Bill Lapworth. Bill is most famous for his TransPac-winning Cal 40. My father went to all the Hobie regattas, trained as my personal pit-crew, and along with my Mom, they were my biggest fans.

Hooking up with Hobie, I got involved with O'Neill Wetsuits and became their sales rep for their sailing line of suits and gave sailing clinics in between regattas. During my tenure there, I introduced a snow ski pant that was developed, and it was in the ski industry that I met well known snow skier Billy Kidd, who I taught how to sail. During the early years, Hobie Cat hired Billy Kidd when advertising their boats to the ski industry.

Geographically, Hobie expanded very quickly. Hobie Cat Company included the talents of Sandy Banks, Rich Jeffries and their 'PR' guy Paul Collins, who deserves credit for getting them national visibility. The majority of people involved with Hobie Cat appeared to be from the surfing industry, where as Paul was a total 'marketing guy' and familiar with 'business sponsorships'. As I recall, Paul was the first to get liquor distributors to sponsor regattas.

Soon competing around the country as a top finisher in regional and national championships, the costs for airfare and boat regatta rental costs were paid, making it easy to travel to many events. It was a pretty great time to race small boats and no other boat builder had that focus or vision.

## **Regionals**

At one of my first regattas, the Division 2A Regional Championships at South Lake Tahoe, I had an advantage. I was competing against experienced sailors 10 years older than I was. Fortunately for me, even with all of their experience, they didn't take into account the high altitude conditions in Lake Tahoe. They went from the worst; 25 to 30 knots of wind and wind swells to light air drift conditions. In Tahoe's high altitude, the thinner air produced a real wind velocity closer to 10-15 knots making it difficult to understand. Then, when the wind shut off, Tahoe's light air made it a drifting event. Thanks to my inexperience, I wasn't thrown off by the unexpected weather change and ended up winning, which qualified me for the Hobie 14 Nationals in Hawaii.

Another advantage I had over most of my competitors was that I rarely modified my boat between regattas. Within the rules of One-Design, you were allowed certain modifications. In the beginning at all of the nationals, Hobie provided the boats, so I got into the practice of sailing boats right out of the box.

Instead, my secret to sailing faster than the other guys was to sail with a loose rig. I slacked the side wires-stays as far as they would go. That way the mast raked back upwind and downwind, the boom swung out wide so I could carry lower sailing angles. This minor wire tensioning took no more than five minutes to change, and made a huge performance difference in all wind conditions.

It took fellow racers and experienced competitors some time to figure out what I was doing, which was basically tensioning the wires to my racing skills and sailing style. I sailed at the minimum

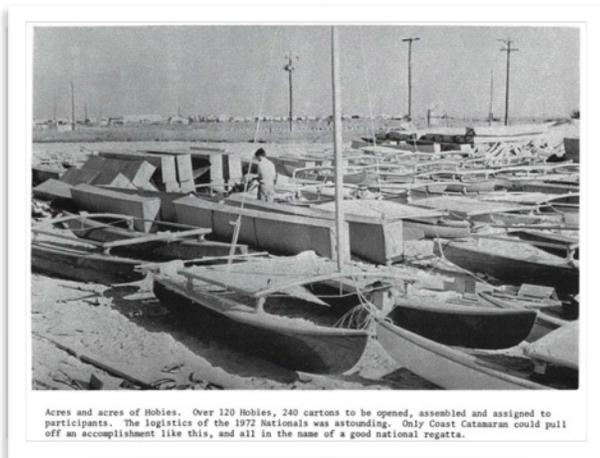
Hobie 14 class weight of 150 pounds. I also spent much of the winter months skiing, became an active cyclist, runner, and sailed regularly to stay in good shape.



*Photo taken from the Hobie Cat Hotline, December 1972*

## The First Hobie 14 World Championship

The first Hobie 14 World Championship was held in the winter of 1972 on the beach at the Kaimana Hotel, next door to the Outrigger Canoe Club. Airfare with hotel at the Kaimana cost \$275; alone airfare was \$190 round trip. Arriving early to acclimate myself, I helped assemble the new Hobie 14's sent over for the race at McWayne Marine Supply.



*Photo taken from the Hobie Cat Hotline, December 1972*

I dominated the regatta throughout, up to the last two races, and was virtually a shoe-in for the first World Champion title. However, in the last-minute drive, Richard Loufek won the last of the nine-race series, taking the crown from my hands by a heartbreaking close margin of only 3/4 of a point.

Regaining my momentum, I went on to win back to back World Championships; the first in 1974 at Matavai Bay, Tahiti, with Loufek in second place, and Phil Berman in third, then again in 1975 in Palmas Del Mar, Puerto Rico, winning over Randy Hatfield and Keith Baxter. I followed that victory up

with a second place trophy at the first Hobie 16 World in Honolulu in 1976. Teaming up with Richard Loufek, I mistakenly gave the wrong directions, and we lost to Dean Froome and John Driscoll. Racing a Hobie 18 in the 1977 Hobie Nationals in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, my partner, Bob Gassie and I came across the finish line in first place.

I never really retired from sailing, my racing patterns just changed. By the end of '78 I found a lovely gal and got married. A year later, I took a job working for a German plastic company that made sailboards and kayaks. For a short time, I purchased an Olympic Class Tornado and thought an Olympic campaign would recharge my interest. As it turned out, it was terribly expensive with little to no fun, and not much success.

By the mid 90's I hired a San Francisco Naval Architect that was a 'multi-hull' aficionado. Jim Antrim helped me re-design a small 20-foot trailerable, which became the ULTIMATE 20 Class. Today, I have a licensed builder in Italy that's built over 150 boats and a US builder in Southern California, Columbia Yachts, that builds a handful a year. In total, there are nearly 330 Ultimate 20s sailing in the US, Canada, Germany, Italy, Austria, the UK, and the Philippines. Jim is just now completing a new design and what we believe it to be the next generation 22 foot trailerable. Most important of all, it will be fun to sail and as fast as any catamaran downwind.

### ***“A Conversation with the Hobie Cat 6: (Cont. from Page 1)***

Wayne: Hobie had a P-Cat out in front of his place in Laguna. He was always interested, he just didn't have time to devote to it because he was running the surfboard business. So when Art came along, he accelerated the business end and let Hobie do just as Paul says.

But, Art was a fish out of water. Water? He didn't know how to swim. One day, there was pressure coming after we were doing the regattas. We put a trapeze on the 14. We had a P-Cat here, and Hobie said, “You take Art on the P-Cat,” cause he was a big guy. So Art came down. He wasn't even dressed for it. We had to get him outfitted and everything.

We finally got him out on the waves, and Hobie took the 14 with the trapeze. It was a nice windy day. I'm downwind of Hobie and I look back and see him crank it up and get out on the trapeze. He's really coming fast, and I thought, “Geez, I gotta get going.” So I turn around and I sheet in and here's Hobie flying through like Superman, and he pitch-poled it.

Mary: He did it again!

Wayne: My back was to the wind and I turned around and he's still attached. Then he goes into the water and comes up and says, “There'll be no trapeze on the 14.”

Paul: I love it! That's wonderful!

Wayne: But that wasn't the end of the story. Then Art says, “I want to get on the 14,” so we have to transfer him from the P-Cat. We got up pretty close and I said, “Art, just jump in, take a couple of strokes and you're over there.” He hesitated, he didn't answer. I said, “Hey look, I can't keep this boat here long, just jump in.” Finally he did, and then we knew why he waited. He came up, hands waving, and we had to rescue him. Art was a businessman, not a waterman. That tells you a little bit about their relationship.

Paul: Yeah, but we've got to give Art a lot of credit for the success of Hobie Cat. We really do.

**REGATTAS:**

Paul: There was a great vibe when we all worked together. It was the first time I ever worked seven days a week. Seriously, we didn't do it when I worked in the motorcycle industry. Sure, we'd do it at races, but hell, I was going all over the United States to these regattas.

Robbie: Sandy ended up with a prime job of going around the world, looking for places to hold races.

Sandy: My part was fun setting up the racing program, yeah.

Robbie: That really helped put Hobie Cat on the map.

Sandy: I think a lot of it was just a matter of making things bigger and better. One organization put on a World with logos, and people sent their champion to race it. When too many people want to get in, you have to break the country down. So we created areas first, then divisions within the area. Area 1 was Hawaii and California. There were about six areas and 13 divisions.

Mary: That was after a long time, though. Basically, the races started right here with a few boats. They gave you a boat and a game to play it.

Sandy: You're right. The very first race was out here in front on Wayne's beach. I think we raced it on the 4th of July.

Paul: Interesting story as you bring up the races. It's how important the One-Design worked. I had no idea that everyone raced the same model boat. I finally realized why it was so important to Hobie Cat. Because the dealers really don't sell our boats. Our customers sell them. People get up early on Saturday morning, they pull out their boat and get it ready and all the neighbors see this. It goes on for years and years. That's where most of our sales came from is from people seeing other people using the boat. I ran into that big time after Hendrickson left and we we hired some professionals. That was mistake #1.

Mary: There was a string of them too; how many presidents and marketers went through there.

Sandy: Paul, were you there when they went public?

Paul: Yeah, I was there. When I got there, some people got a car and it was always a Ford station wagon. We had a special deal with somebody in Chicago.

Robbie: Theodore Robbins.

Paul: Yeah, and when the new guy, Kinsey came, he hired a sales manager who wore his pants up to his waist, Tom Ewing, and they both went out to get their company cars; nice sports car convertibles. They just didn't get it. They just didn't fit.

The first thing they did was call me in the office and say, "Paul, why are we spending \$100,000 on people who already have our boats?" I said, "Well, we need them because they sell our boats." This didn't make any sense to them. They didn't understand the One-Design class and why we invested our own money in it.

Finally, I said, "Well, suppose I get a sponsor? What if I get somebody else to put up the \$150,000 a year, and we put their names on the sail or whatever?"

“You think you can?”

“I don’t know, but I can try.”

Sandy: We were one of the first sailing companies to get sponsorship for our events.

Paul: Exactly, and the first one was Pan American.

Sandy: Yeah, for our first World Championship in Hawaii, Pan Am was a sponsor, and a local beer, Stroh’s Beer. They would buy the beer and Pan Am provided the airfare, and different things, so we put their logo on the sails.

Paul: To get attention from the press, I always picked two of the prettiest girls. Mary was one of them, and I’d say, “Be sure and sail past the press boat.” I was good at getting the press to attend our events. I did all sorts of goofy little things, but they worked.

The best was later when I worked for Windsurfing. Meyer’s Rum paid \$180,000 as a sponsor. The first race we had was in Miami and we created a picture of a girl windsurfing topless. You really couldn’t see anything, but we added, “you’re cordially invited to come join our press boat.”

Remember Nick Nichols? He was a good advertising kid. He had one eye and he was a wonderful artist. So I had him paint a sail with the Meyer’s Rum logo on it. If you recall, it’s a nice tropical scene. I got a girl and she sailed in front of it and they sent five guys down for the first regatta. That night we all met to see if we got on tv and there’s the Meyer’s Rum sail. These guys died and went to heaven right there on the spot. Cause in those days you didn’t advertise.

Mary: Who came up with the ‘Have a Hobie Day!’ sticker?

Phil: I’m having trouble with that one.

Sandy: I can picture the guy, but I can’t think of the name.

Wayne: He was so antsy.

Mary: Kind of like the Hobie presidents, right? Nobody can remember who they were.

Wayne: He came up with the slogan, “Have a Hobie Day!” If he did nothing else, that was pretty good.

Robbie: I remember the Hobie credit card, and somebody wanted to do a Hobie Jeep version, then there was a Hobie Beer. There were all kinds of things floating around.

Wayne: It got to be that anything with a Hobie name on it was fun, and it fit.

Paul: Promoting the Hobie Cat, I used Mary all the time as a model because she had her stuff together and she photographed beautifully.

Mary: Paul would get us out when it was snowing and in our bathing suits. He had us stand on the boom, as I remember, and there was snow on the trampoline.

Wayne: Paul was always doing things to Mary that she never dreamed she’d be doing.

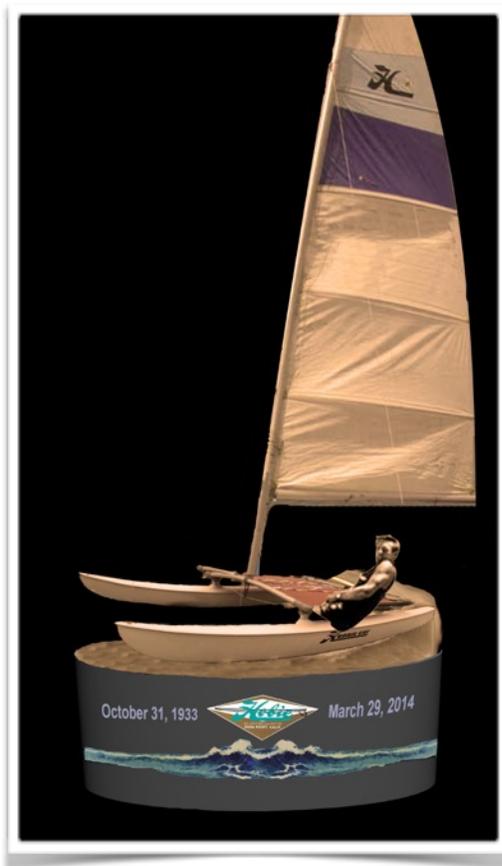
Paul: Boy, isn’t that the truth. It’s not easy in the real world.

Mary: I remember when Phil and Hobie did the Hobie 18 for the first time. We previewed it at the New York Boat Show in 1977.

Phil: Oh I remember that, Spirit of 76.

Mary: It was the biggest snowstorm New York had ever had, and we wanted to have some sort of press party. None of us had been to New York, or I hadn't, and somebody at Coleman said Tavern on the Green was very nice. I said, "What's that? Some restaurant?" I had no idea. So we call them, "Yeah, we're gonna have a little press party and can we have this room?"

We did everything via telephone and sent out invitations to like 50 or 60 magazines; from Field & Stream to National Geographic. If it was on a list somewhere, we sent them an invitation. We could not believe it when we got there and went to what I now know as Tavern on the Green. It is kind of famous, but at the time, we didn't know, and we walked in and I swear, all 50 magazines were there. I mean, it was huge. We got the little guest book where they sign in and all these heavy-duty people came just cause they heard about Hobie. It was really fun.



### Coming Up in the July Issue:

*A Conversation with the "Hobie Cat 6" - Hobie's  
Inventions*

Hobie Memorial Foundation  
24056 Ave Corona  
Dana Point, CA 92629

[www.hobiememorial.com](http://www.hobiememorial.com)  
[hobiememorial@gmail.com](mailto:hobiememorial@gmail.com)

*Left: The Hobie Memorial with preliminary sketch of the base.*