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Preserving America's Sailing Legacy ★ Engaging Sailing's Next Generation

NATIONAL SAILING HALL OF FAME ANNOUNCES 2017 INDUCTEES

Annapolis, Md. (June 29, 2017) – The National Sailing Hall of Fame (NSHOF) today announced the eight people who will make up its 2017 class of inductees: Bill Bentsen (Chicago, Ill./Lake Geneva, Wisc.), a two-time Olympic medalist – bronze in 1964 and gold in 1972 – who has created an indelible legacy for the sport through his contributions as a racing rules and race administration expert; 5.5 World Champion Ray Hunt (Duxbury, Mass.), the innately talented yacht designer of both sail and power vessels; boatbuilder Clark Mills (Clearwater, Fla.), best-known as the designer of the wildly popular Optimist dinghy used by children under age 16; windsurfing superstar Robby Naish (Haiku, Hawaii), who won his first world championship title at age 13 and went on to build a multi-million dollar watersports business; two-time Tornado Olympic Silver Medalist Randy Smyth (Ft. Walton Beach, Fla.), whose expertise as a catamaran sailor led to, among other things, work on major motion pictures; and noted America's Cup sailor Tom Whidden (Essex, Conn.), the industry giant who recently celebrated 30 years with global brand North Sails. Two additional Inductees are being recognized with the NSHOF Lifetime Achievement Award: avid sailor Bill Martin (Ann Arbor, Mich.), whose leadership roles in business and sailing – including the Presidency of the U.S. Olympic Committee – led to a noteworthy 10 years as Athletic Director at the University of Michigan, and Corny Shields (New Rochelle, N.Y.), winner of the inaugural Mallory Cup which earned him national recognition on the cover of Time magazine in 1953, who conceived the Shields one-design in 1964 and founded the International One Design class.

The members of the class of 2017 join 57 previously-recognized individuals as the National Sailing Hall of Fame continues to fulfill its mission by drawing attention and recognition to Americans who have made outstanding contributions to the sport of sailing.

“From the way the sport is run to its portrayal on the silver screen, this group of inductees has influenced the broad spectrum of today’s watersport’s enthusiast,” said Gary Jobson, President of the NSHOF. “In proudly recognizing the legacy of these contributors, by preserving and sharing their stories, the NSHOF is helping to inspire – and challenge – the next generation.”

Following a two-month period this spring during which sailors from all corners of the country nominated their choice for induction, a selection committee – made up of representatives from US Sailing, the sailing media, the sailing industry, community sailing, a maritime museum, a previous inductee, and the NSHOF Board – reviewed a wide range of nominations.

Inductees are American citizens, 45 years of age or older, who have made significant impact on the growth and development of the sport in the U.S. in the categories of Sailing, Technical/Design and Contributor (coach, administrator, sailing media). Nominations of non-citizens were also considered if they influenced the sport in the U.S., and posthumous nominations were also accepted. The undertaking to recognize Americans who have made outstanding contributions to the sport of sailing is central to the mission of the NSHOF which was formed in 2005 and has completed phase one of its plan to establish a permanent facility on the historic waterfront of Annapolis, Maryland.

The Lifetime Achievement Award inducts an American citizen, 55 years of age or older, who has had consistent involvement in sailing for a majority of his or her life and had success in the sport while also becoming successful and achieving noteworthy stature in a non-sailing career.

The 2017 class will be formally celebrated on Sunday, September 24, 2017, with an Induction Ceremony hosted at the world-renowned New York Yacht Club’s Harbour Court clubhouse in Newport, Rhode Island. The Induction Weekend has become notable as a reunion of sailing’s Who’s Who with attendance already confirmed by these previous Inductees: Betsy Alison, Malin Burnham, Steve Colgate, Dave Curtis, JJ Fetter, Meade Gougeon, Peter Harken, Gary Jobson, Bruce Kirby, Bob Johnstone, Rod Johnstone, Timmy Larr, Buddy Melges, Ted Turner and Dave Ullman.

The invitation only event is sponsored by Rolex Watch U.S.A. Additional support is provided by Greenvale Vineyards, Mount Gay Rum, Newport Shipyard, Sea Gear, Vanquish Boats, Volvo Penta and WX/Bread & Butter

Wines. The NSHOF will dedicate the 2017 Induction to Sail Newport, Rhode Island's Public Sailing Center.

For more on the Inductees, please visit: <http://halloffamers.nshof.org>

About the NSHOF: The National Sailing Hall of Fame is a not-for-profit educational institution dedicated to: preserving the history of the sport and its impact on American culture; honoring those who have made outstanding contributions to the sport of sailing; the teaching of math, science and American history; inspiring and encouraging sailing development; and providing an international landmark for sailing enthusiasts. The NSHOF has partnered with US Sailing and the U.S. Naval Academy, and is associated with yacht clubs throughout the country, in its efforts to recognize role models of outstanding achievement. For more information on the NSHOF, please visit: www.nshof.org

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2017 National Sailing Hall of Fame Inductees (alphabetical):

Bill Bentsen (Chicago, Ill.)

Ray Hunt (Duxbury, Mass.)

Bill Martin (Ann Arbor, Mich.) – 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award

*Clark Mills (Clearwater, Fla.)

Robby Naish (Haiku, Hawaii)

*Corny Shields (New Rochelle, N.Y.) – 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award

Randy Smyth (Ft. Walton Beach, Fla.)

Tom Whidden (Essex, Conn.)

*posthumous