

On September 11, 1988 at the Division 12 Ellacoya Points Regatta (held on Lake Winnapausaukee), Drake and Bonnie were the key reasons why John Smith's younger sister, Robin, is alive to sail again today.

At the start for Hobie 16's, a squall suddenly came up on the lake. In an instant, the wind picked up to over 25 knots and waves broke against the hulls of the starting Hobie 16's. John Smith, skipper of his Hobie 16 with Robin as his crew, watched as a Hobie 16 capsized in front of him at the starting line. John's boat went over and so did the one behind him. He and Robin took the capsize easily, but their boat turtled instantly. John and Robin swam to the stern of the overturned catamaran where they began to try to get aboard. The wind and rough water caused Robin to be pulled under the trampoline and she became tangled in the rigging and lines. John struggled to free

her but found all his strength was needed just to keep her head above water.

As Robin was being pulled beneath the trampoline, Drake and Bonnie (sailing their Hobie 18) were just crossing the finish line of their race, which had started before the Hobie 16s. As Drake skillfully maneuvered his boat in the high winds around the capsized boats he called out, "Do you need help?" John instantly shouted back his desperate need. Hobie catamarans sail very quickly, as fast as the wind, and in these unusual conditions, even faster.

There was no time for discussion. In the instant of John's reply, Drake told Bonnie to jump and swim for John's boat pushing her overboard simultaneously. Hesitating even a moment would have resulted in Drake's Hobie 18 being out of swimming distance to John's boat, and in the foul weather conditions Drake would

waste precious minutes tacking back to John's turtled Hobie 16. With Bonnie on the way toward John's boat, Drake sailed his Hobie 18, single-handed to the Committee Boat, where he reported the disastrous condition and called for a knife and additional help. Earlier, Bonnie who never sails without a knife, noticed hers had become frozen in its case; she hadn't purchased a new one before this day's race. She pulled herself up onto the trampoline of the turtled Hobie and scrambled to the stern only to see Robin pass into unconsciousness just inches below the water's surface.

The waves had forced Robin's head beneath the surface, and she was overcome. John, greatly fatigued, was no longer able to hold her face above the water. The continuing severe weather conditions only tangled Robin's body tighter in the lines and rigging. Summoning every ounce of strength her

100 pounds could muster, Bonnie thrust her hands through the lacing and pulled Robin's face to the surface and up to the lacing. The trampoline lacing between their faces, Bonnie administered mouth-to-mouth respiration while John, with renewed hope, continued to push up on Robin's head from below.

Drake's alert at the committee boat brought a Zodiac to the scene only minutes later. Several people jumped into the water to cut Robin free. She was hauled aboard where Bonnie continued mouth-to-mouth and revived Robin. After alerting the race committee, Drake sailed back to the beach and called for an ambulance. Emergency help arrived as the Zodiac came to shore, and Robin and John were transported to the nearest hospital. Robin was released in good condition after several hours of observation. First hand experience in saving a life demands raised awareness. But not everyone facing life's

realities becomes a vocal proponent of safety on the water as Bonnie and Drake have gone on to become.

Drake Barber grew up in Fairfield, Connecticut and began sailing a Hobie in 1975, he was in his early teens. Even as an inexperienced sailor, Drake was a leader. For a time he was the commodore of Hobie Fleet 203 based in Fairfield. Knowing little about organization then, he held the group together with good racing and sailing fun. He established a relaxed and stable atmosphere. Drake required members pay 25 cents each weekend to participate in Fleet 203's events. It's rumored that Drake used the dues to play the video games at the local arcade.

National Champion Hobie 16 sailor, Cliff McCarty remembers Drake Barber at 15. Cliff, 16 years old at the time, recalls, "Drake, Bob Williams, me and our crews, stacked our Hobie's three high on a motor

boat trailer and pulled them behind my dad's school bus/camper to sail at regatta as far away as Canada." Like Cliff, sailing since his teens as he did, Drake has become keenly knowledgeable of the racing rules and, over the years, has served on countless protest and race committees at Division 12 regattas.

Where Drake rises above others is in his intense concern for everyone on the water and his fearless defense against those who would not do right by the division, or the sport of sailing. "Trekkies" will understand when they learn that Drake named his boat, back then, *Kobayashi Maru*. One can be assured that if Drake is involved in deciding a protest, he will find a fair and just solution. He'll never lose his cool, yet find resolution...passing the test of *character every commander faces*.

On one racing occasion when a race committee appeared unaware that a severe weather condition was imminent, Drake challenged the committee when they refused to call the race and send the boats to shore. He enlisted Mac McCarthy, a friend, on the water and between the two hailed every racer, warning of the fast approaching storm, advising each to return to the beach. All but a handful made it back before the storm hit. The chase boats were reluctant to return to the racecourse due to the severity of the storm. Drake and Mac insisted the chase boats take them back out on the water to help the remaining boats.

Because of their fearless and undaunted actions, all were saved. One surely would have suffered personal injury as her Hobie 14 had turtled and she was unable to right it in the storm and return to the beach.

Mac McCarthy who sailed a Hobie 18 introduced Bonnie to Hobie Cat racing in 1984. Bonnie was eager to learn, wiry, and quick on the boat. They sailed together for two years. Once in exceptionally heavy winds, Mac pitch-poled and Bonnie hurt her leg in the fall. Saying nothing she and Mac righted the boat only to have it go over again. Reaching the beach at the end of the day's races Bonnie jumped from the boat and fell to the sand; unable to support herself on her sprained leg. She spent the next couple of days on crutches. Bonnie is remembered as exclaiming as she was carried from the beach, "Wow, what a ride!"

It's been told that Drake found in Bonnie the perfect 285 pound crew combination for racing. The pair became a racing team that took top trophies regularly at regattas. Among Division 12 members, the team are viewed as good

sailors, also the most fair. Their racing integrity is obvious. Tom Sullivan, Fleet 209 Commodore from New Hampshire recalls, "Drake and Bonnie have a gentle way of helping newcomers. It amazed me how Drake noticed and remembered some difficulty I had during a regatta. He showed genuine interest in helping me to learn some of the subtle difference's between monohull and catamaran boat handling. And, Bonnie was right there sharing pointers with my crew."

Hobie sailors are reputed for their love of a good joke. You can be assured if there's a trick in the wind, Drake or Bonnie will be in on the fun. Ruth Lark remembers how Drake and Jim Adelman teased the Canadian competition at a regatta up near the Canadian border by openly spreading dish liquid on all the American boats' hulls . . . calling it their secret formula, "Go-Fast-Gel." Even Ruth was fooled, "I ran back to my car with

DRAKE BARBER AND BONNIE LEE ☐ HAMILTON, MASSACHUSETTS, DIVISION 12, NAHCA SPORTSPERSON OF THE YEAR - 1994

only minutes before the race to make a note to remember to buy 'Go-Fast-Gel' before the next regatta, and all it got them was bubbles."

Drake has served a Vice-Chairman for a year and Chairman of Division 12 for four years. During that time Drake and Bonnie, along with Gail Force, have worked to produce a profitable and professional-looking regatta schedule. Bonnie and Drake are thoughtful in the literal sense of the word, filled with thought for each decision that impacts the racers and sailors in the division. They work to strike a balance in all they do.

Drake and Bonnie are raising their family and still manage to fit in race committee responsibilities for their fleet regatta. Bonnie and Drake raced at Westport, only three weeks before Jasmine was born, and Keir shares his playroom with their Division 12 information-stuffed

computer. They have amassed sailing information and entered it into various computer programs to tabulate the points regattas race results and initiated safety rules to expand division bylaws.

Drake Barber and Bonnie Lee are consistent, stable and positive role models for sailors in Hobie Cat Division 12. Their combined total of 30 years in Hobie Cat sailing and racing has taken them to dozens of fleet events, hundreds of points regattas and six nationals.

The enthusiasm they have for Hobie sailing is still going strong as demonstrated by their support for the Special Olympic World Games.

Sailing will be added to the Special Olympics for the first time and features the Hobie 18 and the Flying Scot.

Their role in the rescue of Robin Smith earned them the United States Sailing

Association's Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Medal in 1993.

Together Drake and Bonnie have been selected as Division 12's nominees for the North American Hobie Class Association Sportspeople of the Year Award.

Drake and Bonnie exemplify the ideas and traditions of good sportsmanship and the Hobie Way of Life.