

Winward Panther

Fall 2019

Middlebury Sailing



Fall Season Recap

Our team had a strong fall season! We have seen significant improvement both in practices and racing. This season we had a total of 18 sailors race in 10 regattas across New England. For the first time in history Middlebury qualified for and raced in the Erwin Schell Trophy Conference Championship as one of two club teams.

Other Highlights include:

- Placing 1st at the Stuart Walker Regatta
- Placing 8th at the Sacred Heart Trophy



Coach's Corner

This fall began with a short handed team. Six seniors graduated this spring, and another five juniors were abroad, leaving a large experience gap in the roster.

Going into this season we knew it was going to be a challenge, but ultimately would be successful.

Despite the relative lack of experienced upper-classmen, September began with earnest excitement. The team was awarded partial early arrival on campus for the first time and spent the week before the start of the semester moving our fleet to Champlain. This saved vital practice time and spared us from spending the first days back on campus moving boats. It also allowed us to participate in the opening weekend of the season which has traditionally been hit-or-miss given Middlebury's late start compared to the rest of NEISA.

The second weekend saw the Stu Walker Regatta, which had moved up from its traditional October date and been upgraded to a ranked C-level event for the first time ever.

Commodore **Ben Arquit '20** and **Evelyn Lane '23** dominated with five bullets in six races. **Lucie Rochat '22** and **Patrick Stevenson '22** earned the remaining first place and secured a first and second overall for Midd in a combined fleet regatta. Racing was abandoned after only three rotations due to dangerous wind and waves from the south with half the fleet capsized on the line at the start, again demonstrating our new Panton location as a superior sailing venue.



The points from the Stu Walker gave us a huge lift in the conference rankings, and Evelyn's performance was indicative of the whole class of 2023. As mentioned earlier, we were severely short handed entering the season and would rely on a large incoming class. Along with Evelyn, sailors **Molly Arndt, Tony Sjodin, Teo Flesher, Katherine DeFrancisco, and Julia Fairbank** all came through in a big way, each leading practice attendance and sailing in multiple regattas. The fall schedule would not have been possible without them.

Additional scores came throughout the season from Fairfield, MIT, Mass Maritime and UVM where **Hanna Mass '21** and **Grace Herring '22** had an impressive performance in A fleet. Due to hard work on everyone's part, we found ourselves in 18th place overall going into the tournament weekend and qualified for the Schell Trophy for the first time. Eight sailors competed in 13 races over two days on the Charles, sailing out of MIT. Conditions on Saturday were light, variable and frustrating and on the other end of the scale on Sunday with gusting winds, white caps on the river, and constant capsizes and collisions throughout the fleet. Racing was abandoned early due to the wild conditions. Our enthusiastic freshmen crew was competing at the same time at Tufts in the Nickerson Freshmen regatta. Overall Middlebury placed 18th in NEISA out of 38 teams that competed this season. This was over ten regattas and 29 practice sessions. This season also saw a night time full moon sail and cookout, only one hospital trip (**Nico Leshaw**) and one boom Vs head (**Liam Hahn**). By all accounts a successful season.

Tom Tucker, Head Coach



Commodore's Corner

Hi Everyone,

We had a fantastic fall season that saw great results and a large increase in the size of the team. The team qualified for the Schell Trophy for the first time in school history. This regatta is the NEISA Conference Championship regatta where only the top 18 teams in New England qualify. This was a direct result of hard work and high levels of commitment throughout the fall. I want to thank everyone who came to practice and went to the many regattas that made this possible. I also want to highlight the great work of our third-year coach, Tom Tucker, who was an integral part of the team's success.

Another highlight of the fall was winning our home regatta, the Stuart Walker trophy. The regatta was sailed in extremely heavy wind and challenging conditions on a cold day in September. The team responded extremely well and had a wire to wire win, which gave us critical points that eventually led us to the Schell Trophy.

Outside of the success on the water, the team was bolstered by over 10 new members from the freshman and sophomore classes. Nearly every one of these new sailors immediately contributed in practice and most were key players at regattas. The team definitely has a bright future ahead and I look forward to seeing this group develop over the next few years.

I want to give one more thank you and that is to all of our generous parents and donors. Without you guys, what we do would absolutely not be possible. We are only partially funded by the SGA and rely on your generosity to stay afloat. Throughout the season, we had parents at nearly every one of our regattas cheering us on, which was a big morale boost. In addition, we had a great parents' weekend in September. Thank you for all that you all do and know that we are extremely appreciative.

As the end of this season marks the end to my time as Commodore, I just want to reflect on my time as Commodore and as a member of the team for the last three and a half years. We have come a long way from our little docks on Dunmore my freshman fall. We are now consistently in the top 18 in NEISA and we have fully completed our move to our new n. This new venue will serve the team very well in the future and it has already had proven positive results. It has certainly been a great three years and I am very thankful for my time on the team. Thanks to everyone who has made my time so enjoyable and fulfilling. From my early mentors freshman year to my good friends on the board with me now, all of our success would not have been possible without all of you. I am excited to pass the torch off to our next Commodore, Allie White, who I know will do a fantastic job over the next year! I look forward to one last season with the team this spring where we will look to making it to the Nationals Qualifier. Have a great winter and see you when the lake unfreezes!

Ben Arquit '20
Commodore



Additional Team Update

The move to Panton and subsequent venue upgrades have been a financial challenge to MCSC. Our dock system continues to be our biggest expense. This summer it underwent upgrades to its mooring system to be more stable and secure. In March 2019, most of the flotation was replaced. The dock superstructure is now in need of new decking over the top, as many of us have experienced first hand this fall. This is our priority this winter, to ensure the dock system maintains essential functionality.

Next due for replacement and overhaul are the wooden floats and cradles which the fleet actually sits on. We've had some ankles slip through the gaps, some of the aging cradles collapse, and the inside edges float a little lower. Overhauling or replacing the wooden floats is in the near future.

The boats themselves are in decent conditions. Only ten years old, the fleet is not due for replacement for awhile. The team utilizes regular maintenance checklists to keep an eye on equipment and parts. Gear is replaced when it is noticed to be worn, and some of the standing rigging and running rigging have been replaced. There are parts on hand, and the most worn rigging will be replaced over the winter. Unfortunately in a fleet of 12 competitive racing boats, occasional breakdowns under sail are inevitable. The sails are the weak point of the fleet. There are several patches on them, and they are beginning to age as racing sails do despite appropriate care. The plan is to hopefully replace the sails in the near future to repower and maintain the current fleet for another 10 years. An entire new fleet is not planned or necessary with our regular maintenance and new sails.

Our two motor boats are also expected to last quite a while longer. The whaler *Lazarus* received permanent fenders fixed horizontally along the gunwales as “armor” in March. The RIB *Patricia* recently received a new propeller and had a small leak patched at the end of this season. Both boats are seen regularly by a professional marine mechanic and expected to be in service for the foreseeable future.

The move to Panton has given the team access to much better and consistent sailing conditions, but at a much larger cost. Our docks alone take up over half the budget to maintain, launch and haul. The price associated with the new venue is high but undoubtedly worth it. The team has received continued support from the Hopper family, without which this would not have been possible, and saw a spike in donations associated with our annual fall alumni/family regatta.

However, despite requests and appeals the budget from the school has not been proportionally increased with the new costs, despite the added benefit from the new costs. MCSC relies heavily on donors to support the growth of this team. Things like transportation and lodging for regattas, fleet upgrades like sails, new and replacement gear for an ever growing roster, and long term fundraising for large purchases in the distant future all rely on donations. This also keeps the cost of participation low for students, and removes a financial barrier to entry of the sport. MCSC prides itself on having season dues of only \$55 per sailor, among the lowest in the conference compared to the hundreds per season other teams ask. We are also proud of our ability to completely outfit any and all sailors on our team, removing the need to purchase expensive equipment to sail and encouraging new members to join and foster growth.

If you are interested in donating to MCSC, or directly assisting with one of the projects listed above, please contact Coach Tom Tucker at ttucker@middlebury.edu or visit the donation link on our website.

Tucker, Tom Head Coach

Spring Dinghy Tournament

Come support Middlebury Sailing at the Spring Dinghy Tournament!

Location: Hosted at our venue in Panton.

Date: April (specific date TBA)



Looking to become more involved?

Host the team! Our sailors travel across the country to regattas, let us know if you are willing to host four of us for a weekend!

Fundraise! The team fundraises for the spring training trip, coaching expenses, new boats and equipment, and other needs. We would love for alumni to help coordinate our fundraising efforts.

<http://sites.middlebury.edu/sailing/support-us/>

Buy a Hat or Shirt! MCSC finally has merchandise in the bookstore! All profits from the shirts being sold in the bookstore go directly to the team and buying new boats! For more information or to donate please contact Ben Arquit, Commodore

E-mail: sailing@middlebury.edu Or visit our website: www.sites.middlebury.edu/sailing

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Middlebury College Sailing Club**

**Fall 2019 Windward Panther Written by Hanna Mass,
Special Events Coordinator**