

Windward Panther

Fall 2020

Middlebury Sailing



Fall 2020 Season Recap

This year, the team was thrust into a brand new season unlike any other. While unfortunately the pandemic prevented any NEISA regattas from taking place, we banded together to continue practicing and building team spirit. Allie White and Anna Spiro stepped up to make sure that all team members felt welcomed and safe, and that the love and traditions of MCSC lived on.



End of Season Barbecue

As the days grew shorter, the lake gave the team many wonderful sunsets. One of the best came during our covid-safe team end of season barbecue.



Commodore's Corner

Hi everyone!

I hope you are all doing well and staying safe and healthy. It was quite a whirlwind of a season for the sailing team this fall! Given the strange circumstances of this semester, we had a season like no other. Although we were unable to attend regattas and had many setbacks along the way, this season was still one full of growth, skill building, team bonding, and unbeatable Lake Champlain sunsets.

We kicked this fall season off over Zoom, wondering if there would ever come a point in the semester when we would get to reunite face-to-face as a team. Despite our worries that we would not be able to sail this Fall due to the COVID-19 restrictions and protocols set in place by the Middlebury administration, we continued to stay hopeful and do everything in our power to get back on the water.

During our time spent waiting for approval to head back to Pantou, we recruited over 20 amazing new members to the team. We were able to host a virtual "booth" at the club fair and welcome in our new sailors through all-team Zoom meetings and chalk talks. As the semester progressed, we were able to start having team dinners outside and at a distance, as well as socially distant team workouts led by our very own Mollie Ockene 21', Liam Hahn 21', Thea Joseph 22', and Lucie Rochat 22'.

We were finally granted permission to begin sailing at the beginning of October. We moved the boats to Pantou at record speed (only two days of boat moving needed!). Ultimately, we were able to get two full months of sailing in from the start of October through to the end of November when we all left campus for Thanksgiving break and to finish out the rest of the semester at home. Thankfully, the weather allowed for beautiful, sunny days of sailing all the way through to the end.

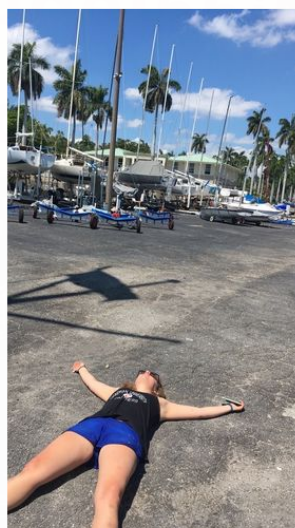
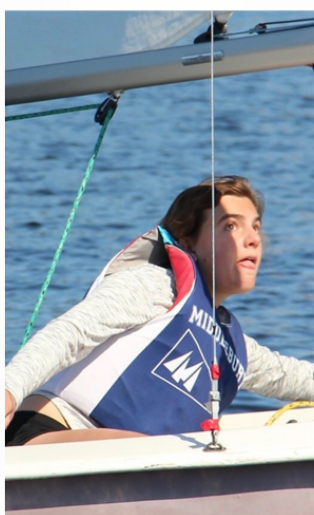
The set-up of our practices looked a little different this season given the circumstances. We had to create designated skipper-crew pairings so that everyone sailed with the same person each practice to reduce the amount of close contact that students had with each other. Although this did come with some challenges, in the end, this arrangement helped skipper and crew pairs really get to know each other's sailing styles and improve their skills together as a unit.

Practice also looked different due to the fact that we were not attending regattas this season. We were able to tailor practices more to each individual's skill level and have separate groups working on different skill sets that they felt would best serve them. With this arrangement, we saw immense improvement across the board, from our most experienced sailors to our new sailors who had never been in a boat before the first day of practice.

This all would not have been possible without our interim coach, Rich. Unfortunately, our coach Tom was not with us this season. We missed him deeply and can't wait to have him back on the water with us soon. However, we were so happy to have Rich with us this Fall. He really stepped up and dedicated himself to making this season the best that it could be under the difficult circumstances. Rich worked hard to make this season enjoyable and productive for all of us. His enthusiasm, high spirits, and creativity (not to mention his adorable dog Dakota, who quickly became our new team mascot) helped us push through the difficulties we faced this season. He helped to lead dynamic, constructive, and fun practices and we are very grateful for all of his support.

We finished off the season with a celebratory, end of the season barbecue and regatta at Pantou. It was the perfect way to end the Fall semester. We are so thankful for the time we were able to spend together as a team on Lake Champlain this season and are feeling extremely lucky that we were able to have some semblance of a normal semester during these difficult times. We miss all of the sailing team alumni, friends, and family dearly and are very sad we weren't able to host a family and friends regatta this year. We hope that everyone is doing well and that we will all be able to come together again sometime soon! Thank you to everyone who worked hard to make this season happen, especially to everyone who has donated to the team. We truly could not do this without you! I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday season and I can't wait to be back on the water with you all in the Spring!

Allie White 21'
Commodore



A Postcard from Coach Tom

Hello Everyone,

I hope you all had a productive and worthwhile semester this fall. I was happy to see you were able to sail at least a little bit. Hopefully regular practices will be back this spring or next fall. I've been hiding out down in Saint Croix, but I'm very much looking forward to coming back to sail on Champlain soon.

As soon as the school says so, we'll be back at it and get the team back up to our 2019 levels. Hang in there a little longer. I can't wait to see all of you and all the sheep in the Spring or Fall of 2021.

Coach Tom Tucker



A Super (Senior) Goodbye

Dear MCSC,

What a whirlwind the past four years at been. Lake Dunmore and Waterhouses is a distant memory (although I will never forget falling in without a drysuit in April). It has been a great ride. I've seen us move to Panton (yay, we have wind now!), qualify for our first ever Shell Regatta, and grow in both size and prestige. I remember my first ever regatta, on Dunmore in my first semester. I didn't have a single clue what was going on. I had been to about three practices, and I just pulled on ropes and hoped they were the correct ones. That is still more or less how I sail, but I guess the correct rope more often now. I was part of the group that won our first ever Stuart Walker Trophy, where I got my first (and only!) bullet. There was no wind whatsoever, which benefitted the Middlebury team because everyone else practiced on windy water bodies, but we only knew how to sail in three knots of wind.

I have to many amazing memories from time on the team that I will hold on to forever. The beauty of a moonlit sail stands out, watching the faint outlines of the rest of the fleet slink out into the lake, feeling like it's just your boat alone on the calm, dark water. So does the exhilaration of a regatta in 20 knots of wind, where you barely spend a moment not hiking out. Team adventures to Falls of Lana are always a good time, and I can't not mention the J-term scavenger hunt or my first pirate party. Truly, the best memories will always be watching the sun set over the Adirondacks from the lake, a sight that is unrivaled in the northeast.

It is hard to believe that my time with the team is over. It still feels like yesterday that I was the new kid on the team. I am happy to know, however, that the team is in great hands. Anna and Allie did an excellent job guiding the team through the most unusual of seasons this fall, turning what could have been a lost season into a time for the team to grow as sailors and develop connections with their teammates. I know that Grace, Nico, and Lucie will pick up where Anna and Allie left off and continue to do an excellent job next year. I'm so grateful for all the amazing people I have met through the team, from the class of 2017 to the class of 2024. You have all made the team such a special place, and I know that it will continue to be a special place when I am gone. I can't wait to see where MCSC goes next.

All love,

Ben Dohan '20.5

Masks On Midd

One of the new challenges this semester was learning how to sail with a (often wet) mask! Luckily, our sailors looked pretty good.



A First-Year Fall

We welcomed in the new season with a crop of new sailors, extraordinary in both number and quality. We extend a special shout-out to our first-years, who braved an entrance to college unlike any other before them, and navigated the waters extremely well. Here's a look at some of their experiences!

"My first Midd sailing semester started with a bang for sure - frantically emailing Allie to get the Zoom password for a mini club fair during orientation. However, I managed to get the password, and after joining the meeting (shout out board members for not making it awkward!) I quickly decided that I wanted to get as involved with MCSC as much as I could. This semester was certainly unlike any other (so i'm told); it was filled with absurdly windy days, absurdly not windy days, and even days when Rich brought his dog to practice! Even with the late start to the season, joining Midd sailing was hands down the best decision I've made so far at Middlebury, as it offered me a little haven amid all the uncertainty in the world right now. Thank you all for making me feel so welcome!

ps. I'd like to use this platform to publicly apologize to those who have gotten stuck behind me driving home from Pantou.

-Will Procter '24



"Since I had never sailed before, my first semester was definitely a learning experience. My favorite memory was sailing on a cold, windy day in Halloween costumes and getting pretty wet, but still having a good time!"



Kylie and her sailing partner Nat

-Kylie Crow '24



Spirits run high but not dry after a first practice filled with capsizes!

"Learning to sail has been an awesome experience. Wanna make a friend and get humbled by nature? Just wait for the first capsize."

-Manuel Morillo '24

Alumni Spotlight

Huge Congrats to sailing alumni Casey Astiz '19 and Ben Brown '18.5 on their engagement! We wish you all the best, and fondly remember your time on the team. You are always going to be MCSC family, and we look forward to seeing where life takes you next!



Thank You!

We have a lot of thank you's to give this semester. First of all, thank you to Rich, our interim coach, for his hard work and dedication handling both sailing and crew practices on short notice.

Secondly, thank you to all the team members who worked hard to make MCSC thrive in a less than normal semester.

Finally, thank you to the alumni, friends, and family of MCSC for their support.

We couldn't do it without you!



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 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 Lucie Rochat, Commodore!

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

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM:
Middlebury College Sailing Club

Fall 2020 Windward Panther Written by Grace Hering,
Special Events Coordinator

