

WINDSHIFTS

➤ US SAILING's Olympic Sailing Committee recognized four coaches as the 2006 coaches of the year: Yale University coach Zach Leonard is the national coach of the year; Ryan Hamm is named the volunteer coach for his work with the James Island Charter High School; Corpus Christi YC sailing director Duffy Markham is the developmental coach of the year; and Hobart/William Smith coach Scott Iklé is named the inaugural winner of the 'Doc' Councilman Science Award. The W. Van Alan Clark Jr. Trophy is presented to 14-year-old J.D. Reddaway, of Suwanee, Ga. www.ussailing.org

➤ GMC Trucks is the new title sponsor for the Inter-Lake Yachting Association's Bay Week events at Put-in-Bay, Ohio, including the Junior Regatta, July 16 to 21, and the Sailing Regatta, July 30 to Aug. 1. www.i-lya.com

➤ The U.S. Olympic Committee selected Chicago as its nominee to host the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

➤ OC Events will run a 2008 edition of The Transat, formerly the OSTAR, the first ever single-handed ocean race; it began in 1960. The race will start from the United Kingdom in May 2008. www.thetransat.com

➤ Six sailors make up the first class to be inducted into the Bermuda Race Roll of Honour: Carleton Mitchell, George Coumantaros, Thomas Fleming Day, Bobby Somerset, Clarence Kozlay, and Sir Eldon Trimmingham. www.bermudarace.com/roh/

➤ The Transpacific YC board of directors removed the rating limit for the fastest boats seeking first-to-finish "Barn Door" honors and possibly an elapsed-time record in the 44th Transpac Race. The new eligibility limits now allow boats up to 98.5 feet long to compete. www.transpacificyc.org

Lemieux Molding New Future for Finns

WITH THE GULF COAST RAPIDLY building an active Finn fleet, Larry Lemieux trekked down to New Orleans to compete in the Finn Masters last March and brought along one of the first of his new Finns. Having retrieved his molds from Hungary, Lemieux, a 1988 Olympian in the Finn class for Canada, is taking advantage of the growing interest in the physically demanding single-hander, and along with Jibotech, is now building them at a facility in Baltimore. Jibotech now joins Pata and Devoti as the primary Finn manufacturers, and it's the only one in North America.

"I had an opportunity to get my molds back, and Andy Pimental at Jibotech, who's a big Finn sailor, recognized the booming market in the States for Finns," says Lemieux, who had manufactured Finns with Abbott Boats in Canada until five years ago. "We jumped pretty quick.

"There's a lot of people joining the Finn party, and the North American fleet is expanding quickly. People are discovering how great the boat is, especially downwind. It's like you're skiing the fall line. The purists are getting back into them, because it's much more of a tactics-driven boat. It's like a giant chess game."

Finn sailors are also using their skills to move into the Olympic Star class. "There is so much focus and concentra-



North American Finn sailors are savoring a class resurgence, which is fueled in part by the establishment of a new U.S. builder.

tion needed to keep the Finn going that they find their skills are greatly improved when applied to a more forgiving boat," says Lemieux. "Something like four of the current top five Star sailors [in the ISAF world rankings] moved in from Finns."

John Dane III, who is currently the top-ranked Star sailor on the U.S. Sailing Team, did his first Olympic campaign on Finns in the 1970s and has moved back

over to the singlehander to stay mentally sharp and physically fit while training for the Star trials in October. Dane, along with Mike Woodhead and Lou Nady, challenged Lemieux at the Masters, but Lemieux pulled in the win. He then followed that up with a bullet in the sales column, selling the Finn he raced to Andy Lovell, adding yet another boat to an expanding Gulf Coast fleet.

—TROY GILBERT

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◆ Senior editor Stuart Streuli is in Valencia, Spain, contributing daily interviews, audio commentary, and photographs from the Louis Vuitton Cup and the 32nd America's Cup. www.sailingworld.com/americascup

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with late-breaking stories you won't find in the magazine. Sign up at www.sailingworld.com

◆ The Sperry Top-Sider NOOD Regatta circuit is in full swing, with events in Detroit (June 1-3), Chicago (June 15-17), and Toronto (June 22-24). Complete coverage, including photos, results, and race reports, can be found at www.sailingworld.com/nood.