

MASTERS MATTERS

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President’s Message

Hi Canadian Masters,

Hope you have had (are having for wingers) a great season. This year has seemed to show continued strength in the sport, maybe with more specialization. The shops in Canada told me this year that they were selling out of windsurfing gear, meanwhile everyone seems to be trying winging and windfoiling. With more options, we have been able to extend our wind ranges and seasons giving us more opportunities to get on the water.

We had a great event in Ottawa for our Masters Championships with renewed energy on the board looking to expand numbers in the future. Foils and winging have helped events such as the Mammoth Marathon in Toronto and the OBX-Wind events in Cape Hatteras hit record numbers with both events having over 120 sailors. The Toronto Windsurfing School was also busy this year with a solid stream of new students as well as students moving on to higher levels.

With racers travelling around the world to events, and the Wednesday night races at the Toronto Windsurfing Club getting new racers coming out every week, I am confident we can grow our membership and events in the years to come.

Happy Holidays!

Ian Matthews

Windsurfing Weekends 2025

By Stephanie Todd

Clifton House is the perfect place to gather for our windsurfing weekend. Located on the shores of Lake Ontario in Waupoos, Prince Edward County, on an extremely large piece of property. Lots of rigging space. The house has 5 bedrooms - 1 King, 2 queen and 1 double, 1 room with bunk beds and there is one bunkie (3 persons) as well as a smaller cottage. There is plenty of room for parking and camping. The house comes with linens so you only need to bring your own toiletries and towels.

The weekend consists of water sports including windsurfing, paddleboarding, kayaking, wing and foiling as well as kiting. Great place to swim as water is shallow along the shoreline.

We do potluck lunches and dinners so be prepared to delight your palate!

We have secured the following dates:

June 13-15, 2025

September 12-14, 2025

Please be sure to sign up early to secure your spot. Some of our regulars have their chosen rooms! We do need a minimum of 10 persons to break even and the rental price was increased this year so expect to pay a little more. Registration should be online in early 2025. Cost will be around **\$185.00** per person. If you have a family membership paid up before the event then it is less. If you opt to pay your membership with your registration for the event, total cost for an individual is **\$230.00**. Your membership is due in April and is good for the 2025 season.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

Contact: Stephanie Todd,
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2024 Championship at the Britannia Yacht Club, Ottawa

By Suzanne Roberge

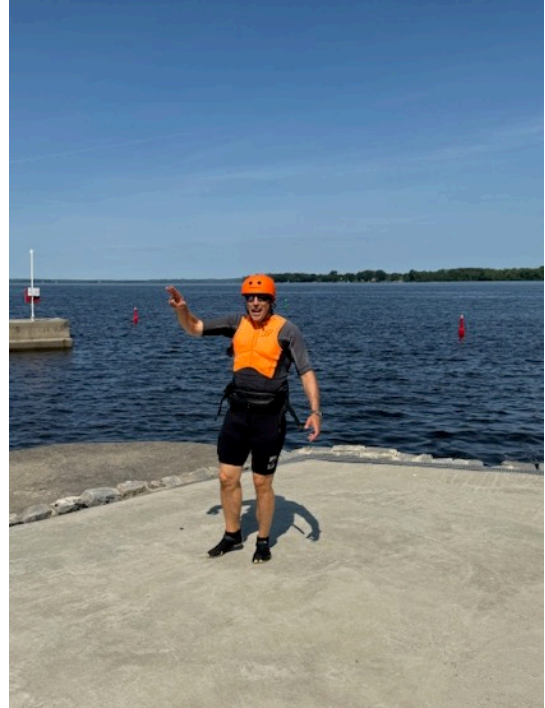
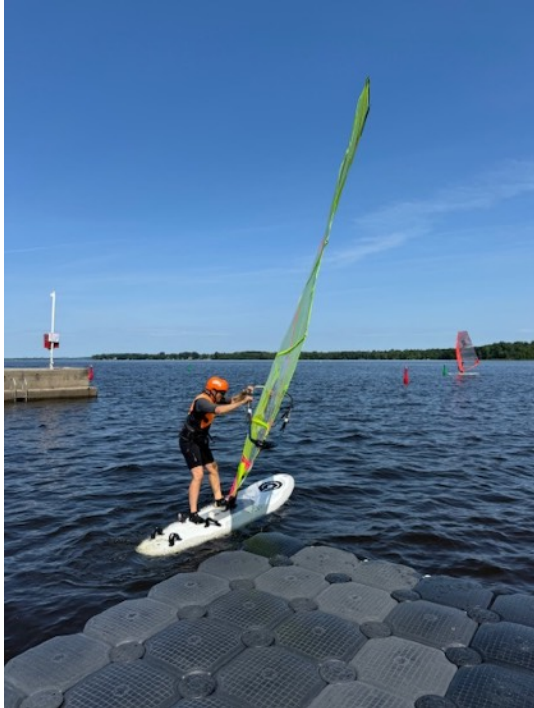
Once again our Championship was held at the Britannia Yacht Club in Ottawa in conjunction with the National Capital Regatta. In spite of a low turnout, 12 in total (3 Konas, 8 raceboards and 1 wing), the event was a success.

On Friday, Vincent Gauthier from Windforce Sports, did a demo day that attracted a few people from the area. Vincent even tried to race during the weekend! We predict that with the right equipment, he will become someone to beat!

The race committee was able to do 7 races in 2 days, which is pretty good and a sign that it was windy.

Our newest keener is John Bowen from Ottawa. John finished 6 races and was hooked.

Thank you to all our sponsors: Silent Sports, NorthLine, Windforce Sports, Mae Productions Inc. and not to forget the generosity of BYC for allowing us to hold our championships in conjunction with the National Capital Regatta once again.



John Bowen taking off from the float at BYC and returning triumphant!

Raceboard World Championships 2024

By Keith Whiston

The International Raceboard Class is a non-profit association based in the UK. Class rules are identical to the ones we follow at Cherry Beach on Wednesday night racing. Windsurfing race events are held around the world, however the majority of the events are in Europe. This year the Raceboard World Championships were scheduled to be held from September 15-22 in Cadiz, Spain, not far from Seville. I'd been dreaming of participating in the Raceboard World Championships ever since my first Kona Worlds in 2013. This year the timing and location closed the deal and I decided to register. The Raceboard World Championships are open to all competitors, with no need to qualify. This year there were ninety-one competitors ranging in age from under fifteen to over seventy, with past Olympians, World Champions as well as new longboard racers with only a couple of years experience. To encourage competition, award subdivisions included: Under 21, Women, Men, Senior, Master, Grand Master, Veteran and Super Veteran. I would fall into the Veteran subdivision, being over sixty but under sixty-five.

One of the most interesting features of a World Championship event is the opportunity to meet people from many different countries and cultures, this event would include racers from Spain, Slovakia, Great Britain, Argentina, Czech Republic, Portugal, Netherlands, Australia, France, Germany, Finland and **Canada (me)**. I had arranged for charter equipment through the event organizer, so I arrived a day before scheduled racing to pick up my Phantom raceboard and 9.5 Loftsails Raceboard Blade. The owner of the Phantom had replaced the original dagger board with an RSX model and had removed the original pinching foot straps, providing me with different ones to install. I discovered later that day that the foot straps didn't fit and had to scramble the next day to get alternate ones, just getting them installed one hour before race time. I had never rigged a Loftsails Blade sail, so I approached a friendly looking racer from the Netherlands who was using the same sail. He was more than happy to share his knowledge and we became friends over the course of the event. As I rigged my sail, an Australian couple came over to introduce themselves. They had been traveling for six months and racing at events along the way. You've got to love Australians, they are so friendly and adventurous, needless to say we became good friends during the event. The Spanish lifestyle is more relaxed than in North America, racing never started before 1:00 pm. In Spain dinner typically starts after 9:00 pm and breakfast is seldom before 8:30 am, so just time for a Skippers Meeting in the morning. Scheduled racing included fifteen races over five days, with three races scheduled per day. A typical day started around 9:30 am with rigging and board prep, this was followed by the skippers meeting around 11:00 am, racing around 1:00 pm. After racing, everyone gathered for food, beer and subdivision leader results.

During the five days of racing, we had wind that ranged from 8 knots to 28 knots with flat to choppy water. **Day one** was 18-21 knots, and I was on untested gear! The course included up wind – downwind segments with a reaching segment in the middle and at the finish. I

quickly discovered that my new pinching foot straps were too big and my reaching foot straps needed that washer I borrowed for the pinching foot straps. During the first reaching segment, going 20+ knots, I was momentarily sailing beside the event winner Curro Manchon, that is when my reaching foot strap let go and I had my biggest crash of the event. Exhausted after multiple uphaul attempts and with an unusable reaching foot strap, I decided to go unhooked while reaching and on the down winds. While I avoided another big catapult, this approach was slower and my arms stretched a couple of inches. Unfortunately, I was so tired towards the end of the first race that I made an error on one of the mark rounding and had to disqualify myself from that race. I had made my own sail numbers, this was a bad idea! The numbers started to peel off after the first race and I had to jump in the water to press down the numbers after each race. **Day two** was more manageable at 16-18 knots, finally I was able to hook in on the reaches. I had adjusted the pinching foot straps for proper fit, replaced the washer on the reaching foot straps and re-taped my sail numbers. My results also improved and I took the leader position in my age subdivision. I also met a very passionate racer from Germany on day two. It turns out he had a major arm injury where he severed tendons just six weeks before this event, it was amazing to me that he was still able to compete and do well. **Day three** I was feeling good, the forecast was 18 knots and so I headed out to the course full of optimism. Unfortunately, the forecast was wrong, the wind quickly increased to 28 knots! After thirty minutes trying unsuccessfully to get out of the harbour and totally exhausted, I flagged down a rescue boat and was hauled back to shore. This was my first time getting rescued in thirty years of racing and needless to say I was not a happy sailor. As it turns out only twenty five percent of the fleet made the start and even fewer finished the race. After a couple of hour delay, the wind dropped to 16 knot and we resumed racing. **Day four** the wind was forecast to be 10 to 14 knots, finally I could focus on tactics and improved starts instead of survival. One of the top ten racers was from Great Britain, he had an identical sail to me, so I approached him for light wind tuning tips. He was extremely helpful and friendly; he even came over to check out my sail when I had finished rigging. We became friends and he helped with an interview for my wind sport documentary project. **Day five** the wind was scheduled to be 8-10 knots later in the afternoon, this would give me time in the morning to conduct interviews for my project. All the friends I had made during the event participated, and the event organizer Curro Manchon even made time to help out. The racing was like a typical Cherry Beach Wednesday, tactics and good starts were the order of the day.

The awards ceremony was held later that evening with much fanfare. The Spanish Team dominated, winning every major category including: First U21 - Alejandro Selma Cruz, First Men's - Curro Manchon, First Women's - Blanca Manchon, First Master - Curro Manchon. I held on to win my age subdivision and secure my place on the podium. This was a fun and exciting event. I would encourage every racer at TWC to consider participating when the stars align for them.



OBX-Wind - A Must for Every Windsurfer's Bucket List!

By Vincent Gauthier

For the last three years, around the end of October, my wife and I have gone on a pilgrimage to the OBX-Wind event in Cape Hatteras. OBX-Wind is a week-long annual windsurfing race event organized by Mike Burns of Severne Windsurfing and Ocean Air Sports. The racing takes place on the Pamlico Sound essentially right in front of Ocean Air Sports at a spot called Island Creek.

The week features a slalom event, a freestyle event (wind permitting), a fun course race called the beer race and the centre piece of the event: the long-distance race. The week is punctuated by beach parties, clinics, demos, swap meets, cocktails and an award ceremony all put together by the organizers. Windsurfers come from all over the United States and beyond to compete in the races. It is the biggest racing event on the East Coast, and certainly one of the largest amateur races in the United States. Typically, several hundred people descend on Cape Hatteras to race and have fun.

My OBX experience: Gear (choice) matters!

This was my third year competing in the long-distance race, which consists of two 20 km races where contestants do four stretches of 5 km each. More than 100 people line up at the start behind the jet-ski, and when the jet-ski zooms across an imaginary start line, it is essentially pandemonium as racers try to catch the wind to get going. The 5 km legs sound easy, but they are not, as winds can gust anywhere from 15 to 25 knots, and the water can get choppy. My first year in 2022, I was supporting three guys from Bonaire, Bimbi and Terrence Clappers, and Nigel Hart. They borrowed my best gear, which left me with no race experience and the wrong gear. I never made it to the first mark. I picked a small board and a sail that was way too small for the conditions. So, I blame that failure on the lack of experience and the wrong gear (not on the sailor LOL).

My second year, the Bonaire boys were back and Taty Frans came along too. I was again left with a poor choice of gear (particularly the wrong weed fin) but I managed to finish the whole thing. I did not do well but at least I finished both races.

In 2024, my third year, I had no more excuses. The Bonaire guys did not come, and I had a van full of gear just for me. The wind was light, so I chose to take out a 7.8 Loftsails Switchblade and a Future Fly Dark Horse 122. I did finish the first race but was overpowered and not comfortable on the gear. So, like many people, I downsized. I switched to a 6.6 Loftsail Racingblade and a Future Fly Dark 117 for the second race. Unfortunately, the wind died and I could not get on a plane. I managed to finish one leg of the second race but simply abandoned after that. On this occasion, I could only blame myself for a poor choice of gear and poor decision making all the way through.

I am not an experienced racer, so I do learn a great deal every time I go to this event. The first lesson is that gear choice is very important for the racing but also being in good shape and doing lots of windsurfing prior to the event helps a great deal. The other thing I always fail to do is to adjust my setup during the race. The sound is very shallow, and you can easily stand at the first mark. I always hesitate to adjust my gear for fear of losing too much time. However, had I simply lowered my boom during the first race, I would have been much more comfortable and able to catch up the time lost adjusting my gear. Hopefully everything will come together in year four!

A few more things to consider as you think of going down for the annual event. The event is in late October so temperatures can swing from a balmy 20°C to 12°C and very windy. In 2023, we thought the Bonairians would freeze to death during the freestyle event.

The wind at OBX is usually quite good. Certainly between 15 and 25 knots and sometimes more during the race. This year was different as we only had wind for the first two days and it was not that strong. Bringing gear for both light to heavy wind conditions is a must. Weed fins are also necessary as the sound gets full of weeds in the fall. This year we were there for 12 days and had no wind for about 8 of those days so it was not ideal in that regard.

While at OBX, we took the opportunity to visit the area, as there is quite a lot to do. One interesting nearby attraction is the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge, which is about an hour and a half from Avon. The reserve website tells you to be there a dawn or at dusk to see the local population of black bears and we were not disappointed. We saw huge bears a few feet from the road and cubs in the fields surrounding the roads. It was well worth the trip. <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/alligator-river>

There are plenty of other sites and attractions to see not so far from Avon. Just google Cape Hatteras to see what is available when the wind is not blowing.

A few practical tips for those who have never been

Getting there

If you are leaving from Toronto, Ottawa or Montreal, you can get to OBX in one day, provided you start your journey very early in the morning. There are lots of toll roads on the way there and many no longer accept cash payments. You can buy a transponder online and open an account to save some money. If not, the various toll companies will send an invoice to the address associated with the license plate.

We prefer to break the journey in two legs and explore both on the way down and on the way back to Montreal. We typically stay in a hotel along the way. At this time a year, finding a place without a booking is not too difficult and you can obviously book in advance.

Lodging

Once there, the majority of people rent a house or camp. Various companies offer real estate rentals in the area and prices vary greatly. Many people choose to share larger houses to save on cost of rental.

Some OBX attendees stay at the event location the week of the event. Houses are available on Island Creek immediately in front of the event. However, those houses are expensive and are usually rented out in January or February for the event in October.

If you do not stay at Island Creek, you need to launch at Ocean Air Sports which makes it a bit more challenging, as you need to wade in the water for a few hundred meters. Most people chose this option as access to Island Creek by car is reserved for people renting the properties there.

Food

Cape Hatteras offers a wide variety of food from fast food to fine dining. Most people chose to cook for themselves and shop at the local supermarket. However, if you want to go out the choices are numerous. Keep in mind that this is the end of the season so some restaurants may be closed for the winter.

Conclusion/Wrap-up

To sum it up, the OBX-Wind event in Cape Hatteras is a pilgrimage that every North American windsurfer should attend at least once in their life, regardless of level. The site, events and event organizers are all set up to provide every visiting windsurfer, from pro to beginner, with what will surely be the most memorable event of the season, if not of a lifetime.

For more information on OBX, please visit their website: <https://oceanairsports.com/pages/obx-wind>



More on OBX-Wind

From Artem Lavrynenko

I have participated in the OBX-Wind event for several years and only this year I was able to finish both long distance races. I would agree with Vincent on all his suggestions regarding gear choice. I learn that wind and weather conditions are changing a lot from year to year, so I normally bring all the gear I have, as well as wetsuits from 2mm to 5mm. This place is known for good wind and shallow water which is perfect to learn, improve and enjoy. As for food, we prefer cooking and normally we eat only fish. We buy it from the local Seafood Market. It is not cheap but always fresh and it is local fish.

From Ian Matthews

This year was an exciting OBX-Wind event at the end of October. The forecast wasn't amazing so they tried to get a lot squeezed into the first day. The long distance race went well, the wind was a little light but it was enough to get over 115 racers around the course. Big gear helped, Canadian Vincent Lindauer came in 2nd (1st and 3rd), Keith Whiston and I came in the next group coming 23rd and 16th respectively. It is always an amazing race having so many sailors on the start line (upwards of 150).

For the slalom race the wind dropped a little more with some racers struggling in the lighter air but some Canadians thrived with Paul Wortmann coming 6th, Gabriel Smith taking first youth and 16th and Keith Whiston coming in 17th.

The light wind race brought out a big fleet mid week, with beers being handed out and costumes encouraged. It was a lot of fun. Artem was the masters champion in this one coming in 3rd (the first two people had full raceboard kits). I enjoyed my time trying to keep up with him on a Windsurf LT. The wind was very light but it was great to see about 70 racers on all types of gear bobbing around the course.

It is always a great time being in the presence of so many windsurfers for a week. Great clinics and socials helped us get through a mostly light wind week (this is usually not the case, which means next year will be windy). All in all this is a wonderful week and I highly encourage windsurfers of all levels to join as there is something for everyone



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Upcoming Events 2025

Spring Windsurfing Weekend - June 13-15

Annual Championships - August 8-10, Deep River, ON **SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

Fall Windsurfing Weekend - September 12-14

Visit windsurf.ca for updated news on upcoming events.

The next newsletter should be published in the Spring/Summer 2025. We welcome all contributions. Please e-mail your articles and pertinent pictures to roberge811@sympatico.ca.

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