

USMCA Annual Report 2016

The USMCA has concentrated its efforts on an intense racing schedule that included all areas of the country. The intent was to support events in different regions and generate enthusiasm and excitement leading up to a National Championship in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin and later the Worlds Championship in Miami, Florida. We kicked this effort off with a 4 Act Winter Series starting in Miami, then Key West, passing thru Miami again and Act 4 winding up at Charleston Race Week.

We are working on cooperating our schedules with our Canadian neighbors where in June the Canadian National Championship was truly a very well attended and successful Can-Am event. We intend to continue this momentum into 2017.

The summer schedule boasts over 25 regional well attended regattas throughout the country including the Columbia Gorge One Design Regatta in Cascade Locks, Oregon. This is the venue for the North American Championships in 2017. The Columbia Gorge is proving to be a perennial site for Melges 24 Championships for years to come.

The summer season finally wound down to a spectacular National Championship in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. 47 boats competing along with the Fall colors. The National Championship was also highlighted by the opening introduction of our class charity "Doctors without Borders." We will see more and more involvement with this truly great cause in more and more events to come. This association with "Doctors without Borders" shows that while we sail our yachts we keep in mind and supports those less fortunate and in need. We want these acts of kindness to be associated with the class.

The goal of the USMCA has been on scheduling high quality events with the emphasis on high quality sailing in exciting venues. The Worlds Championship in Miami on the ocean is consistent with this goal. We have engaged the class for the last two years and we expect to have a World Class turnout later this month with the focus on the sailing. During the planning and preparation for this event many challenges were presented. As the environment continues to evolve concerning our sport, these realities will continue challenge us. We have learned that by concentrating our focus on the sailing....quality sailing, we can expect to enjoy high level.

Preparation for Worlds Miami has shown the need to be more creative with not only how to promote premium events but the reality of how they are run both on and off the water. In the U.S. we have been hit with escalating costs. Yacht clubs are less and less willing to assume the business risk. We need to template costs for future events to best provide amenities at exciting venues while offering the best value possible to our members. More and more the event cannot be expected to pay for everything required all inclusive. We need to do all this while not compromising the sailing on the water.

Finally, the hard work of the USMCA membership and leadership has garnered 83 full members. Membership and engagement is strong. Our biggest goal is to keep this momentum beyond Worlds Miami. We have started doing this with our 2017 Winter Series and 2017 North American Series. These annual championships Melges 24 sailors can anticipate for years to come.

Steven Boho, USMCA President.