MASTHEAD

The Official Electronic Magazine of the Shields Class Sailing Association

Ocean Great Lakes Challenge Returns to Monterey

Summer 2026

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Cover Photo: Stillwater and Fireball 7 Saturday in Front of Cannery Row

President's Message
By: Jonathan Krumeich

Greetings Shields Class-

With the summer in full swing, we have much to be excited about in the Shields Class. Starting off our season with the successful running of the Ocean Great Lakes Challenge Cup, I must start off this message with a big thank you to the Monterey Peninsula Yacht Club and all of the volunteers who made this regatta a success. Congratulations to team Bit O Honey and Ken Deyett on a hard fought victory.

Moving back to the east coast, the class has exciting news to share out of Boothbay Harbor Maine where the class has added a new fleet, number 23. Led by Robert Scribner and Peter Neidhardt, the new Boothbay Fleet offers the class an expansion north and new racing opportunities which began with the 2026 BHYC Regatta on July 18-19th.

With our marquee regatta, the 2026 National Championship, returning to Oxford Maryland there is plenty to be excited about. So make sure to get your qualifying days in, pay your class dues, and review your compliance forms as soon as possible!

Lastly, the Class is currently accepting proposals for our 2028 National Championship Regatta. If your fleet is interested in holding our 64th running of this event, please do not hesitate to reach out.

It is a distinct pleasure serving as your Class President and I look forward to seeing everyone on the water in 2026.

Cheers,
Jonathan

Above: Jib Measuring by Brian Hayes and Wes Bemus
Photo Credit: Jonathan Krumeich

Welcome to the 2026 Shields National Championship Regatta to be held at Tred Avon Yacht Club

The members of Tred Avon Yacht Club are delighted to welcome the Shields Class to historic Oxford, Maryland, for the 2026 National Championship. As one of the Chesapeake Bay's premier racing venues, TAYC is proud to host this prestigious event for the fourth time and looks forward to sharing a week of outstanding competition, Eastern Shore hospitality, and memorable camaraderie.

Sailing on the Choptank
This year's championship will be sailed on the beautiful Choptank River, just a one-mile sail from the TAYC clubhouse on the Tred Avon River. The Choptank offers wide-open racing water with plenty of room for championship-caliber courses and tactical racing. September typically brings southwest to southeast breezes averaging around 10 knots, although passing cold fronts can introduce stronger northerly winds and exciting shifts. Afternoon sea breezes often develop, rewarding crews who recognize changing conditions early. While tidal current is generally modest—typically less than one knot—it can still influence race strategy. Combined with warm Chesapeake waters and spectacular scenery, the Choptank provides an ideal setting for a week of competitive Shields racing.

Racing, Friendship, and Eastern Shore Hospitality
A Nationals is about much more than great racing, and the organizing committee has planned a full week of activities that showcase the best of Maryland's Eastern Shore. The festivities begin Wednesday evening with a Welcome Happy Hour featuring heavy hors d'oeuvres and an opportunity to reconnect with old friends and meet new competitors. Thursday's traditional crab feast at Bachelor's Point offers visitors an authentic Chesapeake Bay experience, with alternative menu selections also available. The week concludes Saturday evening with the Awards Banquet featuring Maryland crab cakes, steak, and a celebration of the week's champions.

Each morning begins with complimentary coffee and bagels at the clubhouse before racing, while afternoons conclude with cold beverages, snacks, and plenty of storytelling on the deck overlooking the Tred Avon River. Every skipper will also receive commemorative event swag, including a custom Sea Bag tote filled with championship keepsakes.

Nearly a Century of Sailing Tradition

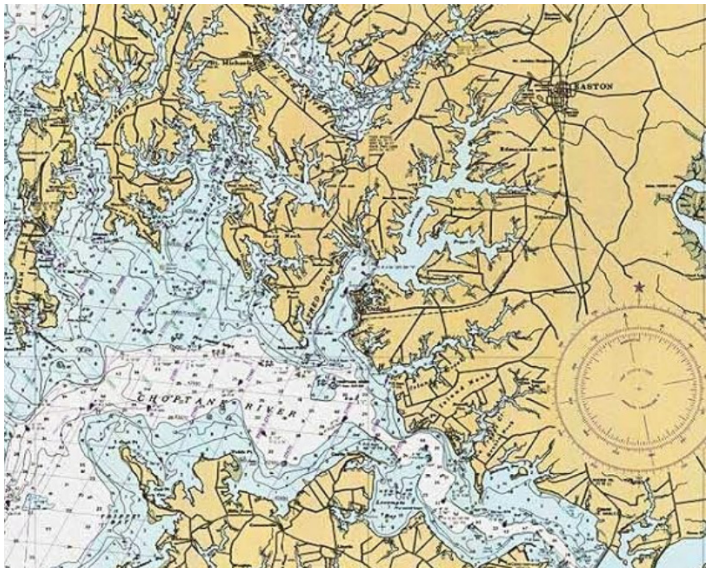
Founded in 1931, Tred Avon Yacht Club has grown from a small local sailing club into one of the Chesapeake Bay's most respected racing organizations. For nearly 100 years, TAYC has hosted championship regattas, fostered generations of competitive sailors through its renowned Junior Sailing Program, and maintained a proud tradition of excellence on the water.

Today the club continues to host signature events such as the Oxford Regatta and the Myers Heritage Regatta while its members compete successfully at regional, national, and international levels. This deep commitment to racing, sportsmanship, and fellowship makes TAYC a fitting home for the 2026 Shields National Championship.

The Tred Avon Shields Fleet continues that tradition of competitive one-design racing. Established in 2001 with three pioneering boats, the fleet has steadily grown through the enthusiasm of local sailors and new owners. Two of those original boats—Hull #73 Black Pearl and Hull #149 Merlin—are still actively raced in Oxford today under new ownership. With the addition of four boats this year, the fleet has grown to 14 active Shields, making it one of the largest and most vibrant fleets in the Mid-Atlantic.

SHIELDS NATIONALS 2026

Tred Avon Yacht Club



A Welcome from Commodore Tom DeMarco

On behalf of the members of Tred Avon Yacht Club, welcome to Oxford and the 2026 Shields National Championship. It is an honor to host this event once again. Having raced a Shields myself, I appreciate what makes this class exceptional—close competition, great sportsmanship, and enduring friendships. We look forward to providing outstanding racing, memorable social events, and the warm hospitality for which TAYC is known. Fair winds, and welcome to Oxford!

Ocean Great Lakes Challenge

Upon arrival in Pacific Grove to compete for the Ocean Great Lakes Challenge Cup, a trophy which dates back to 1915, Team Bit~O~Honey enjoyed a wonderful meal at the Beach House Restaurant at Lover's Point. From our table we had a panoramic view of the racecourse that would test us over the next three days. This was my fifth time sailing on Monterey Bay, each regatta having taught new lessons and reinforced others learned previously. We looked forward to the challenge of facing some of the top talent in our class and to re-establish friendships with our only fleet west of the Mississippi River. Before reaching the starting line, the crew put in significant work preparing the boat. We changed a few tuning elements of the rig of our assigned boat to make things more similar to our sailing style at home. These changes seemed to benefit us, but the tuning and changes continued on Friday evening after the Practice Day. The result was a boat that felt fast, balanced, and competitive. Just as important was the teamwork. Everyone contributed ideas, experience, and effort. Discussions on tuning, sail shape, tactics, and local conditions helped us improve throughout the week. **Meg Yorsz** provided leadership throughout the event and helped keep the team focused. After handling foredeck duties, she moved aft to assist with race management and worked closely with Curtis on compass numbers. She was particularly effective at fleet observation and identifying strategic opportunities while stepping into whatever role was needed. **Curtis Johnson** played a key role in sail trim, tuning, and compass work. Working closely with Meg, he helped keep us in phase with the wind and consistently identified adjustments that improved boat speed. He also helped keep the crew organized and operating efficiently. **Eric Anderson** joined the program late and immediately contributed valuable Shields experience and local Monterey knowledge. He adapted quickly to whatever role was needed and played an important part in the team's success. **Dan Ronan** was a valuable addition to the team. Whether trimming, advising on tactics, or managing spinnaker work, his experience and calm approach were especially helpful in close races. As the week progressed, communication became increasingly efficient, and Dan contributed throughout the event with sail trim, tuning, and strategy. One of the biggest lessons from Monterey was understanding the course and local conditions. The left side often appeared favored, though the lower-left corner sometimes had less pressure. Success frequently came from getting left early without over-committing. We also noticed a strong relationship between tidal changes and wind velocity. As the tide approached slack and began transitioning, the breeze often softened noticeably, creating opportunities for attentive crews. Monterey offered challenging, constantly changing conditions. Every race required careful observation of pressure, current, and shifts. The fleet was competitive enough that small mistakes could cost several places, while good decisions were often rewarded immediately.

Thank you to Jim Wirtz and Jerry Stratton for organizing the event. From race management and protest administration to meals and logistics, they created a well-run regatta that allowed competitors to focus on sailing. Special thanks to Eric Anderson for arranging housing and opening his home to the team during our stay. His hospitality made the week easy and enjoyable. Garth Hobson deserves recognition not only for finishing second overall but also for handcrafting the event trophies. They were beautifully made and reflected the care that went into the regatta. **Above: Bit~O~Honey and October Photo Credit: Michael Fiala**

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Larry Gamble sailed an excellent regatta to finish third overall. His speed, consistency, and knowledge of the Shields Class continue to make him one of the fleet's toughest competitors. Heather Shaver and her Newport team were strong competitors all week. Their opening-race victory highlighted their preparation and speed. The morning tuning sessions with Heather and her crew provided valuable opportunities to compare settings and exchange ideas. The overall level of competition was excellent. Every boat brought strengths to the racecourse, and every day offered new lessons. The camaraderie ashore matched the intensity on the water and remains one of the defining qualities of the Shields Class. One of the most rewarding aspects of the week was the willingness of competitors to help one another. Morning tuning sessions, dockside conversations, and the sharing of ideas are part of what makes the class special. While everyone wants to win, the fleet maintains a strong spirit of friendship and sportsmanship.

Consistency proved to be the key to success. Bit~O~Honey #237 was fortunate enough to win the Ocean Great Lakes Challenge Cup and bring the trophy back to Fleet 10. The racing was close throughout the regatta, with every boat showing race-winning speed and opportunities to move up the standings. For our crew, the result was especially satisfying because it reflected the effort invested in preparing the boat, learning the Monterey conditions, and improving throughout the week. Winning the Ocean Great Lakes Challenge Cup was an honor, but the friendships, teamwork, and lessons learned were equally rewarding. All Photos: Michael Fiala

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Final Thoughts: Most importantly, this regatta reminded me how fortunate we are to sail in the Shields Class. The combination of strong competition, good people, and a willingness to help one another makes it a special fleet. We learned a great deal, made the boat faster, and came away with ideas we'll continue to build on as we head toward Newport, NYYC, Edgartown, and Nationals in Oxford Maryland. Thank you to everyone who helped make Monterey such a memorable event. Ken Deyett
-Skipper Bit~O~Honey

Above: The Challenge Cup is permanently on display at Chicago Yacht Club, Belmont Station Right: Fleet after start during Saturday Racing Below: 151 after Race 1 victory. Sailing Photo Credit: Michael Fiala

Shields Class Foundation
2026 Mid-Year Report
by Eric Anderson

SHIELDS CLASS FOUNDATION

The Shields Class Foundation is pleased to partner with our newest fleet at Boothbay Harbor Yacht Club in Maine. The foundation sold one boat, entered into a lease to own for another and arranged for a private sale of a third Shields to be part of this new fleet. The inaugural regatta for Fleet 23 was held on July 18-19. Members of the new fleet and Ken Deyett are shown below with the SCF Banner as a backdrop.

For a fourth consecutive season, the Shields Class Foundation is partnering with the Monterey Youth Sailing Foundation to help support a junior Shields Crew campaign during club racing in California and also at our 2026 National Championship Regatta in Oxford. #191 Crew is co-skippered by Rosie Savukinas and June Emerson shown below.

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Abigail Forcier is skippering Shields #89 this summer in Fleet 10 in Marion, MA. The SCF was pleased to partner with local fleet members to make this happen.

Please consider ways the SCF can work to help the racing at your fleet in 2027.

In addition to cash donations the Shields Class Foundation is seeking 2-3 sets of sails in good condition, Harken cam cleats, and halyards and sheets in order to keep our boats in good racing condition. If this is something you can assist with, please email:

info@shieldsclassfoundation.org

Look for our table at TAYC during Nationals for SCF hats and burgees. Plus we are planning to auction several magnums of wine generously donated by Jerry Stratton.

Abigail Forcier of Fleet 10

Our new SCF Battle Flag is proudly tethered to #237 in the mooring field at ILYC. For those Fleet 9 sailors unable to scan the code under sail, we have included an easy to scan QR below. Eligibility for donations through scanning is open to sailors in all fleets, not just Newport. Thanks in advance to all who help us through your giving!

New Energy for the Shields Class in Boothbay by Ken Deyett

This past weekend, the Shields Class headed to Maine for the 52nd Annual Boothbay Harbor Yacht Club Regatta and Shipyard Cup Classics Challenge—and if the enthusiasm we saw is any indication, the future of Shields Fleet 23 in Boothbay is looking very bright.

The regatta itself was something special. Boothbay is a spectacular place to sail, and seeing beautiful classic wooden yachts, modern race boats, and one-designs all sharing the water created an atmosphere that was hard to beat. But for those of us sailing Shields, the most exciting part of the weekend was seeing firsthand just how much energy and interest there is in growing the class in Boothbay.

Four Shields were registered for the weekend, with three making it to the starting line. But the numbers only tell a small part of the story. Everywhere we went, there seemed to be genuine interest in the Shields. The sailors, the club, and the local sailing community are excited about the class and what they are building.

Above: #187 Sleigh Ride (Bob Scribner) Below: #183 Pizza! Pizza! (Maarten Zonjee and Betsy Pilcher)

Bob Scribner, Fleet 23 Captain, has been a driving force behind the effort. Bob sailed Sleigh Ride, Shields #87, with Peter Neidhardt, Matt Neidhardt, and Brian Reed.

Maarten Zonjee and Betsy Pilcher have also brought tremendous enthusiasm to the growing fleet. Betsy took the helm this weekend aboard Pizza! Pizza!, Shields #183, sailing with Maarten and Brad Collins.

Another exciting piece of the fleet's growth is Shields #188, currently being restored by Dennis Gunderson, manager of Simple Marine in Boothbay. Dennis is doing an outstanding job. The restoration is beautiful, and #188 looks more like a brand-new Shields than a boat being brought back to life. With #188 joining the fleet, Boothbay is building toward five Shields, with hopes of seeing eight—or perhaps even more—on the starting line next year.

Richard "Rich" Robbins and I came to Boothbay hoping to help promote the Shields Class and support the growth of Fleet 23. I was fortunate to have Liam Walsh and Luke Saletta sailing with me. We all came away from the weekend impressed by the people we met, the sailing venue, and especially the enthusiasm surrounding this new fleet. There is clearly something special starting to happen in Boothbay.

The Shields Class Foundation at Work

The growth of Fleet 23 is also a great example of the Shields Class Foundation doing exactly what it was created to do—supporting and growing the Shields Class.

Through the efforts of the Foundation and the people in Boothbay, three Foundation boats have made their way to Boothbay to help establish and build this fleet. Seeing those boats on the water and the enthusiasm they have generated is proof that the program is working.

The Foundation is helping put Shields into the hands of sailors, bringing boats back to life, and creating opportunities for the class to grow in new places. Every boat we can help get back on the water, every new sailor we introduce to the Shields, and every new fleet we help establish strengthens the future of our class.

The Foundation is working. The Foundation is strong. And to continue building new fleets like Boothbay, the Foundation needs the support of the Shields community. Fleet 23 is a great example of what that support can accomplish.

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...And Boothbay Knows How to Throw a Party

Of course, the weekend wasn't all about racing.

Saturday night's regatta party was incredible. Hundreds of sailors and guests packed the venue for a night with a great band and what seemed like an endless amount of food. There were oysters, sushi, shrimp, scallops wrapped in bacon, chowders, lamb, chicken, sausage, nachos, macaroni and cheese—and just about anything else you could imagine.

Tables of food seemed to surround the entire room, the drinks were flowing, and somehow, despite a crowd that appeared to number more than 500 people, there was hardly a line to be found.

They know how to run a regatta in Boothbay.

But when all is said and done, what we'll remember most about the weekend is the people.

Fleet 23 has a great group of sailors who are enthusiastic about the Shields and eager to grow their fleet. They are learning the boats, building their program, and bringing tremendous energy to the class. With the enthusiasm we saw this weekend, it is easy to imagine Boothbay becoming a great Shields destination and an exciting addition to the class for years to come.

A sincere thank you to everyone in Boothbay for welcoming us and making us feel at home. It was a privilege to be there, to sail with you, and to play a small part in helping promote the Shields Class.

Welcome to Shields Fleet 23, Boothbay. The energy is there, the sailors are there, and the future looks bright. We can't wait to come back.

Dear Wendy

Can you please send out an update on when we can purchase replacement Shields masts?

Sincerely,

Wally Waiting

Dear Wally:

Thank you for the question. We are glad to update everyone on where things stand. A little history: the company who extruded our Shields mast extrusion in the past upgraded machinery and they are no longer producing extrusions over 30'. Understanding that Shields owners do not want spliced masts, we worked diligently to find a reasonable solution. We have a relationship with another extruder willing to produce full-length mast extrusions but their minimum order is double what we have purchased in the past. With budget in mind we met with colleagues in the industry for alternatives. The only extruder to send a comparative quote is unable to supply stock in the aluminum alloy we require. A change in the alloy is not acceptable as it effects the One Design attributes of the rig and reduces the life expectancy in comparison to Shields spars produced in the past. So we are back to the first proposal and the need to purchase more raw material. We currently have an order placed for a batch of 40-foot extrusions. Once extruded, they will be transported for anodizing & then to our shop in Wareham. Volume and logistics have affected the cost to produce these masts, but I'm pleased to report we can continue to supply Shields masts. Where things stand right now: The Shields mast price has been adjusted accordingly. Please reach out to us to pre-order a mast. We look forward to producing this next run of Shields masts.

Please contact Cape Cod Shipbuilding for a quote.

What to do in the meantime: The best insurance for keeping your rig intact is to inspect it before you step the mast. Replace standing rigging every 8-10 years. This regimen should be followed regardless of whether you have a broken strand of wire. Inspect your chainplates & the hull to deck connection. Inspect the backstay casting and the optional sheave. Replace the backstay pennant frequently. Inspect the ~~for~~estay deck assembly, including the connection below deck. Inspect the mast itself at the spreaders, deck & very bottom. Clean up & treat any corrosion. If you'd like to extend the life of your existing mast, inquire with us about ordering replacement standing rigging. Wishing everyone smooth sailing as the season is off to a great start!

Sincerely,

Wendy J. Goodwin