

For Immediate Release: 8/26/2007

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Chris Van Tol (USA) Wins the 2007 Knickerbocker Cup

Port Washington, NY – The Bayview Yacht Club Match Racing Team, with skipper Chris Van Tol, Mike Hoey, John Van Tol and Mike Rehe have won the 2007 Knickerbocker Cup, beating Andrew Arbuzov (RUS), the leaders going into the semi-final round with a score of 2-0. It took three races to determine third and fourth place winners, with last year's Cup Champion, Martin Angsell (SWE) beating John Loe (USA) 2-1 in the Petit Finals.

The pre-start of the first race of the finals had Arbuzov, with Igor Bychkol, Anton Sergeev and Alexander Kapalin, setting spinnaker to catch up to Van Tol as they raced around the bow of the Race Committee boat. Emerging at the stern, Arbuzov dropped spinnaker, rounding up to sneak between Van Tol and the Committee Boat. Van Tol protested, but it didn't hold; however Van Tol was able to maintain an advantage at the start and held it throughout the race. Race two of the finals had both teams neck and neck approaching the starting line. At the gun, Van Tol covered Arbuzov's air and shot ahead to take a huge lead that lasted throughout the race. A jubilant team crossed the finish line in style, with hugs and high fives all around.

It took Martin Angsell and crew members Martin Stromberg, Johan Sawensten, Jens Kulstad three races to dispense with John Loe, 2-1. Loe beat Angsell in the one match during the Semi-finals; wind conditions prevented additional matches. Once the wind filled in after a short delay, Loe and his team of Val Smith, Bartosz Zienda and Baker Potts, lost the first match to Angsell, got an early lead in the second race to beat the Swedes, but just couldn't make it happen a second time. Loe came very close to beating Angsell – it was a photo finish, with Loe just inches behind Angsell. With both team promising to return next year, Loe will have another chance to tackle Angsell. And with an additional year's worth of college sailing, he and his crew might very well be able to slay the giants they were up against this year.

During the awards ceremony, Chris Van Tol let on that they call themselves the “zero to hero” team. He explained, “We were here last year and only managed to win one race. We put it together this year by practicing a lot. Each race had us gaining momentum and confidence and by the time we got into the finals, we nailed it.” Next stops for this team are the Great Lakes Match Racing Championships, the US Match Racing Championships in Newport, RI at the end of September and then it is on to Bermuda for more racing. Van Tol and his team “are thankful for the support of Alcos Insurance and Financial Services that helps them extend their match racing schedule.”

This is the Silver Anniversary for the Knickerbocker Cup. The late Edward du Moulin, who is a past Commodore of Knickerbocker YC, a member of the New York YC and the Storm Trysail Club, and an inductee into the America's Cup Hall of Fame, and his late friend Arthur Knapp founded the Knickerbocker Cup. 25 years ago, the two friends had just returned from the Congressional Cup in California and thought it would be a good idea to bring match racing to the east coast. Since that day, the Cup has grown in prestige and in recent years has become a platform for launching many match racing careers. To celebrate the Silver Anniversary, Knickerbocker YC member Morty Schwartz produced a video highlighting the Cup from its inception. Richard du Moulin, Ed's son, presented commentary on the match racers who have challenged for the Cup over the years. Rich, a member of Larchmont YC, NYYC, and a past commodore of the Storm Trysail Club, won the Knickerbocker Cup in 1984. By all accounts, the Friday evening presentation was a huge success, with historical facts either not known or forgotten brought to light. With Rich's sailing expertise and his great sense of humor, the audience was treated to a very special, informative and fun evening.

Edward du Moulin was truly a devotee of match racing. And his interest in training up and coming racers was legendary. Some time ago, he and Dennis Conner founded the Knickerbocker Cup Junior Match Racing Trophy to promote match racing for juniors in Manhasset Bay. This year the trophy was won by Colin Kennedy and Ryan Schmitz, junior sailors representing Port Washington YC. Several years ago, this same trophy was won by Carrie Morea, du Moulin's youngest grandchild.

As the 2007 winner, Chris Van Tol's name will be engraved on the Knickerbocker Cup. He will be in good company with match racers from past years: Ed Baird, Peter Holmberg, Peter Gilmour, Paul Cayard, Russell Coutts, Terry Hutchinson, Ian Williams, and Long Island Sound sailors, Dave Dellenbaugh, Dave Perry and Rich du Moulin. With the top four teams planning to return in 2008, next year promises to be a great event. But for now, it is Chris Van Tol and his "zero to hero" team who holds the title of 2007 Knickerbocker Cup Champion.

An international event of this caliber takes many people working together to achieve success. Paula Davis, the Event Chair, deserves the highest accolades for bringing yet another very successful international sailing event to our bay. Along with Paula, congratulations and thanks go to the following Knickerbocker Cup officials: Paula Davis, Commodore Robert Lager, P/C Joel Sterling, P/C Theodore Weisberg, Tinette Sterling (Steering Committee); P/C Howard Hirschmann (Chair), P/C Norman Schefer, P/C Maurice Mandel, Commodore Robert Lager, P/C Joel Sterling, Sue Miller, PRO (Race Committee); Robin Helfat (Umpires & Contestants); Robert Lager (On-Water Coordinator, Colgate Boat Recruitment); Jeanne Rosenthal (On-Land Coordinator); Paula Davis and Alicia Munves (Abilities! Liaison); Susan Gordon-Ryan and Linda Tibbals (Abilities! Staff); Paula Davis (Sponsorship Recruitment); Manny Green (Trophies); Tinette Sterling (Hospitality); Debbie and Jay Dubowsky (Housing); Paula Davis (Merchandise); George Asher and Arthur Seidman (Breakfasts); Tinette Sterling, Dorothy Greene and Lydia Rab (Lunches); Elisa Raskin (Breakfast Raft-up); Cookie Shapiro (Dinner Dance); Paula Davis and Robert Marcus (Auction and Raffle); Richard

Farber (Communications); Andrea Watson, Sailing Press, Inc. and Rita Marcus (Publicity); Brian Raskin and Bob Ebenau (Website); P/C Norman Schefer and Paula Davis (Fundraising); P/C Norman Schefer, Paula Davis and Aaron Alpert (Journal); Steven Feinsilver, MD (Medical Officer); Bob Ebenau, Brian Raskin, Andrea Watson and Paula Davis (Photography); Morty Schwartz (Video Production); and Marla Freeman, Smallkaps Associates, Inc. (Journal Design).

Thanks also go to the sponsors of this year's Cup: Sterling and Sterling, State Bank and Bonnie Doran of Daniel Gale Sotheby's International Realty. Steve and Doris Colgate, Offshore Sailing School, loaned 4 Colgate 26s and seven sets of brand-new sails. The rest of the Colgate 26 fleet was loaned to the Cup through the generosity of local sailors David and Jennifer Birnbaum, Paula Davis, and Bruce Joseph.

Chief Umpire at the 2007 Knickerbocker Cup was Bruce Cook, past commodore of Seawanhaka Corinthian YC, with assistance from Angelo Buscemi, USA; David Collins, CAN; Don Makowiecki, USA; Ewan McEwan, GBR; Chris Petracco, USA; Jesper Wilkens, DEN; Steve Wrigley, USA.

By the end of "Cup week" the prizes have been awarded, the international teams go home or to their next match racing regatta, and the exhausted volunteers sign with relief – and a great deal of pride – that another regatta was a roaring success. Accolades like "great racing," "wonderful hospitality," "can't wait to come next year," are heard and much appreciated. This year, on the Silver Anniversary, one competitor gave the Knickerbocker YC a gift that will never be forgotten, and that the founders of the Cup would have been thrilled to hear, if they were alive today. Praemek Tarnacki, POL, raced in the Knickerbocker Cup in 2003 but was too busy to return to the Cup the following year for a very good reason, but was able to find time to compete this year. The following is what he told to Tinette Sterling, who, along with her husband, Joel, housed the Polish team. His story, printed with his permission: "I first visited the Knickerbocker Yacht Club four years ago when I was invited to participate in the Knickerbocker Cup. That visit had a profound effect on my life. I was so impressed by the Yacht Club, by the organization of the event and by the community that participated in the event that I started to think about establishing such an event in Poland. When I returned to my home in Sopot, near Gdansk, I began to set things in motion to realize my dream. First, I established the club called, The Sopot Match Racing Center. I was able to obtain some commercial sponsors such as Toyota and in 2004 we organized a Grade 2 Match Racing Event with sailors from all over the world. In the meantime I had begun to build a fleet of six eleven meter yachts (36 feet) with money we received from our commercial sponsors and also with the cooperation of local government. The event evolved into a grade 1 event in 2005 and 2006. This year, our fourth year, we ran a European Championship Match Racing Event, the first ever in Eastern and Central Europe. This has become the biggest sailing event in Poland. I now work full time with the match racing organization and can appreciate the complexity of running an event such as the Knickerbocker Cup. I am grateful that I had this opportunity and want to thank all of the organizers of the Knickerbocker Cup and the members of the Knickerbocker Yacht Club for the opportunity of a lifetime. Hope to see you in the future!" Never in their wildest

imaginations would the founders of the Cup thought that their dream of bringing match racing to the eastern United States would have such an impact on international match racing. Congratulations to Knickerbocker YC and to all the volunteers.

2007 Knickerbocker Cup FINAL RESULTS

Chris Van Tol (USA)
Andrew Arbuzov (RUS)
Martin Angsell (SWE)
John Loe (USA)
Dave Perry (USA)
Keith Swinton (AUS)
Przemek Tarnacki (POL)
Brian Angel (USA)
Pierre-Antoine Morvan (FRA)
Matteo Simoncelli (ITA)
Nick Cherry (GBR)
Robert Gibbs (USA)

For more information, see www.yyc.net

PHOTOS:

- 1. Andrew Arbuzov, RUS, (C) set spinnaker in the pre-start to try to catch Chris Van Tol, USA (M) in the first race in the Finals of the 2007 Knickerbocker Cup. Van Tol won the finals, 2-0 and is the 2007 winner of the Knickerbocker Cup.**
- 2. Chris Van Tol, USA (M) protesting Andrew Arbuzov, RUS (C) as Arbuzov tried to squeeze between Van Tol and the RC boat. The protest was denied but Van Tol maintained the advantage at the start and went on to win the match and the Cup.**
- 3. The top four teams on the race course at the 2007 Knickerbocker Cup. L to R: Chris Van Tol, USA, (M) has a slight edge over Andrew Arbuzov, RUS, on the upwind leg of the first race in the finals in the 2007 Knickerbocker Cup. Martin Angsell, SWE, is in a close downwind match with John Loe, USA in their first race of the Petit Finals.**
- 4. High fives all around for the winners of the 2007 Knickerbocker Cup. Chris Van Tol, USA, crossed the finish line under spinnaker, beating Andrew Arbuzov, RUS, 2-0 in the finals, to capture the 2007 Knickerbocker Cup.**

5. **A photo finish in the third race of the Petit Finals in the 2007 Knickerbocker Cup. Martin Angsell, SWE, (D) the defending champion, edged out John Loe, USA, (N) at the finish to capture third place, with Loe a very close fourth.**
6. **Colin Kennedy and Ryan Schmitz, Port Washington YC won the Dennis Conner-Edward du Moulin Junior Match Racing Trophy. Colin is seen here with the team from Sweden: L to R: Martin Angsell, Martin Stromberg, Johan Sawensten, and Jens Kulstad.**
7. **The top four teams at the 2007 Knickerbocker Cup. Teams from left: Arbuzov, RUS; Van Tol, USA; Martin Angsell, SWE; and John Loe, USA.**
8. **Chris Van Tol and his team at the 2007 Knickerbocker Cup Awards Ceremony. From left: Carrie Morea, granddaughter of Edward du Moulin, the founder of the Cup; Knickerbocker YC Commodore Robert Lager; Skipper Chris Van Tol, Mike Hoey, John Van Tol, and Mike Rehe; Paula Davis, Event Chair.**