

# Sailors for the Sea Clean Regatta Platinum Level Sustainability Report



## 75th Thistle National Championship

July 30 – August 6, 2021

Prepared by: John Yingling  
Green Team Lead  
John.Yingling@SBCGlobal.net

Green Team Members include:  
John Yingling, Marilyn Hunger, Mike Ingham, Cairn Krafft,  
Danielle Buehler, Mary-Pat McNulty, Trudy Hudson

## 1. Eliminate Single-Use Water Bottles and Provide Water Refill Stations:



In pre-regatta announcements sailors were informed to bring reusable water bottles as water stations would be provided and single-use bottles were discouraged. It was hoped that a “water buffalo”, a 250-gallon water station with a dozen spigots, would be available, but due to Covid-19, local organizations no longer loaned them out. We borrowed/purchased 10-gallon igloo water containers and scatter them around the parking lot. Each morning they were filled with ice and water and as the regatta progressed keeping them filled became an issue as sailors learned to depend on them. A total of 10 containers were provided that could dispense 110 gallons of water. In addition, one of the sail makers contributed a commercial water filter station system with water supplied from a hose.

**ISSUES:** State health laws prohibit servers from reusing cups provided by customers, so depending on the server and if it was self-serving some beverages were dispensed in compostable cups. Keeping the 10 containers filled with water and ice required regular monitoring, especially on days when racing was delayed.

## 2. Eliminate Plastic Straws:



Straws were not issued with free alcoholic beverages and at the club bar signs were displayed stating no straws would be served with their drinks. We provided compostable stirrers at the coffee station each morning along with compostable coffee cups.

## 3. Serve Food with Plastic-Free Dinnerware:

Opening ceremonies food service were consisted of China and metal utensils, which were washed. Cups used at opening ceremonies were compostable. Dinners were served Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, to over 500 sailors/support team members and all the tableware was compostable items (plates, bowls, cutlery, napkins & drinking glasses). For beer and alcoholic beverages, each boat received three stainless mugs for their post-racing partying and were strongly encouraged to bring them to the party tent. Compliance improved over the course of the week. Sailors who forgot their mugs were issued beverages in eco-friendly compostable cups.



#### 4. Use or Provide Reusable Bags:

At registration, each boat received a reusable bucket with the names of sponsors printed on the exterior side. Regatta organizers used reusable bags when making purchases for the regatta.



#### 5. Award Practical Items or Use a Perpetual or Upcycled Trophy:

With the support of Sea Bags, daily trophies were awarded made from recycled sail material. A total of 37 awards were issued during the week replacing the historically used pewter cups. We announced a sail recycle campaign before the regatta for boat owners who wanted to donate their used sails to be repurposed into awards. As an incentive each donated sail received a raffle ticket for a repurposed item. We also initiated a program for trophy winners to “opt-out” of an award for alternative “greener” items or nothing at all.



## 6. Publicize Your Sustainability Efforts:



Throughout the regatta the Sailors for the Sea logo was constantly visible. It might have been the SftS decal which every boat received at registration, or the SftS signage at many of the stations, or in the bathroom encouraging sailors to learn more about the program, or on the Jumbotron. In our communications to the Thistle class through email, yacht scoring, the Bagpipe (Thistle Class Magazine) as well as our NOP (Notice of Party) we highlighted one or two of the 20 High Impact Goals we were trying to achieve. We also had a public address system which periodically made announcements about properly disposing of food waste and recyclable items.

## 7. Involve Local Organizations:

Our efforts to compost all food waste and compostable tableware was supported by Rust Belt Riders of Cleveland with daily pickups. The City of Rocky River supported us by picking up our recycling bags daily as our club does not support recycling. We felt this was a positive way to nudge CYC into seeing recycling can work! We also had our local Cleveland MetroParks provide educational classes to children in the childcare program about sustainability, see #16.

## 8. Post Educational and Reusable Signage:



Signs were everywhere!!! Many had the SftS logo while others were just bold and informative. The latter were reusable.

## 9. Serve Local Food or Source Seafood Sustainably:

Every meal served by the club had a vegetarian component with much of the food locally sourced as confirmed by our CYC chef and Club Manager.

## 10. Organize a Green Team:

The green team of five sailors was pulled together six months before the regatta and had regular monthly Zoom meetings. The drive was supported by the experience from Severn Sailing Association (SSA) of Annapolis and Mike Ingham, and during the regatta expanded with enthusiasm from other sailors. Our initial goal was to “Participate” but over the months of planning interest expanded and we quickly wanted to reach the Platinum Level by addressing all 20 Best Practices.



## 11. Ensure Proper Waste Bin Placement and Signage:

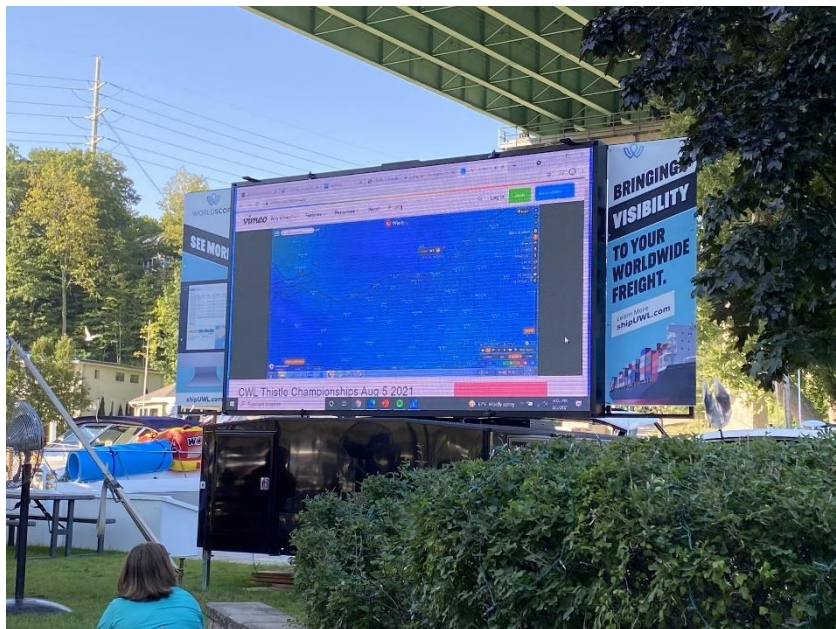


Around the island we placed over 20 containers for trash /landfill/recycle. Most locations had three clearly marked bins for landfill, recycle, and compostable items. Signs were initially placed on containers, but we quickly learned that signs were not enough. We modified “signage” to tape the physical item to the lid or side of the containers. We learned that having containers with lids is very helpful in guiding the participants to use the appropriate receptacle. Our recycling bins did not have a lid and very often people saw an easy, but not proper way to dispose. Resorting some of the containers was necessary by team members. For food waste and used compostable tableware, we contracted out to a commercial composting company which uses the collection for the manufacturing of rich organic earth. Next time, we will make sure that all the receptacles have lids and have plastic gloves on hand for resorting items, as well as provide “hand tools” for reaching into the bins.

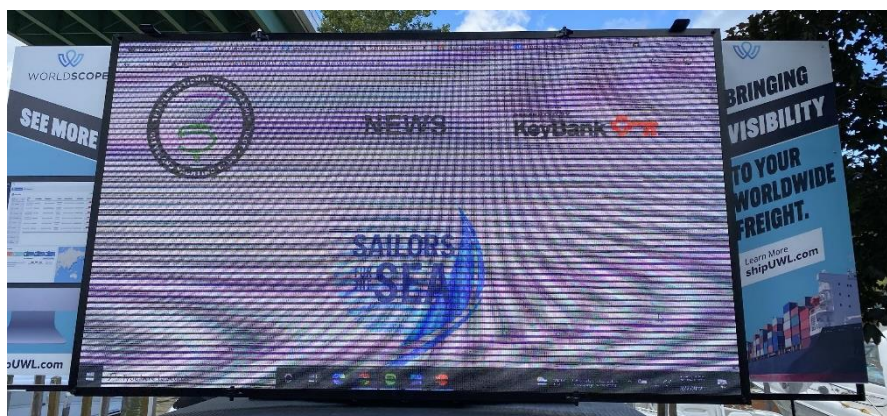
## 12. Divert Food Waste from the Landfill:

A local commercial composting firm, Rust Belt Riders, collected all food scraps and compostable items each day to be used in their composting business for resale of rich soil back to the public.

## 13. Use Paperless Event Management:



With support from the PRO it was decided that the Notice of Race (NORs) and Sailing Instruction (SIs) would NOT be printed out for inclusion in the registration packet but provided on-line for reading. Daily score results, which typically are printed out and made available to competitors each afternoon, were posted on-line as well.



Two pages were printed for inclusion in the registration packet. The Sailors for the Sea Mission and Vision statements as well as what the regatta was doing for each of the 20 Best Practices. This information was intended to inform and introduce sailors about Sailors for the Sea and briefly explain how we were attaining our goals. This document helped remind sailors of our Clean Regatta efforts and provided the foundation for this report.



## 14. Host a Beach or Marina Clean-up:



As the Thistle Class is a family-oriented boat, we provided child care each day for parents out on the water. The last day of the regatta, the children learned about sustainability from the local MetroParks and then had a dry-stall scavenger hunt/cleanup of the area. The want-to-be racers then made posters or drew on the cement about their sustainability experience. An adult educational program on eco-management/sustainability was hoped for during post-racing socializing, but support for this idea could not be provided by our MetroParks.

## 15. Promote Alternative Transportation:



The use of alternative transportation was encouraged and publicized. The website for Ocean Foundation's SeaGrass Grow calculator to offset our traveling carbon footprint was provided. The number of bicycles on the island was encouraging, and even skateboards and scooters were tooling around the area. A 7AM to 1AM free shuttle service was also provided to sailors between the club and a nearby business. This was primarily to help with traffic management and parking, but in a very small way did reduce some driving and remind sailors of our fragile ecosystem.

## 16. Increase Awareness of Wildlife and Habitat Protection:



As stated in #14, the childcare program had a local environmentalist come to the club to talk about nature, sustainability, and brought a live snake for the kids. This was a great success! The children then made posters/chalk drawings of what they learned.

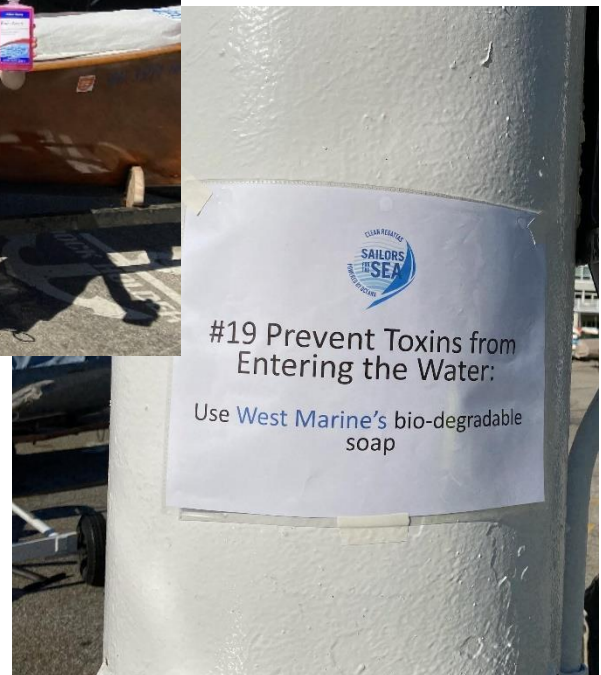
## 17. Offer Vegetarian or Vegan Alternatives:

At the opening cocktail party, at each of the club meals, and the awards banquet, vegetarian or vegan foods were made available for everyone.

## 18. Use Eco-Smart Race Management Techniques

With the support of the PRO, bow identification numbers were eliminated, as after the regatta the large vinyl sheets end up in the garbage. Patrol boats were asked to shut off their engines when standing by or idle. Lightweight RIB patrol/safety boats were requested, but none were available for loan by club members.

## 19. Prevent Toxins from Entering the Water



West Marine and HarkenDerm provided biodegradable/reef safe products for competitors. West Marine issued each boat a bottle of Boat Soap to keep our lake toxic free.

## 20. Encourage Green Boating Practices

All of the above items contributed to Green Boating, especially: reducing single-use plastics by encouraging and facilitating the use of reusable water bottles and providing compostable tableware; hiring a commercial composter to handle all of the food waste and used compostable tableware to keep these items out of the landfill; holding a used-sail collection drive to educate sailors about eco-friendly ways to dispose of old sails; using an opt-in approach to trophies, and providing useful trophies such as bags made from recycled sails; and, providing durable and reusable promo items.