



PK WITH WIND DANCER



PK WITH TROPHIES

Waterfronts, Jan. 15

In my last column, I last wrote about 57-year-old Deke Klatt, who easily was the county's top sailboat racers in 2014. But alongside PK Edwards, Klatt is just a kid.

Edwards, a retired anesthesiologist, is the county's premiere offshore racer and certainly the most active senior racer by far. In June he will skipper his Catalina 42, Wind Dancer, for the fourth time in the 2,200 mile Transpac Race from Los Angeles to Honolulu. In August, he will celebrate his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.

That wasn't a typo. Edwards has been racing sailboats, climbing mountains and hiking through the wilderness long before most local sailboat racers were born. His accomplishments are amazing – both at sea and on land.

As a sailor, Edwards has won dozens of blue chip offshore races. On land, he has hiked the 215-mile John Muir Trail and conquered the Sierra High Route both on skis and afoot at altitudes never lower than 10,500 feet.

In a book he wrote on the Sierra High Route in 1995, he noted that "climbing and sailing are single sports, whereas ski mountaineering is the fusion of two sports: climbing and skiing."

He stands 5-foot-6 and weighs 145 pounds and I doubt there's an ounce of body fat on his active frame.

Edwards, a member of Ventura Yacht Club, prefers offshore racing to buoy racing "because it is similar to mountaineering – more challenging, more dangerous."

He has owned a Cal 25, a Cal 34, a Yankee 30, a Catalina 38 and since 1991 his beloved and highly successful Catalina 42, Wind Dancer. He has more trophies than his age and he proudly displays the most prestigious ones in his Ventura Keys home.

His offshore racing resume, in addition to three TransPac Races, includes seven San Francisco to Santa Barbara Races, two of which he won; 25 Newport Beach to Ensenada Races on three different boats; five San Diego to Ensenada races and numerous Santa Barbara to King Harbor Races, including two overall victories.

His most grueling race and yet another impressive victory, was in 2001 when he won Los Angeles Yacht Club's 320 mile race around all the Channel Islands except for San Clemente. The first leg was a 125 mile weather leg from L.A. Harbor to Richardson Rock on San Miguel Island. "It was pure hell all the way up there," Edwards said. That race is no longer sailed.

The year just past was a difficult one for Edwards. Despite some serious health issues, he still won several races but has been relatively inactive the last couple of months – unless you consider that he has done a lot of skiing recently.

In 2014, he finally fully retired as an anesthesiologist. “People start asking how old is your anesthesiologist,” Edwards said with a smile. The year also saw Edwards conquer bladder cancer, suffer both a broken arm and a broken leg, and battle hepatitis C which he expects to have fully under control in February. He said he is fortunate that the medical industry has developed “a miraculous drug which is curing it.”

“My physical conditioning has gone to hell in a hand basket,” Edwards said. He intends to resume his workout program in February after he completes his treatments for hepatitis C. His workout program would stagger men half his age. Edwards will be doing pushups, pull-ups, squats and miles of running five days a week to prepare himself for another TransPac Race and more mountaineering.

“I wouldn’t be doing it if I wasn’t hooked on mountaineering,” Edwards said.

Much of his mountaineering occurs near his cabin on June Mountain. He says he will get in 20 days of skiing this season “on lift chairs” and numerous other days back country skiing on mountains that he must first climb before skiing down.

Living in Ventura, Edwards said, “is the perfect situation.” The best sailing in the United States is right here and it’s only a few hours a few hours away to go skiing.”

#### SOLID BOX:

U.S. Sailing officials will present a day-long race management seminar on Sunday, Jan. 18, at Pierpont Bay Yacht Club.

The seminar will begin at 8 a.m. and run until 5 p.m. The fee for the seminar is \$25.

Pierpont Bay Yacht Club is located in Ventura Harbor at 1363 Spinnaker Drive.

For more information about this important seminar, contact [raceadmin@ussailing.org](mailto:raceadmin@ussailing.org) or call 401 683-0800.

#### SOLID BOX:

#### Upcoming Sailboat Race

- Saturday, Jan. 24, Regatta Series 1. Hosted by Ventura Yacht Club, this is the first of three windward-leeward regattas for PHRF spinnaker boats. There also may be a J-24 class and PHRF non-spinnaker class if enough entries. The other regattas in the series are on April 18 and Aug. 29. Entry fee for individual regattas is \$25, or \$60 for the series. The skippers meetings will be at 8:30 a.m. and racing begins at 11 a.m. in the vicinity of the Mandalay buoy. For more information, contact Race Chair Stan Whisenhunt at 659-1464 or email him at [Swhisenhun@aol.com](mailto:Swhisenhun@aol.com).

(Fax your race announcements, results and other information to Stan Whisenhunt at 659-3058 or call him at 659-1464. His e-mail address is [Swhisenhun@aol.com](mailto:Swhisenhun@aol.com)).