



DAVID TRUDE

Water Fronts for 5-14

Cutline: Dave Trude in front of his Zap 26, Asylum.

One of Ventura County's top sailboat racing skippers can't walk to the podium when he wins a trophy. Instead, Dave Trude, 57, wheels himself forward in his wheelchair.

Trude "fell and got hurt when I was 40" and has been paralyzed from the waist down for the last 17 years. But that hasn't kept him from excelling in the sport of sailing.

Trude had been a crew member on several of the county's top racing boats in the 1970s and 1980s. That changed on a fateful day in December, 1997, while working for the City of Oxnard at the city's waste water plant. He fell 25 feet and "just landed wrong."

After he got hurt, he dropped out of big boat sailing for awhile and concentrated on small boat paralympic sailing.

He went to several regattas back east since there were no paralympic regattas on the West Coast. He placed third one year in Olympic trials in St. Petersburg, Florida.

While sailing in an Olympics Classes regatta in Miami, "that's when I learned I was out-moned," Trude said. "The British brought professionalism to the paralympics.

In 2011, Trude left small boat racing and bought a Zap 26, which he has named Asylum. Recently he won four of the five races in the first Ventura Yacht Club Regatta. Unable to do crew work any more, he

concentrates on driving. Last year he was guest driver on the Fast 42, Uhambo, and placed second in the popular Milt Ingram Trophy Race.

When he was younger, he worked as a sail maker for 11 years with Gary Swenson and Deke Klatt, who are both world class sailors. "My sailing skills went up exponentially," Trude said. In 1979 Klatt and Trude qualified for the Prince of Wales championship in Martha's Vineyard.

"Thirty five years later and I'm still racing against Deke," Trude said.

Of late he has been doing a lot of land sailing, which he says is easier for disabled people like him. He said he plans to sell his sailboat in a year or so and concentrate on sailing his "blow cart." It's way easier for him to get into his "blow cart" than into his zap.

Whether on sea or land, Trude likes to go fast and he does it better than most.

Upcoming Sailboat Races

- Saturday, May 16, Hardway Race. Co-hosted by Pierpont Bay Yacht Club and Santa Barbara Sailing Club. It is the first race in PBYC's Island Series. The other races are the Milt Ingram Race on July 11 and the Tri Point Race on Aug. 15. The 67 mile Hardway course is from Santa Barbara around Santa Cruz Island and finishing at Ventura Harbor. The 47 mile coastwise spinnaker course is around Anacapa Island, finishing at Ventura Harbor. The 24 mile non-spinnaker course is around Platform C, finishing at Ventura Harbor. The skippers meeting is at SBSC at 9:30. The first start is at 11 a.m. For more information, contact Richard Countess at 818-889-2669 or email him at rcountess@aol.com.
- Sunday, May 31, Commodore Classic Race. Hosted by Ventura Yacht Club, this popular race requires that a current or past commodore drive the boat. There is a cruising class and a spinnaker class. There is no entry fee for this event. The skippers meeting is at 9 a.m. and the first start is at noon near the Ventura Harbor whistle buoy. A complimentary buffet for skippers and crews will follow the race. For more information, contact Race Chair Stan Whisenhunt at 919-0555 or email him at Swhisenhun@aol.com.
- Saturday, June 6, Governor's Cup. Hosted by Ventura Yacht Club, this is Ventura County's oldest continuously run sailboat race. The perpetual trophy was originally presented by the late Gov. Edmund G. Brown, father of current Governor Jerry Brown. Spinnaker, non-spinnaker and multi-hull classes are planned. Entry fee is \$40. If three or more lady drivers check in prior to June 1, there will be a special trophy for the top lady driver. The skippers meeting is at 9 a.m. The first start is at noon in the vicinity of

the Mandalay buoy. For more information, contact Race Chair Stan Whisenhunt at 919-0555 or email him at Swhisenhun@aol.com.

- Saturday, June 13, Platform A Race. Hosted by Anacapa Yacht Club, this is the second of AYC's Anacapa Island Series. The final race is the Wes Golemon Memorial on Aug. 1. The skippers meeting is at 8:30 and the first start will be at 11:30 in the vicinity of the Mandalay buoy. Entry fee for the race is \$30. For more information, contact Gene Beville at 805 469-9549.