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## “Lorelei” takes the H Class Championship in Edgartown, MA

28 H12 teams from across New England and from as far away as Shelter Island, New York battled for the H Class Championship on Martha’s Vineyard, hosted by Edgartown Yacht Club July 27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

Designed by Cap't Nathanael Herreshoff, the first H Class hulls began construction in 1913. These classic little gaff-rigged sloops hark back to the golden age of sailboat design and while they are small, it takes big skill to sail one well. Five clubs host the annual championship in turn, and teams from all five turned out in Edgartown to take part in the 2024 edition.

Conditions in Edgartown’s outer harbor were challenging on Day 1, beginning with an hour-long shore delay as racers waited for a breeze to fill in. A light east south-easterly, barely reaching racing minimums, made for a long slog out to the start line, and mark boats left the course to tow boats out to the racing venue. The race committee managed to put two scores on the board - the last race a sprint to the top of the course and back to a reaching finish in what turned out to be the best breeze of the day.

Day 2 brought a stronger east wind at 8-11 kts, and brisk competition. Josh Legg’s #245 “Bumble” out of Buzzards YC, Bill Berry’s #104 “Nefertiti” from Beverly YC, and Terry Cronburg’s #41 “Lorelei”, also from Buzzards, were top contenders with first place finishes for each boat in races 3 through 5. “Bumble” retired before race 6 with a broken gaff, dropping her out of contention for a podium finish. At the end of the day, experience rose to the top: Cronburg’s “Lorelei” took the event with a decisive win in race 6 to become back-to-back champion, having won the trophy last year at Shelter Island YC, NY. Edgartown’s Penn Edmonds in #404 “Zig Zag” took second place overall, followed by past champion Bill Berry in #104 “Nefertiti.”

Buzzards YC also won the team award, with Lorelei’s winning score joined by Legg’s #245 “Bumble” at fourth place and Stephen Braese’s #336 “Sunbeam” at fifth. The “Savvy Sailor Award” was given to the top-scoring skipper over age 65 - also won by Cronburg, aged 79. Past H Class Champion Warren Vose sailing #326 “Moonglade” with wife Ann of Edgartown at ninth place won the family team award, narrowly edging out Quissett’s Mike Garfield and son Ben in #183 “Phoenix”. And Dona Bergin’s #452 “Blue Sky” and her three-woman team from Shelter Island, NY were lauded for traveling the greatest distance - with the most crew!

Event chair Marnie McLagan said "Imagine having 57 sailors gather in an old Massachusetts whaling village to race sailboats designed 110 years ago! The championship showcased both fierce competition and exceptional camaraderie, ably supported by our staff and volunteers. It was a true celebration of the spirit of sailing." Second place finisher Penn Edmonds shared: "We had an amazing weekend of racing in very difficult conditions. Having an experienced PRO, lots of race committee personnel, marks, and boats made a six race series possible which I think all of the competitors appreciated." For her part, PRO and EYC race chair Elizabeth (Tot) Balay praised the competitors for their sportsmanship, skill--and patience. "It's not easy waiting for the breeze with so much on the line," she shared. "It was a grand sight once we got them all racing. We're grateful to have had such a fine bunch of sailors here with us in Edgartown."

Sponsors of the 2024 H Class Championship were: [Doughdish](#), [Harding Sails](#), [Herreshoff Marine Museum](#), [Martha's Vineyard Shipyard](#), [Saltmarsh's](#), [Sperry Sails](#), and [Vineyard Vines](#).

Next year's H Class Championship will take place at Buzzards YC in Pocasset, MA.





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