



For Immediate Release

DOYLE DOMINATES, INFELISE INFALLIBLE – IN 2018 STAR NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIPS AT CALIFORNIA YACHT CLUB

MARINA DEL REY, CALIFORNIA 19 AUGUST 2018 - - After four days of combat on the waters of Santa Monica Bay, Eric Doyle has earned his second Silver Star, winning the 2018 Star North American Championship regatta at California Yacht Club.

Doyle, representing San Diego Yacht Club, and racing with Payson Infelise of Newport Harbor Yacht Club, defeated 35 rival teams in eight races over four days of competition. The 50-year-old sailmaker previously won the Star North Americans and the Worlds nearly 20 years ago, in 1999. He compared this win to his victory 19 years ago, saying, “It hurts a little more to hike out; but the competition is still great, and Bill Stump (PRO) is still out here running great races.”

With a podium placement in every race but one (when he was OCS), Doyle added, “The big key to the regatta is to be consistent. You’ve just got to be conservative and chip away at it. Try to stay fresh and focused, always looking out the boat.” He credited “good teamwork” and gave a nod to his crew Payson Infelise.

Doyle continued, “You’d better be on your toes, and on your game every second, or there are people passing you from every angle. Because everybody’s fast and everybody’s tough.”

Giving Doyle the toughest time was the St. Francis Yacht Club team of Paul Cayard/Arthur Lopes who finished second, just five points astern; while Newport Harbor Yacht Club's Charlie Buckingham/Jamie Buchan finished third.

Competitors from the US, Canada and Argentina enjoyed breezes ranging from 6 to 12 knots over the course of the four-day event; plus toasty temps and the warm hospitality of Cal Yacht Club.

Doyle had launched an early lead in the championship regatta which began August 16. On a roll – winning last weekend's King of Spain regatta, and on the heels of an impressive victory at the Lipton Cup Star regatta in Santa Barbara – he appeared set to dominate: until Cayard sprung to the top of the leaderboard Friday. That day's prickly racing saw several general recalls, leading PRO Bill Stump to hoist the U pennant for the start of the second race. With 36 boats on the line, starts were testing, and that black flag snared seven racers – including Doyle, dropping him to second overall. But Saturday's races, held in 6-8 knot zephyrs and sloppy seas, saw the leaders flip-flop again; putting Doyle over Cayard.

By midday Sunday the building breeze was already an improvement over Saturday's trying conditions.

Doyle was seated at the top of the leaderboard, but the situation was no longer like Thursday's initial race: where Doyle led the fleet from pole to pole. After three days of hard racing the competition was tuned up, and Doyle had to fight for every inch of victory.

Derek DeCouteau/Jamie Stewart had a brilliant start in today's Race Seven, and led the pack to the first mark. But by the final lap, racing twice around on 1.3nm legs, they had succumbed to the persistent Doyle, who finished first; with Cayard, second, hot on his trail.

At the start of the final race Sunday the breeze freshened, and racers were faced with

significant chop. Cayard continued to put pressure on Doyle, and initially got several boats between them. But Doyle chipped away 'til nearly parked on Cayard: the two holding their own private match race on the final two legs. In the end, Doyle overtook Cayard to place third in that race and clinch his grip on the title. That final race was won by Mark Reynolds/Roger Cheer.

Reynolds was one of many challengers with lofty reputations. He is a 1995 and 2000 World Champion, and a 1989 and 1992 North American winner. Another, John MacCausland, was the 2013 World Champion, and six-time North American champion. "There are a lot of people who have been in the class a long time," Doyle conceded. "They're as good as it gets, so it's really great to race against them."

Cayard admitted to 41 years as a Star sailor, while Grand Master racer Benny Mitchell added, "We've all been racing Stars against each other for many, many years – more than we want to admit! But we are all friends, and it makes it fun."

It would be fascinating to add up the centuries of experience these competitors have, sailing Stars. And one racer was working on a century of his own! Saturday, Doug Steele celebrated his 80th birthday at the regatta. To the comment that he was an 'Exalted Grand Master' in the Star community, he replied: '*Exhausted* Grand Master perhaps!" Steele and Isao Toyama finished 30th.

The Stars recognize sailors over 50 (Master), 60-plus (Grand Master), and 70-plus (Exalted Grand Master). Stephen Gould received top honors in the latter division. Reynolds was recognized for best finish in the Grand Master division, while Doyle received the Master trophy, in addition to first place overall awards.

Competitors lauded Cal Yacht Club for superb race management and hospitality, while others commended the beautiful weather and fair conditions, and camaraderie. "No one can say Santa Monica Bay and Cal Yacht Club doesn't deliver," added Mitchell. Event chairs for this event were Denise George and Monica Antola.

Host California Yacht Club is located in Marina Del Rey, Calif. and has been a mainstay of the yacht racing community since 1922: a modern organization steeped in tradition. Its 1,250 members range from neophyte juniors just gaining their sea legs, to Olympic champions, and compete in major regattas around the globe.

Cal Yacht Club is a three-time recipient of US SAILING's St. Petersburg Trophy for "excellence in race management," including the year 2005, when their running of the Star North Americans earned this revered award.

For full race details and results please visit: <https://starclass.org/calendar/details/2018-north-american-championship> For more information on Cal Yacht Club, please go to: <http://Calyachtclub.com>

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Top Five

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|-----------------------|----|
| 1. Eric Doyle | 13 |
| 2. Paul Cayard | 19 |
| 3. Charlie Buckingham | 35 |
| 4. Mark Reynolds | 37 |
| 5. Peter Vessella | 40 |

END TEXT

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