



CAL MARITIME

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CAL MARITIME'S SAILING PROGRAM IS A FAMILY AFFAIR Husband and Wife Team Have Created Tiny Sailing Powerhouse



(Vallejo, CA – Oct. 11, 2010)... Despite California Maritime Academy's small size (850 students); the school's sailing program has established an enviable record of success over the past decade, much of it directly linked to the husband-and-wife team who guide its fortunes – Director Charlie Arms Cartee and her husband Jesse Cartee. Charlie (her first name is Susan, but she has always been Charlie to everyone who knows her) came to Cal Maritime in the fall of 1999 when the school was looking for a Director of Sailing. “My father had joined the campus a year before as the Director of the Academy's Simulation program and soon became the Director of Continuing Education as well,” she explains. “Jesse and I met in 1998 when we both were working in southern California. Both of us loved the water and sailing and when the Director position was opened, I applied immediately.”

Just before she came onboard, Cal Maritime's sailing program was made part of the school's Athletic department where it has been ever since. Arms Cartee had been teaching sailing skills ever since she learned to sail herself and over the years had always worked on or near the water...boat chartering, a sail loft, and teaching junior sailing programs in San Diego.

"Jesse and I met in San Diego where he was working for a marine equipment company and he was able to arrange a company transfer to the Bay Area when I took the Academy job. He decided to enroll at Cal Maritime in 2000, graduating in 2004, and sailing with the school's team during that time. I was coach and Jesse was a student, but we drew a line between our campus relationship as coach and student and our life at home."

Jesse Cartee literally grew up "on" the water...living aboard a sailboat with his parents until he was 10 years old. In his youth, he lived at various times aboard a boat in southern California, and sailed and raced as much as possible in Santa Barbara and San Diego.

"When I began as Sailing Director, our dinghy program was going well with a full time coach and a fleet of FJs," Charlie said. Arms Cartee took over coaching duties in 2003 when the dinghy coach left mid-year. "A colleague urged us to compete in the Kennedy Cup offshore championships on the East Coast and we decided to go. Jesse skippered the boat that year and we wound up with a 5th, which was pretty good for a first-time effort, but we wanted more. We then entered the Shields Trophy competition for U.S. service and maritime academies for the first time and came away the victors, again with Jesse at the helm.

"In 2004, we moved up to a tie for third in the Kennedy Cup, and in ensuing years we kept coming close but never quite capturing the top prize. In the Shields however, we established a pretty strong record...in fact, with a victory against Navy this fall at Annapolis, we've won the Shields five times out of the seven years we have competed. Finally, we won the Kennedy Cup in 2009 and the berth in the World Cup this year."

Under the Cartees' guidance, the school's fleet has also grown and strengthened. "We have updated the dinghies, acquired six J-22s and more recently have added a J-105 and two One Design 48s. The latter three were donations to our sailing program and have been tremendously helpful in giving our sailors truly professional platforms on which to practice and perfect their skills."

The establishment of an annual high school sailing regatta each winter at Cal Maritime now draws scores of top-notch youth sailors from throughout northern California to the Vallejo campus. "It's a great recruiting tool for us with students and their parents, many of whom know nothing about the Academy, its strong educational programs and its outstanding sailing program," Arms Cartee adds.

2008 was a big year for the Cartees...they got married that spring and Jesse began working as a maritime instructor in marine survival skills and small boat handling, and as a shipboard officer during summer training cruises. It was a natural that he take on the task of coach of the offshore team – a post he has accepted on a volunteer basis.

"Charlie and I have been able to divide up the workload. She has more time to concentrate on program scope and logistics, while I focus on teaching big boat skills and tactics to our students. With the One Design 48 as a platform, our veteran sailors can work together with our newest members. Many of our new sailors have experience in dinghies and recreational sailing, but this is a new level of boat performance – more speed, more stresses, and an atmosphere which demands good team dynamics and communication. The One Design and J-105 enable us to 'show the flag' in Bay Area events and regattas and means our veterans can step aboard other competitive boats on the Bay with greater confidence in their skills."

“I think we’ve prepared well,” Charlie adds.” The team is working well together, we’ve got a solid team of veterans and good experience in the stronger winds which are more the norm on the Atlantic French coast in the fall. In the end, we all will be racing on the same kind of boat in the same conditions. It boils down to consistency, and making the fewest mistakes over six days of racing.”

The Cartees’ biggest challenge will be trying to decide teams each day. Cal Maritime is sending ten students, two of them women who must be aboard for all races --an extra challenge for cadets Sara Himes and Jessica Bernhard. But the rules also limit the total weight of the crew and that means a maximum of seven sailors each race. “We’re going to have to make assignments each day based on the conditions and what combinations seem best suited at the time. We hope we can make the right choices during Regatta week because all of us would love to be the second U.S. team to win the World Cup.

Cal Maritime’s special TeamUSA website (<http://followteamusa.csum.edu>) will carry daily reports from La Rochelle throughout the week of competition including photos and videos from the scene. Bookmark it and tune in daily for race results, background and input from students and coaches.

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