

2011 Chicago Macinack Race

Lessons Learned

By Ralph Naranjo

A US Sailing Special Report

Inquiry into the Chicago Yacht Club

-Race to Mackinac Capsize and Fatalities

Sport turns into Survival

Chicago Mac Race



Great Lakes sailors





Volatile weather and a vulnerable boat

2011 Race



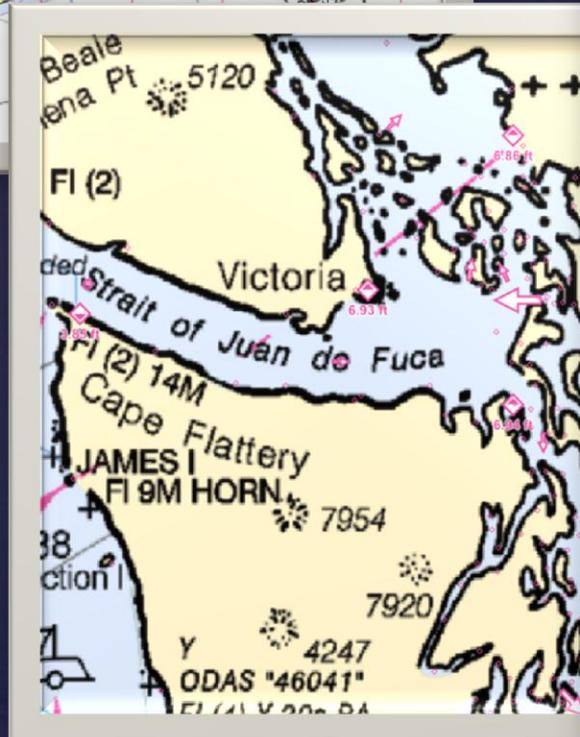
- & A severe weather warning
- & Became a watch
- & Turned into a disaster

Just before midnight on 7-17-11

**The least seaworthy boat
rendezvoused with
the worst part of the storm**

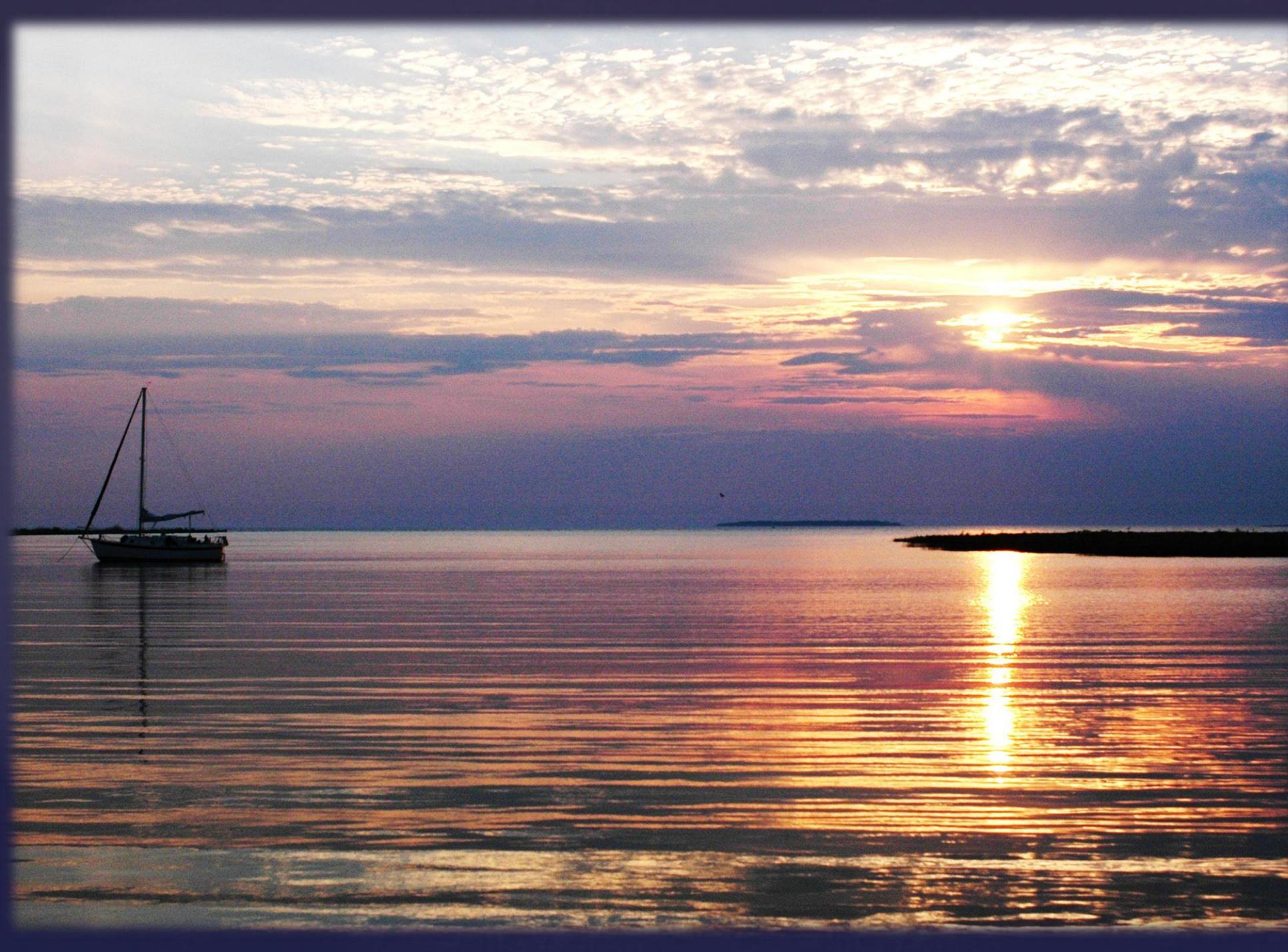


The lessons learned



& Chesapeake Bay
& Long Island Sound
& Puget Sound







- Cold front
- Low pressure
- Trough
- **Unstable air mass**

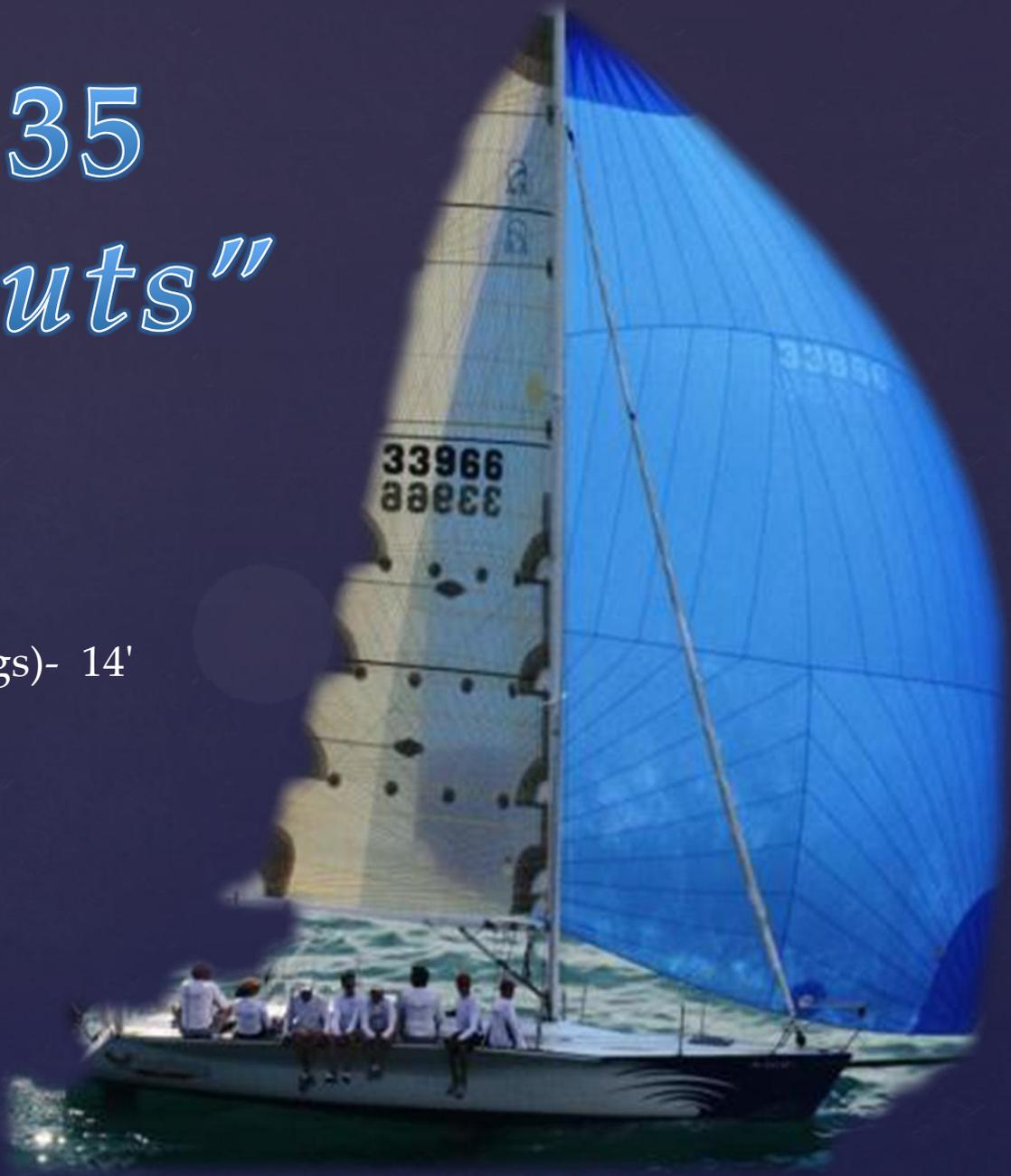


Kiwi 35

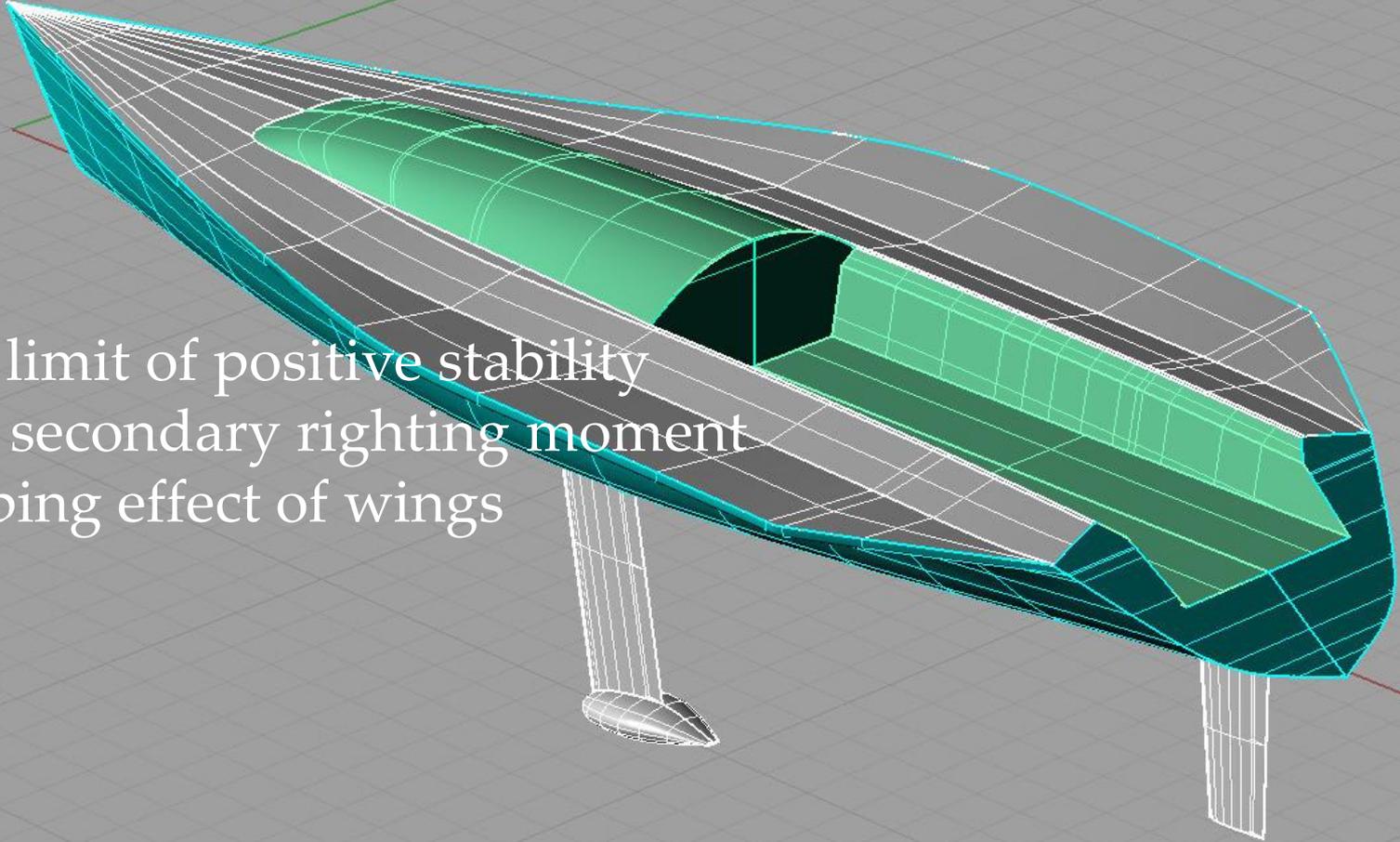
“Wingnuts”

Designer OH Rodgers

- LOA- 35.08'
- Beam(with fold out wings)- 14'
- Draft-7.08'
- SA(upwind) 477 sq.ft.
- Displacement 2850lb
- ballast-1,200lb
- SA/D 36.29



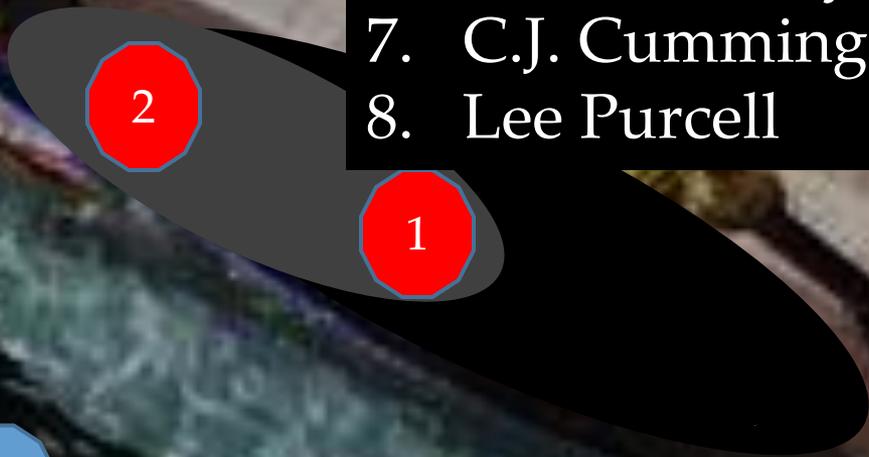
Low limit of positive stability
Poor secondary righting moment
Tripping effect of wings







1. Mark Morley
2. Suzanne Bickel
3. Peter Morley
4. Stan Dent
5. John Dent
6. Stuart Morley
7. C.J. Cummings
8. Lee Purcell



Four crew trapped under vessel

ø2 with gear fully functional perish

ø1 with no gear swims to safety

ø1 with manual PFD

- ✗ Chooses not to inflate

- ✗ Unclips from jackline

- ✗ Tether tangles and must cut

Those not trapped under the boat

- ⌘ Helmsman had to be cut free (cowhitch)

- ⌘ 3 on port jackline

 - ⌘ One unclipped and didn't inflate PFD

 - ⌘ One needed assistance to release

 - ⌘ One untied sail tie used as a tether while wearing type III PFD



Equipment awareness





Develop an understanding of

- & Stability and capsize resistance
- & Weather awareness
- & Response to heavy weather
- & Personal safety gear

Crew Training

The safety of a yacht and her crew is the sole and inescapable responsibility of the person in charge







the end

Ralph Naranjo ©