

'Glory Days' for Amons

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BEACHWOOD — These are Glory Days for Paul Amon and his family in the Barnegat Bay Yacht Racing Association.

"Glory Days" is the 15-foot Sneakbox that Amon, who sails out of Toms River Yacht Club, his wife Donna and daughter Ericka hope will carry them to a second bay championship in three seasons.

Amon, who lives in the Bayville section of Berkeley Township, held off a late charge by Steve Tyler of Island Heights Yacht Club on the final leg to win the Sneakbox race on the Wanamaker Course yesterday, and the Charles Hotaling Trophy awarded by host Beachwood Yacht Club.

Amon and Ericka, a senior at the State University New York/Maritime College, had to work hard for their fourth win of the season — third on the Wanamaker Course — and second Hotaling Trophy win since 2000, when he was his club's commodore.

They sailed in third place for much of the race on the triangle layout in light to diminishing air out the northwest.

By the third mark, they had passed both Tyler and fellow Toms River Yacht Club sailor Russ Lines. They fell behind Tyler again, then took the lead for good about 300 feet from the finish line. They won by about a boat length.

"Today, it could have been anybody's race," said Amon, 49, a Philadelphia machine shop owner. "Going into the last leg, there were lots of spots with no air. At one point, it could have been either one of them."

Tyler was second in the 11-boat fleet and veteran Dan Crabbe of Toms River Yacht Club was third. Crabbe is a past winner of the Hotaling Trophy, first awarded in 1950 and named after the former Beachwood Yacht Club commodore.

"The thing about these perpetual trophies," Amon said, "is you look at the names, many of them were legends, sailing greats. It's pretty incredible.

This trophy was awarded before I was born."

The day turned out to be a double celebration for Ericka, who crewed for Had Brick of Island Heights Yacht Club in the afternoon E-Scow race. Brick's boat Orange Thunder, which also included crew Kevin King, Ocean Gate Yacht Club, and Willie Wiencke, Beachwood Yacht Club, won the race — their first win this season — for the Bobby Valdes Trophy named after a former Beachwood Yacht Club commodore.

Other trophy races yesterday:

■ The Witch, skippered by Russ Lucas of Bay Head Yacht Club won the Skip Moorehouse Trophy in A Cats for his fourth win of the season. The trophy is named after the Marleton sailmaker who has assisted in the revival and growth of the class.

■ Mark Beaton of Metedeconk River Yacht Club, Brick, posted his fourth consecutive victory in Flying Scots to earn the Reindel Trophy, named in honor of a long-time club member.