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Sports

Ten Local Sailors Qualify for National Team at Sailing Trials

US Optimist Dingy Team Trials in Beach Haven drew 186 youth sailors from around the country



Karen Wall, Neighbor

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Over four days of changeable weather, the United States Optimist Dinghy Association held its 2012 KO Sailing/US Optimist Team Trials at Brant Beach Yacht Club in Beach Haven, hosting 186 youth sailors ages 10 to 15 in the competition.

After 13 races over the four days, 10 sailors from Ocean County placed in the top 100 racers, who qualify for the US national team and can compete in national as well as international regattas in the Optimist class.

The Optimist class is a small one-person sailboat invented in 1947 as a way for young children to learn the sport of sailing.

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There are now more than 20,000 youth sailors in the United States, and one of the largest groups is in New Jersey, where the Barnegat Bay Yacht Racing Association has more than 3,000 members.

Jeffery Glosenger of the Lavallette Yacht Club placed the highest out of all the local racers, finishing 18th with 113 points, including best finishes of first and third.

Points accumulate based on where the sailors finish in each of the 13 races, with each sailor allowed to drop their two worst finishes, and the lower the score, the higher the placing.

The top finisher was Ivan Shestopalov of Coral Reef Yacht Club in Miami, with 29 points. Coral Reef had six sailors place in the top 20.

Carolyn Corbet of Bay Head Yacht Club was the highest finishing local girl, placing 53rd with 220 points, including a second-place finish.

Other locals who qualified were Drew Lorenz of Haven Beach Club, finishing 31st with 153 points on the strength of three sixth-place finishes; Clay Johnson of Brant Beach Yacht Club, 32nd, with 159 points, including a first and a second; Jack Brown of Seaside Park Yacht Club, 37th with 176 points, including two thirds; Carrson Pearce of Surf City Yacht Club, 55th with 223 points and a second; Alex Fasolo of Bay Head Yacht Club, 64th with 245 points and a best finish of 12th; Dante Rienzi of Brant Beach, 72nd with 265 points and a best of seventh; of Toms River Yacht Club, 82nd with 302 points and a best of sixth, and Taylor Gavula of Bay Head Yacht Club, the only other local female qualifier, who placed 94th with 320 points and a pair of 10th-place finishes.

For more information on the US Optimist Dinghy Association, visit www.usoda.org.

For information on the Barnegat Bay Yacht Racing Association, visit www.bbyra.org.

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