

STEVE LATHAM □ HOBIE FLEET 28, NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS, DIVISION 12, HCA SPORTSPERSON OF THE YEAR - 1995

Steve Latham of Hobie Fleet 28 has been a vital part of his local fleet and a contributing member to Division 12 since 1982, when he began his career of love for Hobie Cats and the people that make up the Hobie Way of Life. Steve is that *behind the scenes* guy who makes it all happen — quietly and steadfastly.

At the fleet level, Steve has served as commodore of the New Bedford fleet for six years. During his reign, he conducted ten learn-to-sail seminars for beginner sailors and newcomers; he organized the Long Pond Regatta every year for nine years, and organized the Buzzard Bay Regatta for eight years. Steve wrote and published the fleet's newsletter regularly for over seven years; has written the bylaws and increased fleet membership by spending countless hours writing to and speaking with Hobie enthusiasts. Again, behind the scenes, Steve is to be credited for the success of Fleet 28's regattas held

at Duxbury, Nahant, Mastippee, Harwichport and Newport. Steve holds the celebrated title as the single largest factor, Fleet 28's backbone — the reason for its success over the past twelve years.

Fleet 28 is not the only local club to benefit from Steve's passion for our sailing sport. It seems he never misses a Division 12 regatta or special event. And while there, he's a regular fixture either at registration, placing marks, on the committee boat with the race committee, skippering a chase boat, scoring, or judging protests. He has towed, delivered, picked up and repaired marks, flags, anchors and whatever else might need to be handled by someone with a reputation to follow through.

On the beach, Steve is always willing to give advice and help to those who need it. The number of parts and equipment that has gone out on loan or has been given generously from Steve's personal

supply might well be a concern for the Hobie Factory. Steve has loaned out everything from shackles to his entire boat; he does whatever needs to be done to keep someone on the water. At most regattas, a broken rudder pin might put any sailor out for the weekend. At Steve's regattas, even a major collision on Saturday is met with a fiberglass repair crew working overnight on the beach with generators and floodlights.

On the water, first, last or somewhere in the middle, Steve always sails a clean race. How many of us as beginners have suffered the wrath of racers caught up in the race to finish? One novice reported that Steve had passed them and called to them to do a 360. Unaware of their transgression, the newcomers ignored Steve's requirement and finished the day's racing without doing the turn. That evening on the beach, the novices learned of their error, gently — but Steve never

