

# Sheila Holmes, Carlton Tucker Sportsperson of the Year, 2023

*Jane Sherrod, Division 6 & Mark Ralph, Division 14:*

Sheila Holmes embodies the “Hobie Way of Life” and the spirit and sportsmanship of Carlton Tucker in so many ways. She attended her 1st Nationals at Lake Tahoe in 1978 where she met Hobie Alter for the first time. Inspired by the man, and to this day, you can find a picture of Hobie Alter in her life jacket pocket.

Forty-five years later, she is still fiercely competitive. Along the way, she competed in at least 50 Hobie Nationals – on 14s, 16s, 20s, and Waves, 3 Hobie 16 Worlds, won a National Championship in 1995 at Lake Tahoe, and have raced hundreds of regattas. On and off the water, this person exemplifies Carlton’s legacy, always available and willing to help, whether novice or expert. Her sportsmanship and friendly attitude continue to be a driving force behind countless sailor’s introduction into Hobie sailing and racing.

Sheila does more than just attend races. She also gives back by organizing and leading regattas. She organized, ran, and later even hosted the National Qualifier “Shegatta” for 10 years. She also served as race commodore for one of the largest Hobie Fleets for many years.

You can find this year’s nominee volunteering for regatta race committees and chase boat duties, such as at the 2023 Hobie 20 Nationals in Oklahoma City. Whether racing, organizing or volunteering, she is never too busy

to lend a hand, offer an explanation, or make a novice feel welcome, just like Carlton.

But wait, there’s more! Sheila has organized and lead the multi-week beginner sailing course – Hobie University – for over 10 years, which has introduced countless people to the joys of sailing. Beyond that, she has also served on the Hobie Class Association Board for the last 5 years.

Finally, Sheila honors the namesake award with her legendary partying abilities. Like Carlton, she is a friend to all, shining ambassador for Hobie sailing, and stranger to very few. You many know her from sharing tequila shots or a sip of Sambuca after racing.

So, we are honored this year to recognize as recipient of the Carlton Tucker Sportsperson of the Year Award, a most worthy competitor, an amazing leader, a mentor to many, and a friend to all sailors – know far and wide as “Tequila Sheila” – our friend, the one, the only – Sheila Holmes.

*Krista Vind & Michael McNeir, Division 15:*

Sheila works tirelessly promoting Hobie sailing by serving as HCANA 1st Vice Chair and putting in many hours on the Hobie Hotline. Sheila and Mark are always great competitors and fun to sail with but also willing to help anyone with tuning tips, parts or gear. She is always smiling and encouraging other sailors. She eats, breathes, and sleeps Hobie it seems. She even works at a Hobie

dealer, Mariner Sails! You can always count on Sheila and Team Mariner Sails to support major Hobie events. Sheila has over 40 years of sailing experience, a genuine love for the sport, a positive attitude and kind nature. Good sportsmanship and Sheila Holmes are synonymous.

*TL Lewis, Division 15:*

I first encountered Sheila in 1983. At that time, she had already garnered a reputation as a fierce competitor, especially in the Women's championships, and as the life of the party. Fast forward 40 years and that drive and determination is still evident, "Tequila Sheila" and her partner in crime Mark Ralph still saddle up and put in the long miles to compete successfully at the upper levels of Hobie Class racing. Along that journey she has managed to give so much back to all of us in the class. I personally would not have been surprised if Hobie racing in a large part of the country might have withered and died were it not for her leadership and passion; the huge attendance at the 50th Mid-Americas this year stands testimony to her impact on our Hobie "family". I can think of very few individuals who have put quite as much of a mark on our part of the sport of sailing as Sheila. I'm pretty sure that were he alive CT would gladly do a shot or three... but never 12 as I can painfully attest to... of chilled Almendrado in honor of her receiving this well-deserved award.