

Newport Harbor YC Wins 2025 National Women's Invitational Team Race for the Thayer Trophy

California team seals the deal in must-win final race

Marblehead, MA (June 22, 2025) — Newport Harbor Yacht Club won the 5th edition of the National Women's Invitational Team Race for the Thayer Trophy in dramatic fashion. After the six competing teams were met by light and shifty conditions the morning of day three, it was game on as the wind kicked up at the start of the final-four round, which had the California team in a must-win situation going into the final race.

The 3v3 format sailed in 23-foot Sonar keelboats with spinnakers is challenging in the best of conditions, but big gusts during the finale made for some tense moments.

Tied with Eastern Yacht Club and facing two-time Thayer winner New York Yacht Club, Newport Harbor Team Captain Carolyn Smith said they approached that last race with the same mind set as any other. "We were just focusing on strong communication, and positive vibes."



2025 Thayer Cup - Corinthian Yacht Club - HDFA Photography

In fact, Smith said she didn't even think about it being a must-win. After almost getting flipped backward out of the boat when a big gust at the start caused her boat to round up hard, Smith and her crew recovered quickly and focused on the fact that their other two boats started strong. Their team ended up running away with with a one-two position, which they held and extended from mark one through to the finish.

"That can actually be super stressful because you're just hoping you don't lose that first-second position," Smith said.

As to her team's overall performance, Smith was quick to note Newport Harbor's support for women's team racing and the fact that their team included a mix of experienced team racers and first timers. They are already planning to be back next year to defend the title.

This year's second-place finisher, Eastern Yacht Club, will likely stand in their way, as will third-place Chesapeake Bay Yacht Racing Association, who has sailed all five editions of the Thayer Trophy, and been in the top three four times.

During the awards ceremony, Event Chair Miranda Bakos reflected on the extremes the teams sailed in across the three-day event. Friday, the wind speeds were gusting

in the high 20s. Saturday was light and shifty with wind hovering around 5 miles per hour with significant current. Sunday was a smorgasbord of light to moderate sea breeze for the first half of the day that eventually shifted nearly 180 degrees and building to deliver some white-knuckle sailing.

“Besides the straight-up team racing, your boat handling, especially crew work with the spinnakers, was incredible,” Bakos told the crowd assembled on the Corinthian Yacht Club porch overlooking Marblehead Harbor.

The Corinthian Yacht Club’s 2025 Women’s National Invitational Team Race for the Thayer Trophy took place June 20-22. It is the only women’s 3v3 team race in keel boats with spinnakers. Event details including results and photos can be found at thayertrophy.com.