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# Young Sailor of the Year is Uplifting Story

[Kurt Hoehne](#)   [Community, Youth Sailing](#)

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It's not a Northwest story, or even a U.S. story, but I wish it were. The British-based Yachting Journalists Association just named its Yachtsman and

Young Sailor of the Year Awards. Alex Thompson was named Yachtsman of the Year, and anyone who follows singlehanded round the world racing or pays attention to Hugo Boss advertising, is already familiar with the charismatic British sailor.

Lesser known is Montel Fagan-Jordan, Young Sailor of the Year. His story is truly impressive, and I hope that someday I get the opportunity to meet and interview him. He represents the Grieg City Academy, where 50 different "first languages" are spoken and 70% are considered "disadvantaged." Fagan-Jordan gave around 50 talks to raise money for the purchase and outfitting of the old Frers-designed *Scaramouche*. He and his shipmates learned to sail that old IOR beast, and did it well enough to finish in the top half of the Fastnet Race.



Along the way they had help from Whitbread Round the World Race veteran Lawrie Smith and the local marine industry pitched in with equipment. But Fagan-Jordan was the driving force.



Yachting Monthly (from which I borrowed some of these photos) did an excellent piece on Fagan-Jordan and the Grieg City Academy effort. If

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[Kurt's Cubby](#)

[Laser Sailing](#)

[Navigation](#)

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[Racing](#)

[Seamanship](#)

[Smartest Sailor](#)

[Transpac](#)

[Uncategorized](#)

[Weather](#)

[Wet Wednesday Videos](#)

[Youth Sailing](#)

you want an uplifting story, read on. At this time particularly, when the U.S. president (and ostensibly 1/3rd of the country) revels in insulting the underprivileged in word and deed and insulating wealthy Americans from the poor, it's good to see that in some parts of the world individuals like Fagan-Jordan can achieve great things in something like sailing, and that their communities are happy to rally around them.

Following is the Yachting Journalist Association press release.

## YJA Young Sailor of the Year, 2017



The 2017 YJA Young Sailor of the Year Award goes to 17-year-old **Montel Fagan-Jordan** from Tottenham, London in recognition of his leadership in first raising the money to restore the 1980s classic American Admiral's Cup yacht *Scaramouche*, then leading a crew of fellow students from the Greig Academy in Tottenham to compete in last year's 605 mile Fastnet Race.

Nominated by his school teacher, Jon Holt says of Montel: "This was unique yachting project in which a multi-cultural crew spent three years undertaking more than 50 fund-raising talks to buy and restore the famous German Frers designed yacht. Montel is able to helm almost any yacht. Not only was he the driving force behind *Scaramouche* – raising most of the money himself, but then developed as the helmsman, after receiving tuition from David Beford and Lawrie Smith. In 2017 he entered the Etchells 22 class Gertrude Cup and finished 4th overall before steering the Lloyds X55 class yacht *Lutine* during Cowes Week. He steered *Scaramouche* for most of the Fastnet Race.

Given that *Scaramaouche* is an old yacht, which rolls madly, his ability to hold a course for four hours in the dark, surfing down wind without broaching was amazing. *Scaramouche* may have finished 142 out of 368, but as a school team in an old yacht, they more than proved their point."

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## Kurt Hoehne



Kurt grew up racing and cruising in the Midwest, and has raced Lasers since the late 1970s. He has been Assistant Editor at Sailing Magazine and a short stint as Editor of Northwest Yachting.

Through Meadow Point Publishing he handles various marketing duties for smaller local companies. He currently is partners on a C&C 36 which he cruises throughout the Northwest. He's married to the amazing Abby and is father to Ian and Gabe.

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 Lizabeth Rose  
 January 12, 2018 at 3:10 pm  
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Yes agreed! Great stories, both of them. I was fortunate to sail in the Fastnet this past year and really admire these young sailors...have also been a huge fan of Alex and have seen him zip by on the water, made my day!

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