



2022-2023 AMERICAS VP REPORT

It has been quite a busy and successful year for the Americas Region after the slow restart post Covid Pandemic. More than three years after its start, I can say that most of the region has been able to recover and restart with a lot of energy and upbeat outlook. While some countries struggled more than others and some are taking longer to do so, the Region as a whole is back, holding all kinds of sailing events, clinics, regattas and lots of travel.

I am happy to report an increase in participation of girls, not only in numbers, but also up there in the podiums in all our events.

Events

2022 South American Championship in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (October 2022)

Impeccable organization in the iconic Yate Clube de Rio de Janeiro. Great hosts with a fabulous team of volunteers in the famous Olympic venue. Great conditions and amazing event. With a fleet of 165 sailors (107 boys and 58 girls), from 14 countries (ARG, BAH, BER, BRA, CAN, CHI, COL, ECU, GUA, PER, PUR, URU, USA and VEN).

2022 North American Championship in Nassau, Bahamas (November 2022)

Extraordinary organization in the Nassau Sailing Club, led by Erin Tomlinson and a tremendously hard-working team of volunteers, once again delivered an amazing event barely missing yet another hurricane to keep with tradition! With a fleet of 155 sailors (102 boys and 53 girls), from 19 countries (ANT, ARG, BAH, BEL, BER, BRA, CAN, CHI, FRA, GER, ISV, MEX, NED, PAN, PUR, SUI, SWE, URU and USA). Worth mentioning is our North American Champion was Isabella Calzadilla from Puerto Rico.

2023 South American Championship in Paracas, Peru (April 2023)

Hosted by Peru in another iconic and past venue for this championship. This was an extraordinary event. Well organized and with warm and welcoming hosts. The best team of volunteers you could ever dream of, magnificent conditions and a great venue where everyone had a lot of fun. The closing ceremonies was taken out of a movie. A truly wonderful experience. With a fleet of 143 sailors (92 boys and 51 girls), from 10 countries (ARG, BRA, CHI, ECU, MEX, PER, PUR, URU, USA and VEN).

Upcoming events

2023 North American Championship in Antigua (July 2023)

It will take place in paradise itself, Antigua, Host of the 2019 Worlds, and several North American Championships in the last few years, this venue is a favorite of the Class and we look forward to working with an incredible organizing team again.

2024 North American Championship Puerto Rico (July 2024)

It will take place in gorgeous Puerto Rico where we have not been in some time, bringing fond memories. A great venue with an active and powerful new Class of Optimist sailors. We look forward to working with an incredible organizing team again.

2024 South American Championship in Encarnación, Paraguay (September 2024)

It will be hosted by Paraguay in a past venue for this championship. The South American countries have their rotation system so this venue is part of that rotation. We are looking forward to returning to this fantastic sailing place

We thank all the venues that work so hard to bring great events and get us all together to celebrate Optimist sailing. It takes years to put together these events and hundreds of volunteers to make these unforgettable events.

New Members

Last year we were incredibly happy to welcome Panama to the Optimist family. With this highly energized and very organized member, we are sure that Panama will start making waves in the Optimist circuit. Welcome!

Venezuela has rejoined IODA after some years when we really missed them. We are very happy to see them back in the circuit. Welcome back!

ROPE Program

The vision of ROPE is to introduce children to social responsibility, sustainability, and the circular economy. It started as a peer-to-peer program whereby children donate gently used equipment at IODA Championships so that there is a legacy to the local community for programs that need equipment. With over 175,000 Optimists built over the past 40 years, many which are still being used today, there is an abundance of hulls and gently used equipment that can be re-used for learn-to sail-programs in a number of regions, and emerging nations around the world.

Sailors bring extra equipment to IODA Championships so it can be collected, catalogued and distributed to local sailing schools in need as well as to specific schools, clubs, and countries that are in dire need of equipment, giving it a second life and good use. ROPE was launched during the **2021 North American Championship in Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico** and it became an instant success. The sailors were very interested in participating and this new idea and it paved the way for the following editions in Worlds at Lake Garda and Bodrum as well as in the South Americans in Mar de Plata and Paracas.

The equipment collected at the 2022 World Championships in Turkiye was distributed to the ***Sudan Optimist Team and the Tanzania Optimist team.***

Equipment donated and collected at the 2022 Optimist North American Championships in Nassau, Bahamas was donated to ***Make them Sailors*** from Bahamas and to ***Antigua Yacht Club.***

Equipment collected at the South American Championship in Paracas, Peru has been donated to The ***Venezuelan Optimist Association*** which strives to make sailing inclusive and within easier reach for children in the Caracas area.

Equipment collected at the 2022 Asian, African & Oceanians Championship in Mumbai, India was donated to the ***Phuket Sailing School in Thailand.***

The ROPE program was one of four finalists in the prestigious 'World Sailing - 11th Hour Sustainability Award' in 2021. This is an amazing recognition to our sailors' generosity and commitment to have both, a sustainable Class and to make sailing an inclusive and socially responsible way of life.

We hope to make this program bigger and be able to reach out to more communities around the World. Thank you for your donations and continued support!

Thank You

I want to, first of all, thank all our members that work relentlessly for this great Class. **Thousands of volunteers all over the world** that bring us all incredible sailing events on the water and on shore, always keeping us happy and safe. We could not do this without every single one of you.

Thank you to all the suppliers, and builders that contribute so much to the best sailing Class in the World. We could not do this without all of you. Each and every one of you, all around the World. Thank you!

Special thanks to each and every coach out there that is helping us raise champions in Life, not only in the water. Your work goes farther than you think. Thank you!

Team Leaders and Country Reps... thank you for being in these events, making sure that your teams have everything they need, while they have fun, they are safe, and also making sure that they take back home with them the best enriching experiences possible.

To all Optimist parents that help build and grow this Class every single day with unlimited commitment and love for Youth Sailing. Thank you!

I want to thank all my IODA colleagues that work behind the scenes in these events and every day of the year, looking to make this great Class stronger and better in every way.

Thank you to the Executive Committee for always looking to make the best decisions and keep the Class in order, especially in tough times as we have seen these past 3 years with Covid. You do have this Class in your heart and it is an honor to work with you.

Thank you to the Technical Committee for keeping the Class organized and always fair for everyone. It is a lot of work that goes unnoticed, but is key to having a strong Class. Thank you!

A big thank you to our Regatta Committee for always being out there in the elements for our sailors, for always managing the toughest conditions gracefully and safely, and for creating the best racing opportunities for hundreds of sailors. We have the best Regatta Committee in the Planet. Thank you!

Thank you to all our juries that travel to our events to keep us in order and sailing fair. Your work and experience is critical for us to be able to have these events and sometimes your hard work goes unnoticed. Thank you!

I want to thank our Secretary General, Fiona Kidd and our Regatta Secretary Susan Elliot Beatty for keeping everything together. These ladies work around the clock to keep this Class organized and alive. I cannot say how much these ladies work and how much energy they pour into IODA. They go beyond the call of duty and I am most grateful to have them always behind the scenes making things happen. Thank you ladies.

Lastly, I want to thank each and every Optimist sailor out there that eats, sleeps, lives Optimist. Your commitment and grit every single time you are out in the water is what makes this Class unique. You are an inspiration. Thank you for being part of our Opti family!

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sigrid Beckmann". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sigrid Beckmann,
VP Americas