

## 2021-2022 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 two 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.

### COVID-19 Response

After 2 years of this life changing event, it is important to mention that everyone at IODA worked very hard to provide safe environments in our events. Very hard decisions had to be made, sometimes last minute, to make sure we were not only compliant, but also sensitive to the worldwide struggle to overcome this unique event. Lots of details had to be secured as we faced a lot of responsibility to provide our sailors, parents, coaches, providers, organizers and IODA officials with a safe yet happy environment. All our events were Covid free. I want to thank everyone that made this huge feat possible.

### Events

#### **2021 North American Championship in Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico (May 29- June 8, 2021)**

Extraordinary organization in the first big event in the region after the Covid breakout began. The Vallarta Yacht Club, led by Linda Green and a tremendously hard-working team of volunteers, once again delivered an amazing event with a fleet of 110 sailors (71 boys and 39 girls), from 11 countries (ARG, BAH, BER, BRA, CAY, GUA, ISV, MEX, PUR, and USA).

#### **2021 South American Championship in Mar de Plata, Argentina (December 11-18, 2021)**

After an almost 2-year delay, we finally celebrated the most anticipated Continental Championship ever. The Club Náutico Mar de Plata, did an outstanding job, led by our favorite Optimist friend, Matias Capizzano and the most dedicated team of organizers, who along amazing volunteers gifted us a very emotional Championship. The difficulties encountered in years of preparation, postponements, delays and unknowns have been unique.

A total of 155 sailors (104 boys and 51 girls), from 11 countries (ARG, BER, BRA, CAN, CHI, ECU, MEX, PER, PUR, URU and USA) sailed together and shared being together once more.

### Upcoming events

#### **South American Championship, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (October 8-15, 2022)**

2022 is getting ready to be a wonderful year for the Americas with 2 amazing venues gearing up. First up SAMs at one of the most iconic sailing venues in the planet. The microsite is up and running and registrations are ongoing.

#### **North American Championship in Nassau, Bahamas (November 13-20, 2022)**

We return to an amazing venue in the bluest waters in the continent. The NOR will be published any moment, with registrations and microsite active shortly after.

#### **South American Championship in Paracas, Peru**

It will be hosted by Peru in another iconic and 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

#### **North American Championship 2023, Antigua**

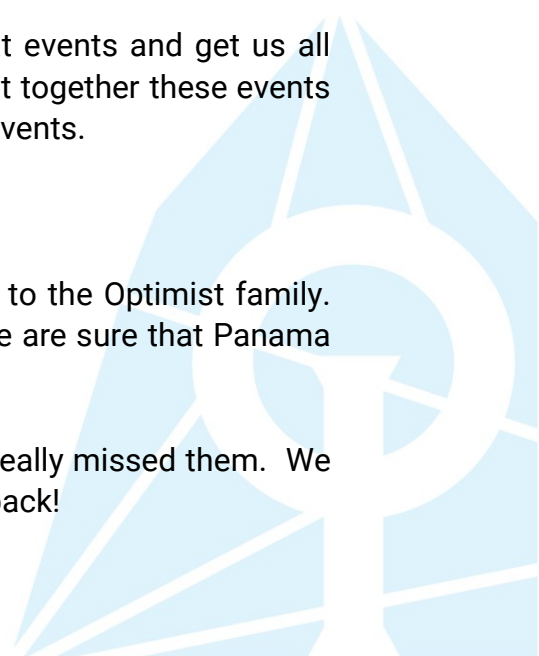
It will take place in paradise itself, Antigua, Host of the 2019 Worlds, and several North American Championships in the last few years, this venue is a favorite of the Class and we look forward to working with an incredible organizing team again.

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.

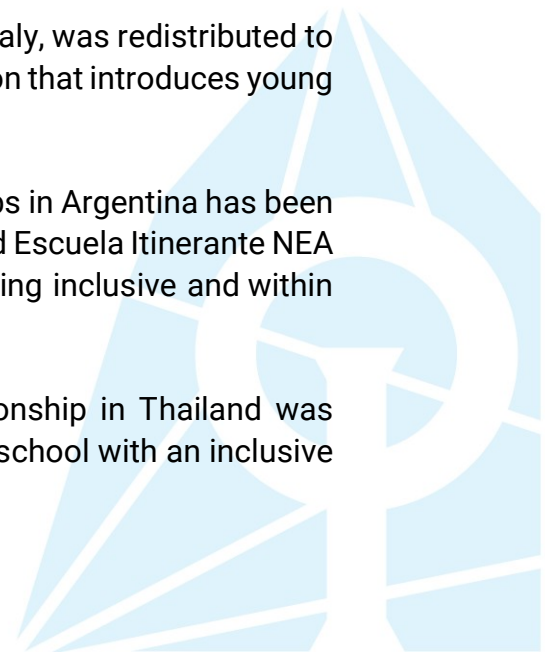
ROPE was launched during the **2021 North American Championship in Nuevo Vallarta**, Mexico and it became an instant success. The sailors were very interested in participating and this new idea and it paved the way for the following editions in Worlds at Lake Garda and South Americans in Mar de Plata.

Equipment donated and collected at the 2021 Optimist North American Championships in Mexico was donated to local sailing schools, Escuela de Vela La Cruz, the Vallarta Yacht Club Sailing Program and also to Make Them Sailors in Bahamas.

The equipment collected at the World Championships in Italy, was redistributed to the Hyderabad Foundation Program in India, an organization that introduces young kids from under privileged families to sailing.

Equipment collected at the South American Championships in Argentina has been donated to Capitanes de Barrio in Barrancas, Argentina and Escuela Itinerante NEA Posadas in Posadas, Argentina. Both strive to make sailing inclusive and within easier reach for children.

Equipment collected at the Asian & Oceanians Championship in Thailand was donated to the Optimist Sailing School in Phuket, a small school with an inclusive sailing program.



The ROPE program was one of four finalists in the prestigious 'World Sailing - 11<sup>th</sup> 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!

### Harken Derm Partnership

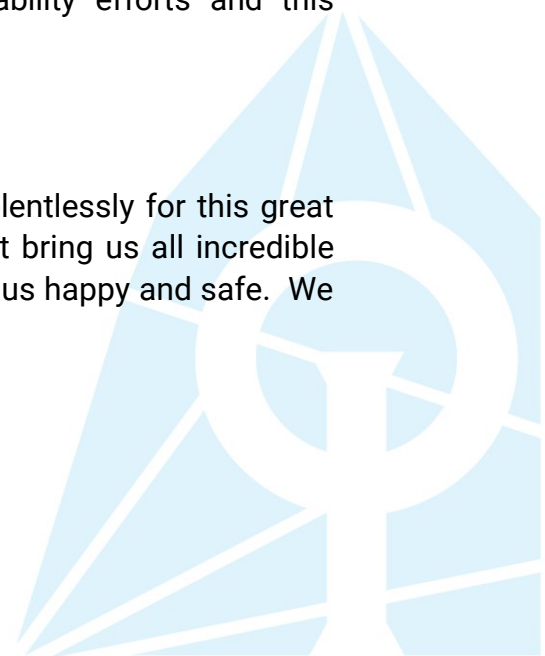
I have been extremely lucky to be involved directly with the launch of our partnership with Harken Derm and to work directly with Dr. Edit Olsasz, Aliz Savay and Alex Kellerman. Harken Derm is not just a phenomenal product that protects our sailors from the sun, but also protects our Oceans, a cause very dear to me. The Harken Derm Team is a dream team.

These enthusiastic team members' work ethos and take on life match perfectly with what IODA and our sailors look for when thinking of how to protect our beautiful seas and planet. I think this partnership is a perfect match for our vibrant sailing Class and look forward to working with them for many years.

IODA looks to align, support, and implement sustainability efforts and this partnership is an example of that.

### 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 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!

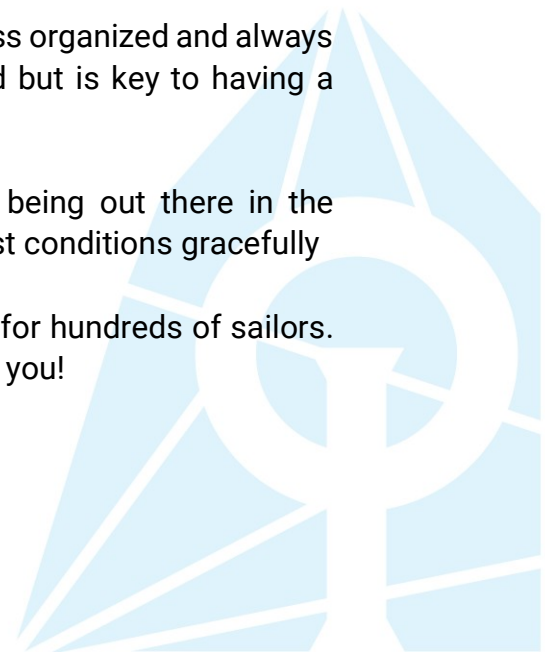
I want to thank all my IODA colleagues that work behind the scenes in these events and every day of the year, looking to make this great Class stronger and better in every way.

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 2 years. 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!





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I want to thank our fantastic Class Secretary, Fiona Kidd and our most incredible 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.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sigrid Beckmann'.

Sigrid Beckmann  
VP Americas

