

SPORTS & LEISURE

Local teen proving to be a Champ on the water

By **EAMONN MAHER**
Staff Writer

Although he's been sailing competitively for just a couple of years now, it's not surprising to those who know local native Marshall Champ that he'd represent Canada in the sport one day.

The 19-year-old qualified in the spring to wear the red and white at next month's Pan-American Games in Mexico after he and partner Dan Borg of Mississauga raced their Hobie 16 to the top finish by a Canadian boat at the North American Championships in Florida.

Champ has spent his summers at Woodland Beach on Georgian Bay (near Wasaga Beach) since his birth and growing up really wasn't interested in many other sports other than sailing.

His cousin, Kevin Stittle of Orangeville, was fourth at the 2008 Summer Olympics in China in the tornado class and took Champ on as a partner on the catamaran a year later.

With Stittle having recently switched his competitive focus to windsurfing, Champ

hooked up with the 48-year-old Borg for some regattas and the partnership has worked well with a few race victories to their credit this summer.

"I started sailing at our cottage when I was about 10 because my whole family's always been into sailing and I love it," said Champ.

"Georgian Bay is amazing to sail on. As far back as I can remember, our family's had like four Hobie 16s sitting on the beach in the basement at the cottage is full of old windsurfing gear. We got into kite boards for a couple of years too."

A Georgetown District High School graduate, Champ weighs just 125 pounds, so with the minimum body weight for the two people on the boat at 285, he and Borg are usually right at the limit or a couple of pounds under, providing an advantage in speed and agility on the water over most competitors.

They've been training three or four nights a week this summer at Cherry Beach in Toronto along with some weekends at Woodland Beach.



MARSHALL CHAMP



Georgetown's Marshall Champ (left) and Daniel Borg of Mississauga will compete together for Canada on this Hobie 16 at the upcoming Pan-American Games in Mexico.

"(Borg) is used to sailing in Toronto through the week and I'm used to sailing at my cottage, so between the two of us, we've got a pretty good handle on the different conditions we'll come across," said Champ, who, like Borg, works for Toyota Canada.

"Down in the Caribbean, it blows hard all the time, so maybe light for them would be kind of breezy for us. But I hear it's fairly light, and we tend to do better in lighter winds."

Champ and Borg are currently ranked third in North

America and will be in a field of eight countries at the Pan-Ams, which will be based in Guadalajara, but the sailing venue is located at Puerto Vallarta.

The event runs from Oct. 14-30 and the sailing races begin on Oct. 17.

Submitted photo

Used equipment wanted

The Georgetown Soccer Club will be collecting used soccer shirts, shorts, socks, shoes, shin guards and balls at its Closing Day on Saturday, Sept. 10 at Trafalgar Sports Park, with all contributions sent to children in Africa.

Booths will be set up at the TSP from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and the items collected are destined for Tanzania and Kenya.

Also at Closing Day, volunteers will sell pizza as a fundraiser to benefit the Jumpstart program and Canadian Tire money donations would be appreciated.

For more info on the uniform drive, call Anita Bergsma at 905-877-5763 or email anita.n.Bergsma@gmail.com



GSC members honoured: The Georgetown Soccer Club recently received a pair of awards at the Ontario Soccer Association's Club Development Conference in Markham. Former Canadian women's national team star Kara Lang of Oakville (left) presented GSC president Alice Strachan (second from left), public relations director Karen Bajic and registrar Eustace Collins with the OSA's Silver Excellence Award. The OSA has three levels for its excellence award, with the GSC having achieved the bronze status two years ago. Each level has various requirements that must be completed with respect to an organization's efficiency, governance and policy development. As well, Bajic, the GSC's Volunteer of the Year Award nominee, was one of two recipients of the OSA's Volunteer Appreciation Honourable Mention Award for her 20 years of hard work and dedication to their organization and to soccer as a whole.

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