

# PINCKNEY DEFEATS CALLAHAN IN SPECTACULAR FIVE-RACE FINALS TO WIN THE 2022 US YOUTH MATCH RACING CHAMPIONSHIP



LONG BEACH, CA June 19, 2022 – Team Pinckney (Newport Harbor YC) defeated Team Callahan (Biscayne Bay YC) in a spectacular display of high-stakes match racing to win the 2022 US Youth Match Racing Championship for the Rose Cup. Callahan, however, did not go quietly as both teams traded wins over the five-race series, with lead changes in nearly every race.

Sunday began with sunny skies and a moderate 6-8 knots of breeze from the left, similar to every other day of the event. But the westerly filled earlier for finals day, and it didn't take long for things to heat up on the racecourse. The rest of the competitors in the event were also out racing in best-of-three matches to finalize their positions overall. Team Barclay (Houston YC) put up his first two wins of the regatta over Alex

Lech (Long Beach YC) to determine 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. Team Stapleton (Balboa YC) and Team Marlo (Newport Harbor YC) each took a win in their first two races for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, but it was Stapleton that sealed the deal in the rubber match to finish 5<sup>th</sup> overall. The petite final featured Teams Earl and Flores, with Earl putting up two straight wire to wire victories to finish third overall and claim the bronze medal.

The first match of the finals began with an even start, but Team Callahan squeaked ahead on the first beat and led at every mark throughout the race. Team Pinckney picked up a penalty at the leeward gate, and the race ended with Team Callahan leading across the finish line, just like every single one of their previous races. In race two, Team Pinckney took the lead at the top mark with Callahan hot on their heels. Callahan got to the strong side downwind, but just didn't have the speed to overtake as Pinckney handed Team Callahan their first loss of the regatta.

Race three of the finals had Team Pinckney in the lead at the first mark, but Team Callahan closed the gap downwind for an even split at the gate rounding. Callahan's upwind speed paid off, resulting in a lead change at the second weather mark. Try as they might, Team Pinckney couldn't reel them back in and the match went to Callahan. In race four, Pinckney was in control during the final seconds of the prestart and stayed clear ahead for the whole first lap. But Callahan gained on the second beat by splitting the course and rounded the second top mark trailing by a boat length. On the run to the finish, Pinckney sent Callahan into a quick luff before gybing away to win by inches, prompting a fifth and final race to decide the overall winner.

The sudden death match started with a penalty to Team Pinckney right off the bat for no entry. At the gun, Team Callahan picked up a penalty of their own after a windward/leeward situation, offsetting Pinckney's penalty. A tacking duel ensued off the starting line and throughout the first beat, leaving Callahan behind and Pinckney three lengths in the lead. But Callahan's downwind speed got them back into the race, setting up an even split at the gate. At the top of the course, Pinckney took Callahan hundreds of yards past the weather mark in an edge-of-your-seat luffing battle up to the break wall before finally setting their kite and heading for the finish. "I've never umpired a Long Beach match race this close to San Pedro," joked Chief Umpire Randy Smith, referring to the distance the pair sailed off the racecourse. Pinckney successfully defended against multiple attempts by Callahan to roll over the top and eventually crossed the line ahead to win the 2022 US Youth Match Racing Championship.

"Massive thanks to Dave Perry and Andy Rose," said Skipper Morgan Pinckney. "I had no idea what I was getting myself into, but I couldn't have asked for a more fun event."



I'm super stoked on our win!" Traditionally, the Rose Cup Champion is invited to compete in the Governor's Cup International Youth Match Race at Balboa Yacht Club in July, but Pinckney had already received an invitation. As the runner up, Justin Callahan received an invitation to the Halloween Regatta at Oakliff Sailing Center in Oyster Bay, New York. "We are hooked on match racing," said Callahan. "Thank you to my club and thank you to Long Beach YC. I could not have asked for a more fun weekend." 2022 Rose Cup Chairman David Stotler wished the teams well in their future endeavors. "Awesome racing all week," said Stotler. "We see future Congressional Cup talent all over the racecourse."

A very special award was presented toward the end of the ceremony – the Nick Scandone Award. Dave Perry noted some call it a sportsmanship award, but he likes to refer to it as a respect award. During the Sunday morning competitors' briefing, the sailors were asked to vote for the team they felt was most deserving of such an honor. The winner by unanimous decision was Team Flores, which included Skipper Jack Flores, Ian Wells, Brook Wood, and Max Kleha. "I'm having trouble finding words here," said Flores. "We're leaving this event with more friends than we came with, and I consider that a massive victory for us."

Thanks to the efforts of Andy Rose, Tom Ehman and the GovCup TV media team, the racing on Saturday and Sunday was featured live on YouTube and Facebook and is now posted to the respective US Sailing pages. "We could not have scripted a better final day, and this was some of the best match racing I have ever seen," exclaimed Rose, whose namesake is on the perpetual trophy for the event. "I've raced a lot of match races, I've commentated a lot of match races, and this was the best finals I have ever witnessed. Wow!" Coach, organizer, and US Sailing representative Dave Perry also expressed his enthusiasm. "What a regatta!" said Perry. "This could not have been a more perfect event. The boats were incredible, and to have the finals go sudden death with overlaps at every mark... it could not have been any closer."

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