

Ye Blunder Bucket

The Blunder Bucket is the most sought-after trophy in AYC. Winning this trophy requires creating the biggest blunder of the season in plain view of another member of the club, most of whom are more than willing to describe in detail your misfortune. Winners:



The justly-famous Ye Blunder Bucket, permanently engraved with the names of the many members who have "won" this remarkable trophy.

1960-61	Tom Dingnan (Daysailor)
1961-62	Dave Shapiro (Interlake): Due to a wind shift, sailed his boat, loaded with six persons, over his trailer and into the trunk of his car at Canyon Lake. Insurance covered the "wind damage" to the car.
1962-63	JT White (Satellite)
1963-64	Bob Beers (Lehman 12): Storm capsized his boat at Saguaro Lake
1964-65	Ev Dean (Lehman 12): Stepped onto his boat at Saguaro Lake and capsized at the dock.
1965-66	Thad Williams (Snipe)
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1967-68	Jim Boardman: Started race by going through line backwards
1968-69	Harold Pachman (Thistle): Started on port tack and hit every other Thistle starting on starboard.
1969-70	Lowell Spencer (Interlake): Raced with the plug out of his boat.
1970-71	Phillip Poland (Coronado 15)
1971-72	Bob Lewry (Thistle): At the finish line he fell off his boat.
1972-73	John Carter (Lido)
1973-74	Doug Peacock (PHRF): On port tack, smashed a Catalina 22 on starboard at the starting line.
1974-75	Lowell Spencer (Catalina 22): On port tack his boat damaged a Thistle on starboard.
1975-76	Bob Alley (Thistle): Loading out on Ramp #3, the wind blew his boat off the trailer.
1976 Fall	Jack Hannafin (Lido 14): Emergency brake failed, truck, boat & trailer sank under water at the ramp.
1977 Spring	Jack Boland (Neptune 16): At Lake Havasu, his boat almost sank on their last tack, a few feet from the finish line
1977 Fall	Dan Schott (Thistle): Went aground on Vacation Island, San Diego, CA.
1978 Spring	Don and Faye Hubele (PHRF): They were married and had a honeymoon regatta at Catalina, thus missed the Spring Series.
1978 Fall	Winona Hinkle (PHRF): She caught a dolphin at Lake Havasu (Dolphin 18' sailboat)
1979 Spring	Bob & Melanie Ball (M-Scow): Their freshly waxed boat slid off the trailer, Melanie riding it down the ramp.
1979 Fall	Tony Zelenak (Catalina 22): Before a race, a gust of wind heeled his Catalina, throwing him and his wife Karen overboard.

1980 Spring	Gill Wallace (PHRF): At a Fun Regatta, he went forward to change sails and fell off his boat.
1980 Fall	Dan Schott (Thistle): During a downwind start, his mainsheet dragged the starting buoy.
1981 Spring	Sharon Smith (Interlake): Each race day was plagued with continuous breakdowns.
1981 Fall	Don and Joyce Alverson (PHRF): At Kino Bay, the tide went out before their launch, causing congestion at the ramp.
1982 Spring	Jim & John Chapman (M-Scow): Traveled to a California Regatta on the wrong weekend.
1982 Fall	Wayne Tucker (PHRF): At del Rey race, instrument malfunction directed him 30 degrees off course.
1983 Spring	Mike Alverson (PHRF): In light air, his M-Scow was capsized in AYC Championship Races.
1983 Fall	Joe Belgen (PHRF): His mast climbing antics resulted in washing his masthead.
1984 Spring	Tom Telfer (Catalina 22) Fell overboard during rafting maneuver
1984 Fall	Dennis Lynde (PHRF): Chartering a "hot" racing boat for the Marina Del Ray/San Diego Race, he was beaten by his own boat.
1985 Spring	Joe Laux (PHRF): Utter chaos in raising his spinnaker while being filmed by local TV stations during the Birthday Regatta.
1985 Fall	Joe Laux (PHRF): Invited a potentially mutinous crew on the Marina del Ray Race for the second time. They went.
1986 Spring	Debbie Fife (PHRF): Learned the hard way that shoes are not to be stored in the porta-potti.
1986 Fall	Chuck Dahill (PHRF): Invited same mutinous crew which earned Joe Laux this same trophy in 1985 with the same results.
1987 Spring	Don Alverson (PHRF): In his excitement to go sailing, he removed his safety chain before launch; however, his boat slid off the trailer before he reached the water.
1987 Fall	Charley Fife (PHRF): Fell overboard within 10 feet of the finish line in the last race of the Fall Series, and in doing so lost the series and his fleet's championship.
1988 Spring	Mike Ewens (PHRF): With a crew of five navigators (?) rounded an intermediate mark of the course and headed for the finish line.
1988 Fall	Frank Putnam: For delivering the Junior Sailing's Sabot and transport trailer to a total stranger's house down the block from the house where he had picked them up.
1989 Spring	Frank Bigelow: Became confused about the date of the Spring Picnic and thus failed to be present at his installation ceremony as Commodore of the AYC.
1989 Fall	Al Lehman: For almost sinking his own boat because he forgot to turn on the bilge pump while his boat was in a slip at Roosevelt Lake for a couple of weeks.
1990 Spring	Don DeFreze: For his great crew work on <i>Windward</i> . His enthusiasm went a little overboard and so did he.
1990 Fall	Dave Nowak: For several reasons. Hanked jib on upside down; tried to put boat on wrong trailer and, when he realized it, backed up into the boat the trailer belonged to; hailing <i>Beamreach</i> on the radio, but really only talking to his wife who was in the store next to where he was docked. And for being nominated so many times.
1991 Spring	Don DeFreze and Frank Bigelow: They were unable to coordinate duty at the helm and therefore neither was there when <i>Windlass</i> attacked the committee boat.
1991 Fall	Mike Easley: For using his engineering skills to mount cleats backwards.

1992 Spring	Jon Dixon: For not checking the contents of the piñata at the Regatta de los Niño's Marineros.
1992 Fall	George Sheller: in one ugly race day he forgot his sails, lost his keys, lost his crew, had a collision, and left his wife at the lake.
1993 Spring	Paul Nowak and Greg Bennett: For showing off their sailing skills when both capsized their Lasers and lost their dagger boards and rudders before the start of the race, ending their race season early. From Will Nowak: Back when we all sailed Lasers together, sometimes we would take the rudders off and sail the boats from the bow, steering the boat by heeling and sheeting. One time while doing this, a big gust came, Paul and Greg both capsized and their rudders fell out of the boats and sank to the bottom of Lake Pleasant. From Paul: Made for a nice ride back to the dock.
1993 Fall	Fleet Captain Eric Smaltz: For engraving the Fall Series trophies to read: Spring Series.
1994 Spring	George Dvorak: For giving his wife navigation instructions to "follow the moon." He forgot the moon moves!
1994 Fall	Rick Johnson: For losing his wife overboard during the Fall Series.
1995 Spring	Amy Croteau: For pretzeling her mast while trailering home. She forgot to tie it down.
1995 Fall	Bob Conner: For putting the Committee Boat on the wrong trailer.
1996 Spring	Dave Nowak: For wrapping the anchor line around the prop, untangling and re-anchoring without tying off the bitter end.
1996 Fall	Steve Nahkala: For backing the new committee boat into the edge of the canopy at the Sailboat Shop and damaging both.
1997 Spring	Erick Smaltz: For going to the wrong mark at the Tall Cactus Regatta.
1997 Fall	Curt Naegeli: For floating out into the ocean at Catalina Island's Cat Harbor after falling asleep in his dinghy.
1998 Spring	Don DeFreze: After a day of racing he sunk his trailer and car on the launch ramp while retrieving his boat at Lake Pleasant.
1998 Fall	Rick Gilchrist: For racing with an 80 lb anvil on his boat.
1999 Spring	Jim Ney: For dismasting the Committee Boat.
1999 Fall	Rick Gilchrist: For his antics at the Wild Horse Bar during the Birthday Regatta.
2000 Spring	Don DeFreze: For the 2000 Championship Races. Don forgot his jib sheets and had to raise and drop his mast several times before he could get his boat in the water.
2000 Fall	Steve Groce: While launching at 3am during low tide at Marina del Ray, Steve's Catalina 25 and Suburban proceeded to slide down the ramp. Trophy nominator Dave Nowak was awakened to come to the rescue.
2001 Spring	Jim Douglas: In the Marina del Ray to San Diego Race, Jim sailed <i>Pretty Woman</i> for 27 hours and thought he'd finished the race, even though he couldn't find the Race Committee boat.
2001 Fall	Pat Blumm: Claiming he was following the directions of nominator Steve Groce, Pat backed a club boat into a tree, snapping a shroud. "It was rusted anyway," says Pat.
2002 Spring	This prize winner's name and story have been lost to history. If you know, please inform us.
2002 Fall	Peter Schweizer: Peter rose to nominate the race committee, saying they'd been slow to rescue him and that his masthead fly was bent in the process. Instead, Peter was stung by the boomerang, the nomination that came back to hit him in the face. "Nominating the people who rescued him?" went the murmurs in the crowd. Bam! Peter won the prize.

2003 Spring	Steve Kusic: Tactician successfully mis-navigates fastest boat in Tall Cactus fleet to afternoon of bird watching and running around on the Agua Fria.
2003 Fall	Patty Rosky: Bill Snuffer was having engine problems outside the harbor at Lake Pleasant in very light winds, 45 minutes before to the first race start and after other boats had left. Patty Rosky approached. Patty, claiming not to know how to tow a boat, powered up her diesel and sped away, leaving Bill adrift.
2004 Spring	Dennis Martinelli: Dennis agrees to tow an ASF boat to the storage area, but encounters a non-functioning gate, requiring him to drive around the lot to the opposite side. Clang! Mast-up boat becomes mast-down boat when it meets the height-limiting overhead bar. This is the first of many dismastings by what become known as the “mast-eating bars.”
2004 Fall	Dave Christensen: After the Thanksgiving Lake Havasu races were abandoned due to high winds, Dave and the <i>Bad Idea</i> crew decided to go for a joy ride downwind at 9.5 kts with spinnaker up. A gust rounded them up, knocked them over, ejected a crew member, shredded two sails, and broke the spin pole.
2005 Spring	Ricky Gilchrist: “Shameless fleet building” by T-boning Mike Parker’s Santana 525. End result: Santana 525 with big hole is totaled and is traded for Merit 25, adding one more boat to the growing Merit fleet.
2005 Fall	Not Awarded
2006 Spring	Arno Marcuse: The Rear Commodore wins for the above—for failing to ensure the Blunder Bucket was awarded in the fall.
2006 Fall	George Tingom: While trying to nominate the women entrants of the Ruth Beals Cup, George disrespects the women and is promptly boomeranged: nominated and chosen for Ye Blunder Bucket.
2007 Spring	Ricky Gilchrist: Apparently having it in for Mike Parker (see 2005 Spring), nearly sinks Mike’s Buccaneer while sailing in the Club Championship races.
Special	Ray Gazzera: Granted special “Lifetime Achievement” Ye Blunder Bucket award for an awesome 11 nominations without a single victory.
2007 Fall	John Riddell: For recruiting crew for a Lake Pleasant race and then not showing up himself. (This could be a pattern with John since he gave birth to both the Viper and Megabyte fleets and then stopped sailing in them.)
2008 Spring	Rick Johnson: This time for leaving race marks in the water after a race weekend.
2008 Fall	Rick Johnson: This time for acting as Prime Advocate of the new “X” course design and then racing it totally wrong.
2009 Spring	John Mayall: For breaking the first rule of sailboat racing. Stay in the boat. John fell out of Tony Chapman’s Viper during races in Charleston, SC. Twice.
Spring 2010	Joe Motil: For so many, many things. For standing as a beacon to Blunder Bucket aspirants everywhere. Pick one: The time he stepped off an ASF student boat while deftly flipping his key ring into his side pocket. And missing. Keys found months later when the Tempe Town Lake dam burst, revealing them in the mud below.
Fall 2010	Emory Heisler: For knocking out the rear window of his tow vehicle with the mast of his Buccaneer. Because he hadn’t closed the latch on the hitch. On the way to the fiberglass repair shop.
Spring 2011	Martin Lorch: For losing his sheets overboard while “rinsing them off.” But as much as anything, for not having won the Bucket in 30 years with the club. (Note below that son Cedric didn’t wait nearly so long.)
Fall 2011	Ray Gazzera: For faulty trailer hitch fastening. When the hitch didn’t fasten, his Catalina 22 went nose up, stern down in the parking lot. Thus securing the Bucket on his 12 th nomination (see “Special” above).

Spring 2012	The PHRF Spin Fleet for hightailing it out of Humbug Creek after finishing the Tall Cactus Regatta, not sticking around for social hour and food.
Fall 2012	Cedric Lorch for spearing the runabout into the back wall of the head on the RC boat, launching over the RC outboard en route. At age 16, Cedric is the youngest honoree in AYC history.
Spring 2013	Cedric Lorch scores again, this time for spearing a C14 mast into the TTL muddy bottom, appearing on the 6 and 10 o'clock news for this feat, and burying the mast so thoroughly that it had to be detached from the boat and marked with buoys until divers could free it.
Fall 2013	Emory Heisler for the minor infraction of rigging his spinnaker upside down at a Tempe Town Lake race.
Spring 2014	Mike Ferring for inventing a new way of decapitating a C14 mast: driving under rowing shells parked inside the fence and overhanging the drive.
Fall 2014	Victor Felice: Helping teach impressionable new sailors for ASF at Tempe Town Lake, Victor invited the two students on his boat to clip their keys to his carabiner that he then tossed into his bag before setting off for an afternoon of grueling, light-wind instruction. When the wisps of wind fluttered to a stop, Victor offered a further bit of instruction: here's how you get the boat to the dock when the wind's not blowing. Grabbing the mast, he rocked side to side until, you guessed it, the boat capsized, flipping students (but not Victor) into the water. Oh, and the whole cluster of keys, including the students' keys, including one student's keys to her boss's house where she was housesitting for the weekend!
Spring 2015	Dennis Davis for buying the latest, greatest model Santana 20 and then leaving it unsailed in his driveway for the last year and a half.
Fall 2015	Paul Liszewski for driving his Hobie 33, <i>Rollin' in the Deep</i> , into one of Lake Pleasant's many submerged islands. At high speed. An estimated 8 knots. Blam! Rollin' in the Not Deep Enough. Paul had been an AYC member for nearly 25 years and this was his first Blunder "win."
Spring 2016	Chris Smith, pretty much for being Chris Smith, but specifically because at some time or other he flew his J/80 spinnaker upside down.
Fall 2016	Josh Kimble, after his first sail in his new Nacra 20, blasting home on the freeway when his pricey composite sails Kamikazed off the boat. A trashed jib was recovered; the main was never seen again.
Spring 2017	Paul Miachika, deciding to go Josh one better, turned north on I-101 after racing his Laser at Tempe Town Lake, nearly got to his exit when the boat did a back flip off the trailer, smashed down on the port stern quarter and careened some 15 feet in the air before bouncing to a stop. Remarkably, no damage beyond one very battered boat.