



**Testimonial
Dick Tillman
2019 Midwinter Championship**

In January 2019, I had the opportunity of a lifetime. Jeff Eiber, President of the VXOne Class, invited me to race his boat in the first of three monthly VXOne Midwinter regattas in Sarasota, Florida. Of course, I jumped at the chance. Knowing nothing of the VXOne, at that point, I went to Youtube and was immediately turned on watching the exciting videos of a boat planing like mad: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T0j8cJrIttA>

Jeff told me the ideal crew weight was 460 pounds and suggested I find a third crew member. I found a very competitive Laser sailor, who also is a sailing coach, who weighed about 110 pounds. A perfect combination. She was Monica Wilson, an Argentinian Olympic windsurfer. We were set, for me, for an experience of a lifetime!

I arrived at the Sarasota Sailing Squadron in time to help Jeff set up and launch his boat. This proved to be quite simple. Jeff stepped the mast, singlehanded. We launched with a hoist and had a practice session in light air. At that point I was exposed to a new steering technique of handling the mainsheet from the boom. Then there were the 2 or 3 steps to cross from side to side in the tacks and jibes, a little different from other boats I've raced: Finn, Laser, Sunfish, Snipe, Flying Dutchman, Flying Scot, E-Scows, Windsurfers, various J Boats etc. No problem, in my opinion, for anyone under the age of 80.

Race day came with southerly winds of 18-25. The fun began. I found it a joy to race this high performance planing non-trapeze boat upwind perfectly balanced with three crew hiking hard. Next I found if upwind was fun, it is hard to describe sailing this boat downwind with an asymmetrical spinnaker and the same crew sitting near the back of the boat and hiking just as hard. The balance of the helm could be felt with two fingers and riding down big swells in puffs that Monica was always able to see was the icing on the cake. Believe it or not, I was able to execute my first high wind jibe, with the nimble assistance of a first rate crew. We finished 4th in my first race.

The wind actually increased in races 2 and 3. We were top 3 at every weather mark, but then my inexperience became evident when it came time to jibe. A couple capsize ensued but then others had trouble too. For me, I was amazed how quickly the boat could be righted and off again under spinnaker. The fourth race for the day was cancelled as well as day two of the regatta.

The wind proved more manageable for day 3. This was a day where boat speed and going the right way in tricky conditions was the key to doing well, as typical in any boat race. Here, I found

the VXOne to be just as enjoyable, not as thrilling perhaps as under planing conditions, but a very tactical boat. Bottom line, I considered the opportunity of racing a VXOne, particularly in a strong wind, one I will cherish for a long, long time.