May 12, 2021

Dear Gus and Sally,

It was nice to meet you virtually last year for the 2020 Hall of Fame Inductee presentation and I look forward to meeting you this October in Newport.

This letter is a very easy one for me to write because I not only worked for this man but also sailed with him for over 20 years. His name is Roy E. Disney and I am writing this in support of him being inducted into the 2021 Hall of Fame for his contribution to the sport. His race results could be a candidate for the Racing category but where I felt he really contributed was with youth sailing and please let me tell you why.

In the mid-nineties he asked me to come up to his office and meet with him. I would often do this but this time was something special….he wanted to talk about how he could “give back” to the sport he and his family loved and had participated in for 30 years. He proceeded to explain why he felt he should give something back and asked me what I thought of giving to youth sailing. I completely endorsed and encouraged him to do this through CISA(California International Sailing Association). He wanted to not only help kids go to regattas but also wanted to introduce non-sailing kids into the sport. We came up with a plan to financially support West Coast High School Sailing but also various Southern California and Hawaii aquatic centers and sailing schools for specifically kids up to 18 years old. If I remember correctly he started out at the $75,000 level and when he passed away in 2009 he had donated $125,000 for many years. I remember reading letters from the kids that benefitted from his generosity, both kids from yacht clubs but also kids from “off the street” at community aquatic centers all over California and Hawaii who fell in love with sailing because of him.

Roy was the most giving, unselfish person I knew. He appreciated what people had done for him in this sport and truly wanted to pay back, in his way by helping youth, by giving kids the opportunity to get out on the water.

The sport needs more Roy Disney’s and the hundreds of kids he touched are better off for it.

Robbie Haines

2020 HOF Inductee