Olympic Qualifiers Decided
As Sailing Event Ends Here

The Olympic Team Trials at the Houston Yacht Club finished this past week after completing eight days of racing on Galveston Bay.

Mark Mendelblatt of St. Petersburg, Florida set the pace from the beginning in the Laser fleet and carried the domination through to the last day. He had such a strong lead going into the final day that he did not have to sail the last two races. Runner-up in the event was John Myrdal (Kailua, Hawaii), to whom Mendelblatt had lost to in the 2000 Team Trials.

In the 470 Men’s fleet, Paul Foerster of Rockwall near Austin and Kevin Burnham of Miami, Florida finished all races except one in first place. This gave them the opportunity to miss the last three races of the series. Paul is a three-time Olympian (’88, ’92, and ’96) with two silver medals, and is a past All-American at the University of Texas. Kevin is a two-time Olympian (’92 and ’96) with one silver medal to his credits. Runner-up in the event were newcomers Mikee Anderson-Mitterling and Graham Beihl, both of San Diego, California.

Katie McDowell of Barrington, Rhode Island and Isabelle Kinsolving of New York, New York started the event strong with three back-to-back firsts. Then their hold on the event became challenged when Amanda Clark of Shelter Island, New York and Sarah Mergenthaler of Colts Neck, New Jersey came on strong to tie the team after the halfway point. But near the end of the event, McDowell/Kinsolving put it back in gear to finish the series and win the slot on the Olympic Team.

Now it is off to Europe for the winners, who will spend time there preparing for the Olympics Games scheduled for this summer in Athens, Greece.

One and all who participated had high praise for the host Houston Yacht Club in Shoreacres.