



Record-setting solo circumnavigation for 8th time at age 77

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NEWS RELEASE

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Saito Presented Top Cruising Award By United States Power Squadrons

JACKSONVILLE FLA – Japanese single-handed sailor Minoru Saito received special recognition from the 45,000-member United States Power Squadrons at an awards ceremony held January 28, 2012. It was only the second time the award to honor adventure sailing and boating has been presented by the organization.

Saito was flown from Tokyo to Jacksonville Fla. to receive the Juan Sebastian del Cano Award, named for the navigator who finished the first-ever circumnavigation led by Ferdinand Magellan in 1522. Saito was cited for successfully completing his 8th solo circumnavigation this past fall at age 77, an international record, as well as for his nearly 40-year sailing career that includes a non-stop solo circumnavigation in 2005 at age 71.

Saito is a member of the Tokyo Sail & Power Squadron, the only non U.S.-based squadron of the 420-squadron, 45,000-member boating safety organization.

California USPS members Darrell Allison and Kenneth Griffing reported that Saito-san received a standing ovation from attendees at the national conference.

The response was “very touching,” Allison commented. “Lots of people wanted to meet and greet him and have their pictures taken with him. He was a real rock star!” he said.

Several squadrons in the mostly Southern California district that includes the 100-member Tokyo squadron raised money for Saito’s trip to Florida. Griffing, who led the donation effort

for the airline ticket, was also instrumental in arranging the del Cano Award, which was first presented by the USPS in 2007.

Hunter Brumfield, co-chair of the all-volunteer Saito Challenge 8 Support group that served as his shore crew in Japan, spoke afterward with Saito, who is a Guinness World Book record holder among other major international recognitions. “As a sailor who flies both the Japanese and U.S. flag on his boat, Saito-san couldn’t be prouder of this newest honor from the USPS,” Brumfield said.



USPS Chief Commander Frank Dvorak presents Minoru Saito with the del Cano Award for transoceanic cruising. Kenneth Griffing, past commander of USPS District 13, is at center.