

Cole Brauer – A Sailing Inspiration for All Ages

She delivered a presentation that wowed her audience.

At 100 pounds and just over 5 feet tall, Cole Brauer delighted Pequot members and the local sailing community on Sunday with her story of growing up to become a professional offshore sailor and the first American woman to race solo nonstop around the world. The event was one of Pequot's "Speaker Series," and, when audience demand exceeded the club's capacity, had to be moved to Pequot Library. Sunday's audience included neighboring yacht clubs Black Rock, Cedar Point, Fayerweather and Stamford, young sailors from our Junior Sailing program, along with Sea Scouts and friends from Fairfield Community Sailing.

In February 2024, Pequot members caught up with Cole during her global solo sail, chatting with her via satellite interview arranged by visiting speaker Chelsea Freas Cole, Cole's weather router.

Cole grew up on eastern Long Island and did not start sailing until attending college at the University of Hawaii, where she studied nutritional science and competed on the college's sailing team, becoming the team's captain. She's been winning races ever since. In June 2023, Brauer and her co-skipper, Cat Chimney, won both legs of the 668-nautical mile Bermuda One-Two race from Newport to Bermuda and back, the first women to do so since the race's inception.

She has been awarded the Rolex Yachtswoman of the Year and holds the record for the fastest person in a 40-foot sailboat to sail around the world. Known for her grit, precision and storytelling from the high seas, she has become a leading voice in modern ocean racing. Throughout her talk, Cole demonstrated her interest in teaching and inspiring young people about sailing and overcoming tough challenges, meeting with many after the event concluded. Cole's memoir "First Light" will be published this coming September.

###