# *the* Starting Line

June 2011

Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon

SYSCO

Photo by Dale Mack

# FROM THE COMMODORE

By Jim Sinclair, Commodore

What a Spring! From slalom sailing between floating debris in up to three knots of current, to trying to catch up with a drifting turning mark, to stopped barges waiting for a bridge opening, these conditions and many similar stories have plagued both the Tuesday and Thursday night fleets this spring. So an extra hardy congratulations goes out to all the winners and also to all who have braved the conditions just to test their mettle against the conditions.

And also a big Thank You to all who volunteered for Race Committee duty. It's kind of like being the umpire in a little league game, you have to make tough calls, and not everybody will be happy, but the game can't go on without you, so thank you!

Speaking of race committee, the job will be getting a little easier thanks to Phil and Anna Compagna. They have designed and are building new course board numbers that can be seen from a greater distance. This should make the pre-race traffic jam at the committee boat a bit less frantic. Thanks Anna and Phil!

SYSCO's summer cruises still include July 4th weekend at Martin Pond and the Delta Cruise the week of July 30 to August 7. If the river hasn't gone down much by then, your favorite landmarks may not be visible. On a trip down to Astoria last week I noticed that Warrior Rock light is surrounded by water (no rock visible), Sand Island across from St. Helens has lost its beach, some navigational markers are right at water level, and you can actually see Martin Pond from the main river. I'm also told that Hadley's Landing is now Hadley's Float as the shore access ramp is underwater.

So continue to play safe out there. High and fast water makes our pastime a little more dangerous. Be aware of conditions, plan ahead, wear your PFD, and have fun.

*Jim Sinclair*
*Commodore*
*S/V Dazzle*

**SYSCO Hosted**

**Beer Can Racing**

**June 24 & July 8**

First Warning Signal, 6:30 pm

## Coming Events

**SYSCO Meeting**
Monday, June 20
Dinner 6 pm — Meeting 7 pm

**Independence Day Cruise**
July 2-4
Martin Island

**NO SYSCO Meeting**
in July

**Delta Cruise**
July 30-August 7
Starts at Martin Island

**NO SYSCO Meeting**
in August

**SYSCO/Columbia Crossings Cup**
August 13
First Warning Signal at 1 pm

# SYSCO Meeting
# June 20

Come listen to

Compass Guru

## Mark Anderson

Swinging and Aligning Compasses

Elmer's Restaurant — Delta Park
9848 North Whitaker Road
Portland, OR 97217

Dinner — 6 pm
Meeting — 7 pm


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Photo by Dale Mack

# SYSCO 2011 CRUISING SCHEDULE

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| July 2-4 | Independence Day | Martin Island |
| July 30 - Aug 7 | Delta Cruise | Martin Island, Cathlamet, Warren Slough, Astoria |
| Aug 27-28 | St. Helens Race & Cruise | St. Helens City Docks |
| Sept 3-5 | Labor Day Cruise | J.J. Collins East, Coon Island |
| Oct 22-23 | Fall Colors Cruise | Hadley's Landing |

A SYSCO cruise is held as informal rendezvous. There is no RSVP, no fees to attend, and no cruise leader. Appetizers are commonly shared.

**Don't forget to fly your SYSCO burgee**

For more information on the destinations, go to:
http://www.boatoregon.com/OSMB/library/library.shtml#Boating_Facilities_Guide_

# Independence Day Cruise

## July 2 – 4

# Martin Island

A SYSCO cruise is held as an informal rendezvous. There is no RSVP, no fees to attend, and no cruise leader. Appetizers are commonly shared.

Don't forget to fly your SYSCO burgee

Photo by Dale Mack

# THOUGHTS FROM THE REAR

By Bill Sanborn, s/v Upstart

So we got a three way tie for first place, but I am getting a third place trophy. How's that happen?

At the end of the Spring Series there were several boats with the same number of points in both Tuesday and Thursday fleets. US Sailing RRS Rule A8 guides the way to break the ties. First you review who finished ahead the most times not counting the throw out to find who prevailed. If the tie still remains they are ranked in order of their finish for the last race.

The lesson here is that if the score is close going into the last race a competitor who is only a few points behind could have a good run and get a couple of boats between themselves and other point leaders and improve their position for the series.

What I take from this is that our system of matching up boats in the Level Fleets is working well, and that the level of skill within the one-design fleets is fairly equal.

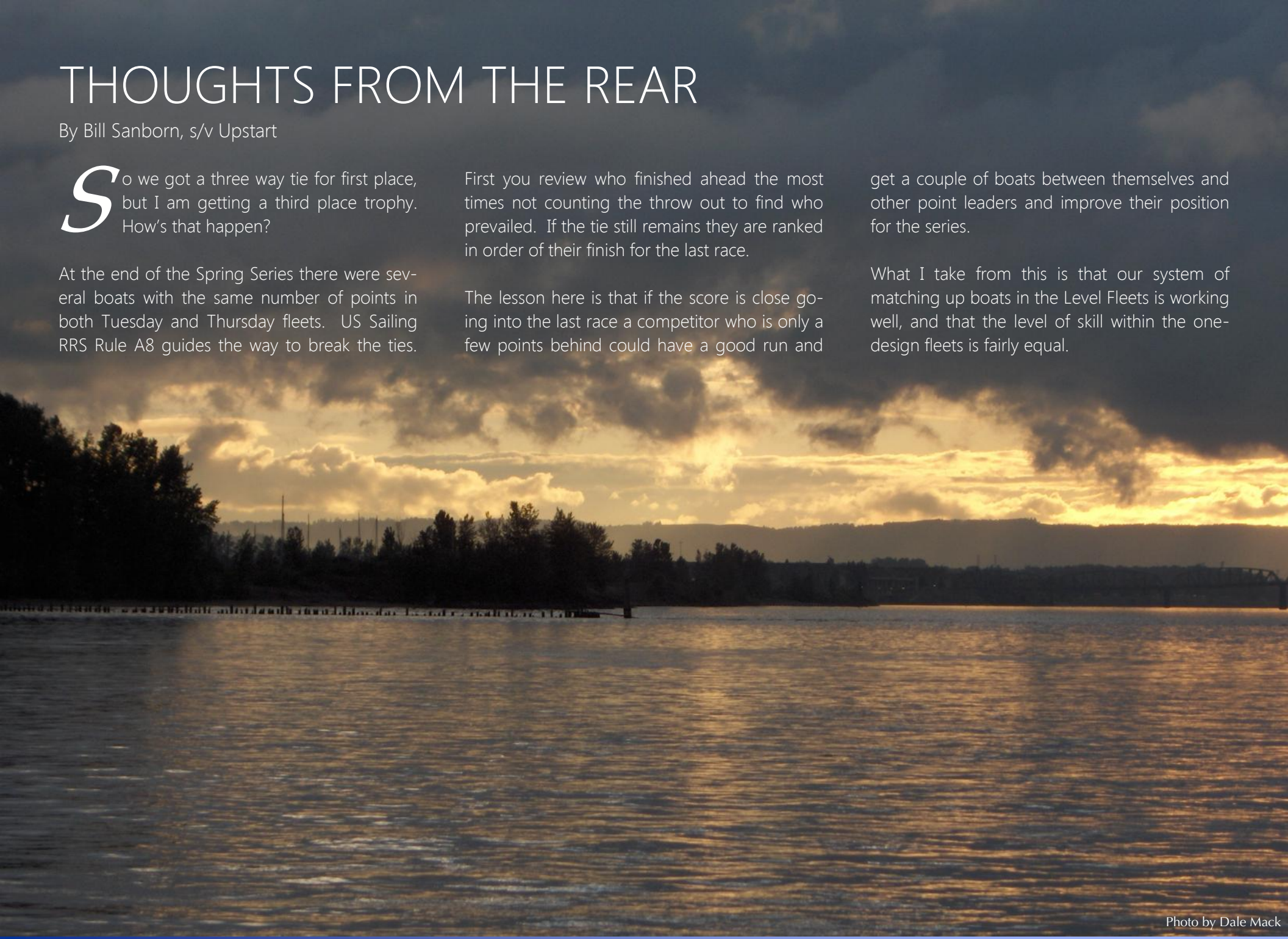

Photo by Dale Mack

# Delta Cruise

## July 30 – August 7

Saturday, July 30 – Martin Island
Sunday – Cathlamet
Monday – Warren Slough
Wednesday – Astoria
Thursday – Cathlamet

A SYSCO cruise is held as an informal rendezvous. There is no RSVP, no fees to attend, and no cruise leader. Appetizers are commonly shared.

Don't forget to fly your SYSCO burgee

Photo by Dale Mack

# SYSCO HIGH SCHOOL SAILING PROGRAM

## *OFF TO A GOOD START*

By Tod Bassham, Ranger 20 Fleet Captain

While the rest of the Portland area sailing community was enjoying a wild downwind ride to Victoria, or fighting off whale attacks, a little fleet of four Ranger 20s embarked onto the flood-swollen waters of the Columbia. Onboard were ten high schoolers and four intrepid skippers. The wind was NE 7-8 knots and the current was three knots. The race committee (RC) boat and Pancho III setup marks at "T" and a shortened "B". After an hour of practice, the preparatory horn went off, and the clock started for the first race of the regatta.

The students are from Portland Waldorf, a private arts-oriented preK-12 school in Milwaukie. At the chalk talk a week earlier, the students were introduced to basic sailing concepts, how a race is conducted, and a much simplified version of the racing rules. The ages ranged from 14-18, and experience ranged from zip to a kid with a bluewater passage on his resume. Crews were matched with skippers and balanced for weight and experience. On regatta day, everyone met at the docks and set off, after being warned to keep a sharp lookout for giant sturgeon leaping out of the water to dismast the boat.

The first race was a short "T-B-T" course, with a straggly start and the horn going to the boat that first figured out how to spell current relief. The second start (T-B-14-B-T) was much tighter, with a couple of skippers trusting the crew to take the helm. The second race featured a long leg over to "14", which meant crabbing over wing-and-wing, then reaching up the Washington side a good quarter-mile to beat the current back to "B". The RC had neglected to specify a starboard rounding for B, so the boats had to do a whoop-de-do 270-degree port rounding. The lead boat rounded to starboard and, after watching the second boat do a port rounding, decided to turn back to go round "B" again, conceding victory. As the boats circled for the short "T-B-T" third race, L'Orca (dismasted in the Oregon Offshore by a breaching whale) came limping in from Astoria, looking sadly truncated, and the chastened crews redoubled their lookout for homicidal sturgeon. The third start was the tightest yet, and a close finish ended the regatta. Everyone then headed back to the docks for pizza, debriefing, and the concoction of preposterous tales.

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Photo by James McCarter

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The students seemed to have a great time (see sidebar). The skippers had the mixed pleasure of introducing the sport they love to the next generation, and enduring three hours of teenager chattiness in a small boat. Much thanks to the patient skippers, Robin Christensen, Mike Barth, Petra Gilbert and Pete Adams. Grateful thanks to Arnie Polk for acting as PRO and providing the RC boat, and to the RC crew: Spencer Moore, Grady Moore, and school athletic director James McCarter. Special thanks to SYSCO and its members for the loan of Pancho III, the marks and equipment, and for supporting the project.

What's next? Well, some of the more motivated students might crew for the Rangers at a beer can race this summer, and we'll start planning for the second SYSCO high school regatta next year, maybe involving other fleets and skippers willing to volunteer their passion and one afternoon of teaching the ropes to some eager high school sailors.

*the* **STARTING LINE**

**Deadline July 17**

Email articles and photos to: Dale Mack

celtic-myst@comcast.net

# REGATTA REFLECTIONS

By Alex Berg, Eighth Grade, Portland Waldorf School

Photos by James McCarter

Sailing is a strange endeavor in that, for beginners you evidently get the hang of it, yet one can never know enough. For though it might sound simple (really, all you have to do is hold up a giant stretch of cloth and hope it catches wind) and it may look simple, in reality it is so utterly confusing, and there simply isn't enough time in the world to learn all there is know. I looked forward to this adventure with a mixed sense of trepidation and eager excitement, and was met with such a smooth "let's do this" that any fear I might have felt immediately evaporated.

So it was with light hearts that we all boarded our respective boats (having been split up into groups of twos and threes), but this lightheartedness lasted only until we got to the point of setting the sails, and then fear of embarrassment began to return. I was so sure that I was going to fail. But no fear. As long as you relax enough to make it look like you know what you are doing, and let your skipper bumble you along, it turns out fine. Kind of. Enough to know jibing from tacking and that the rudder is totally backward, so Pay Attention!

So we had fun, we learned, and we even got to race, what more could you want? Well, maybe another tutorial. I'm still not quite sure I have this knot right.

# PYC / SYSCO Opening Day Regatta

*Photos by Dale Mack*

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*Photos by Dale Mack*

# PYC / SYSCO Opening Day Regatta

*Photos by Dale Mack*

# SYSCO BOARD MEETING MINUTES

By Gary Bruner, Secretary

The SYSCO Board meeting, on June 6, 2011, took place at Elmer's restuarant, Delta Park. Commodore Jim Sinclair rapped the gavel at 7 pm. Present were: Jim Sinclair, Dale Mack, Rich Jones, Michael Nance, and Gary Bruner, and Ranger 20 Fleet Captain Tod Bassham, .

Reports

Treasurer: Colleen Bennett was absent, so no report was presented. Michael Nance had two late entry fee checks to deposit from the Spring Series. The checks will be forwarded to Colleen. Jim Sinclair will ask Colleen to prepare an invoice to bill the Oregon Women's Sailing Association (OWSA) for four nights' use of Pancho III for their Monday night's race series. The cost is $15 per evening.

Membership: In Jan Burkhart's absence, there was no membership report.

Racing: Michael Nance reported that most races in the Spring Series were completed in spite of high water and heavy current. There was much discussion about how race results should be handled after a series. Sometimes they are left on Pancho III to be picked up, other times they are scanned and sent to Michael or to Gary Whitney for publication. Rich Jones suggested that raw data should be cleaned up and clarified before being sent to Gary Whitney, but there is no standard for this procedure at present. No action was taken.

There have been some scoring issues this season, especially within the Cal 20 fleet from whom at least one email was received lamenting a decline in SYSCO race committee work since Rich Jones is no longer serving as the PRO. Race Committees are reminded to carefully check in boats competing and to double check final finishing results.

Discussion ensued about the future hiring of a PRO. CYC has hired Cherie Eudaly to run its races in their Summer Series, but SYSCO will forge ahead with volunteer RC groups this summer. Some issues such as marks floating free in high water would likely happen even with a paid PRO. Michael Nance will discuss hiring a PRO for next year with fleet captains at the conclusion of this season.

Michael Nance has gotten some information from US Sailing's CEO Ken Taylor about using their program for online registration in the future. Questions remain, however, about the actual cost of using PayPal for SYSCO dues as well as fees from non-SYSCO members who wish to enter individual series or regattas. Mike Nance will continue to check these details, and Rich Jones will check with OWSA to get information about how PayPal has worked for their online registrations. No action was taken.

Much spirited discussion took place about potential courses during the SYSCO Summer Series. Rich Jones lobbied hard that most fleets wish to race on the Alphabetic (windward/leeward) courses, and some fleets wish to have multiple races when time allows, while cruising fleets prefer a longer course using the Alphanumeric courses that often include navigational aides as marks. Rich Jones will send a reminder about what is preferred to Michael Nance who will then send it on to upcoming race committees, although it was a near consensus by the SYSCO Board that decisions about courses to be run remain within the purview of whichever fleet hosts each evening's races.

Cruising: The next cruise is this upcoming weekend, June 11-12 to Hadley's Landing. There were comments about the possibility that getting to shore on the float's gangway may be impossible due to high water.

Program: Tod Bassham reported that the speaker for this month's general membership meeting on June 20th at Elmer's Delta Park will

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*(Continued from page 14)*

be Mark Anderson, an expert in swinging and aligning compasses. Bill Sanborn will provide a screen, and Tod will check to see what else Mark might need for his presentation.

Old Business: The Coast Guard permit for racing has been sent out electronically. Racers are reminded that a copy needs to be carried on board while racing.

The SYSCO Board voted to authorize offering a fuel reimbursement to Terry Johnson who has graciously offered to continue running the Sailing on Sunday winter racing program. It is necessary for Terry to be a member of SYSCO for insurance purposes and giving him a 'free' membership would establish a precedent that the Board did not wish to set.

New Business: Phil and Anna Campagna sent a prototype of a new magnetic course board insert and sample vinyl magnetic letters. Their wish is to improve the readability and functionality of our current course board with its often hard to read letters and numbers. The SYSCO Board thanked them for their initiative and hard work on this project, and approved spending $185 for new letters and course board inserts. The Board also approved spending up to $50 for a case in which to keep the letters and numbers for a wide variety of courses, both Alphabetic (windward/leeward) and the Alphanumeric. Provision will have to be made for the addition of some parentheses, S's (for starboard roundings) and dashes to go between symbols as per OCSA requirements. This should be a great improvement to SYSCO's current course board situation.

Meeting Adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm. The next board meeting will be held on Monday, July 11 since the previous Monday is Independence Day.

*Mark Rounding*

*Photo by Dale Mack*

# Wild Goose

*Photo by Dale Mack*