

Starting Line

June 2013



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Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon

From the Commodore

Offshore, Swiftsure, end with a Fizzle

SYSCO went to sea in 2013. After the Oregon Offshore, Wy'East and Siren could be found at Ship Point along with S.V. Shamrock in anticipation for the Swiftshure International Yacht Race. Both events this year were cursed with light and fitful winds. Gary Bruner, racing the Clallam Bay course, managed to do what very few other competitors did not; he hung in there and completed his race with mere minutes to spare before timing out. Wy'East was not so lucky. We started sailing our Cape Flattery race course at 0920 on Saturday morning. At 0600, Monday morning, our race officially was over. We crossed the finish line at 0602.



It only got better after that, Wy'East dipped the line and headed for Portland. We screamed down the Strait of Juan de Fuca with a twenty-five knot quartering tail wind. All was well until we turned south and headed down the Washington coast. There, we were saluted by thirty to forty knot southerlies most of the way home. So, a normally two day trip home turned into a four day trip, sailing all the way. Refueling in Astoria, we found we had consumed a scant two and a half gallons of diesel our entire time at sea.

It's good to be back between the bridges, letting the spring rains wash the salts off our sails.

See you all on Tuesday nights, and thanks again to Vice Commodore Warren Dalby for organizing our summer series, and for Adm. Von Bruner for keeping Pancho in most excellent working order and always at hand.

- Frank Colistro, Commodore

SYSCO Boats Gut Offshore and Driftsure

By Tod Bassham

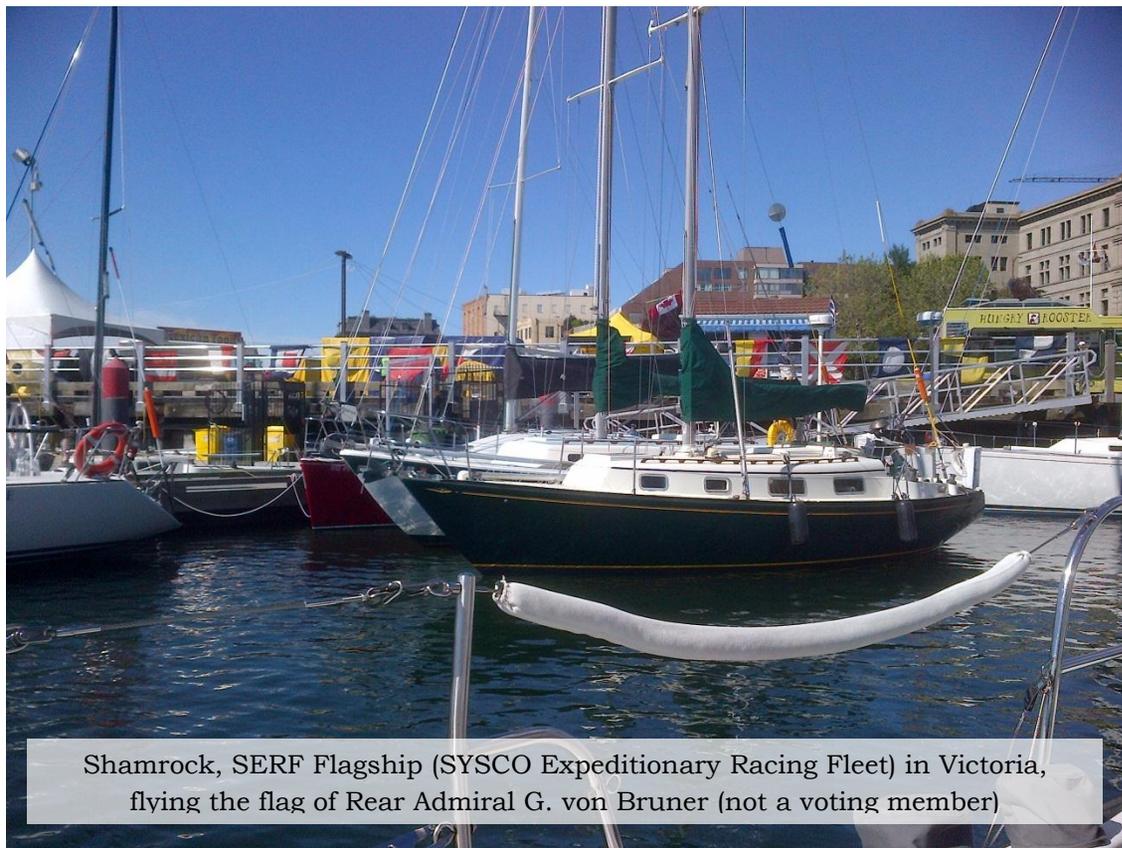
Of the hundred plus entries in the 2013 Royal Victoria Yacht Club Swiftsure Race, only one boat is listed as a member of the Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon. That boat was Siren, a Beneteau First 36.7 owned and skippered by the husband and wife team of Carl and Nicole Sirois.

Oh, there were other Portland area boats, including several skippered by long-time SYSCO members, but the Swiftsure results webpage does not reflect that these boats claimed SYSCO as their home club. Indeed, with sorrow it must be noted that SYSCO's own Commodore listed as his home club Portland's other paper yacht club—The Corinthian Yacht Club or CYC. For whatever reason, the only Swiftsure entrant that publicly fessed up to being a member of our little ditch-crawling, size-challenged sailing fraternity was SV Siren.

Which makes it all the more satisfying that Siren took on the big boys, members of pedigreed brick and mortar clubs sponsored by long-dead English royalty, and acquitted herself with honor.

Our race was the Cape Flattery race, Heavy class, Division 2. Course: Victoria to Neah Bay and back. Distance: 103.4nm. In addition to Carl and Nicole, our crew consisted of tactician Bill Wagner, foredeck Cindy Brown, and your humble reporter, acting as historian and bilge-cleaner.

The 0900 start was a thing of beauty: hundreds of bright-sailed yachts charging close-hauled toward Race Passage in 8-10 knots, trying to get clear into the Straits before the flood tide hit. Siren made it, barely. A couple of miles past Race



Shamrock, SERF Flagship (SYSCO Expeditionary Racing Fleet) in Victoria, flying the flag of Rear Admiral G. von Bruner (not a voting member)

Rocks the tide turned, the wind shut off, and we were caught in a whitewater slalom run that threatened to shoot us back through Race Passage. Using apparent wind created by our retrograde motion, we managed to duck behind an island, and creep up an eddy along the Canadian side until the flood eased. But we had lost dozens of miles on boats that managed to get deeper into the Strait before the spigot turned on. Grimly we pressed on in the light variable winds, finally rounding the Neah Bay markboat at 5:00 a.m. the next day, some 20 hours into the race, well behind almost all boats in the Cape Flattery race.

Time to throw the dice. Most boats were creeping up the Washington Shore, seeking current relief from the building ebb. The brain trust decided to gamble on a 20 mile sail across to the Canadian side, beam on to the ebb and perpendicular to our rhumb line, in pursuit of heavier Canadian air. With nothing to lose, we launched across, and watched our course over ground settle in the direction of Barclay Sound as the ebb shoved us out. We seemed all alone on the empty sea. Far



to the west we could see the sails of the Swiftsure Classic fleet returning from Swiftsure Bank. Far to the southeast we could see clouds of sails creeping up the Washington coast.

The dice clicked, and came up lucky sevens. A stone's throw from the Vancouver Island shore we found an eddy going our way. The east wind built into the teens, and with the No. 2 bent on we were soon knifing at 8.3 knots over the ground, close-hauled, directly toward Race Passage. A number of boats jumped across from the Washington side to share the aeolian bounty. The Swiftsure Classic fleet caught up to us, and we began trading inshore tacks with Rage, the 70-foot Pacific Cup winner. The flood

finally returned, and we rocketed up the Strait in a desperate effort to round Race Rocks before the ebb started that evening. Our spirits soared higher at news that the leaders of the Cape Flattery fleet were becalmed outside Victoria.

At seven p.m. we were rounding Race Rocks in extremely light air, when someone flipped a switch, and with a barely perceptible pause the entire Salish Sea began draining toward the Pacific Ocean at 3 knots. Almost instantly the radio started crackling with dozens of boats calling in to retire from the race; it seems there was still time to motor into Victoria before the bars closed. As the sun set, Siren and a few others—including fellow SYSCOIDS Shamrock and Wy'East—hung on, fighting to avoid being sucked onto Race Rocks, and playing every zephyr in an attempt to make ground toward Victoria, 15 miles away.

At three that morning Siren was stalled 200 yards from the finish line. For almost 24 hours it had been all hands on deck, and we had just completed the nth headsail change in our efforts to clutch the teasing wafts of air that were all we could rely upon to fight the ebb. Now, the tide changed again, and threatened to push us east and downcurrent of the harbor entrance. Warily we doused the A-sail, and put up the half-ounce spinnaker again. Perhaps the universe finally became tired of toying with us, for just when it seemed we must be carried irrevocably past the breakwater a catspaw crept up from the starboard quarter, the spinnny filled, and a burble of wake sounded from the waterline. We drifted into the dark harbor, and a voice called out that we were over.

Thirty boats finished in all classes. Over one hundred boats retired or DNF'd, including Rage and countless others from all other the Pacific Northwest. Plucky Shamrock made it in an hour before time elapsed. Wy'East crossed the line two minutes late. But she crossed.

SYSCO sailors may not have big boats, and may lack a fancy clubhouse, but the evidence suggests that we don't lack grit.



SYSCO Board Meeting Minutes

The June board meeting began promptly at 7pm at the Delta Park Elmer's. Attending members were; Mike Nance, Tod Bassham, Bill Sanborn, Frank Colistro, Ryan Rodgers, Phil Campagna, and Warren Dalby, and Gary Bruner.

Treasury

SYSCO received dues from five new members as well as a \$400.00 check from Regatta Network, making the account balance \$9,846.27.

Membership

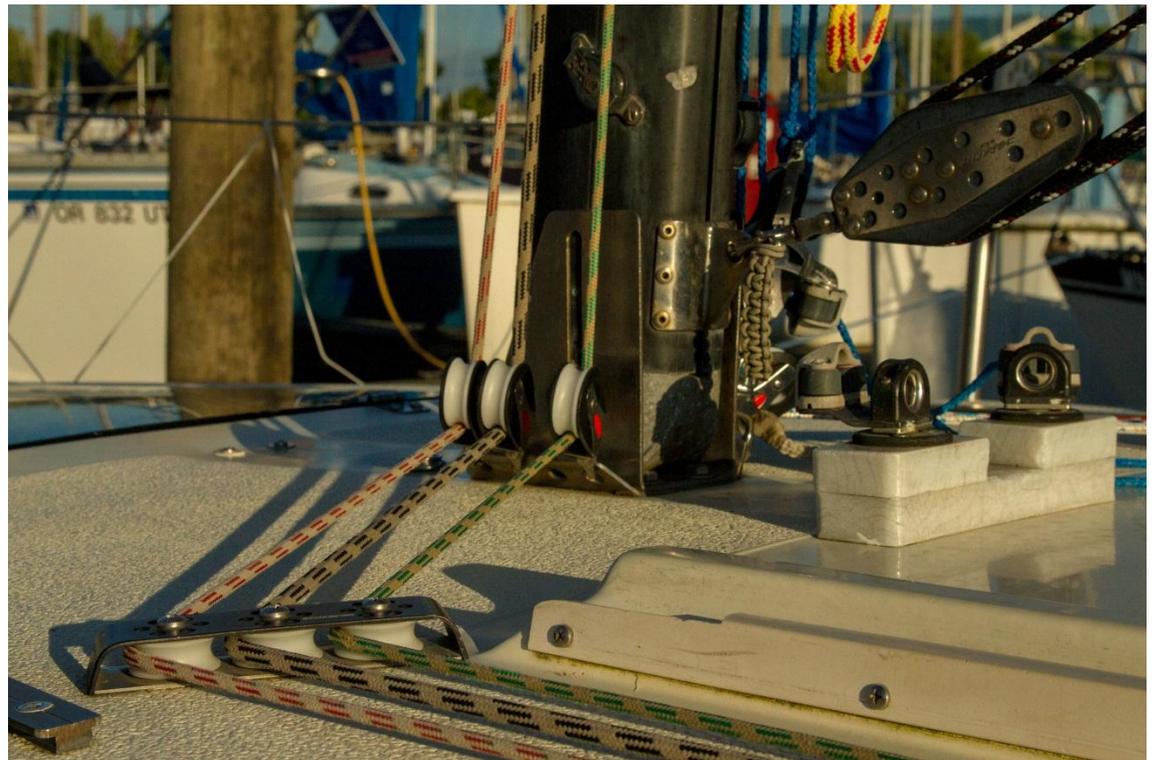
John Hanna with the J-24 Deadbeat and Richard and Elizabeth Samuels with the Yamaha 33 Vaporware were all unanimously voted in as SYSCO members.

The 2013 SYSCO roster stands at 123 sailors!

Look for the online SYSCO roster of members on our website soon!

Racing

A few of the active members suggested that the unnamed J-92 be moved up into the *A-2 fleet* to race among boats with a similar rating. The



J-92 has been racing in the *B fleet* where it is currently registered. The board's rationale for keeping the J-92 in the *B fleet* is that the bylaws state that a boat shall race in the appropriate fleet according to its *observed performance*. The motion was made to move the J-92 to its proper rating per the boats PHRF rating by Mike Nance. The motion failed.

Social

Details for the upcoming Solstice Regatta were discussed and the conclusion that the after party will remain a BYOB event along with a 5.00 dollar suggested donation per skipper and crew member. The event will take place at the Columbia Crossings upper lawn.

Pancho

SYSCO has agreed to loan Pancho to OWSA for the Women's race series for 50.00 dollars a night. This is a slight increase from last year to make up for rising fuel and insurance cost.

The boat itself is in excellent working order after a minor fiberglass fix from SYSCO Race Officer Warren Dalby. Thanks Warren!





SYSCO Solstice Regatta

a Portland [Sailstice](#) event

June 21-22, 2013

Please join us for the after-race BBQ at Columbia Crossings, Saturday June 22!

\$5 suggested donation per person & BYOB

RSVP otterfuzzybutt@gmail.com



Don't Be An Unexpected Guest

The yacht club world, and sailboat racing especially, is powered by volunteers. All of us at one time or another have sat on the boat as all the racers go shooting by the committee boat for a day of happily trying to outthink their fellow sailors. Off they go, and the committee settles in to a wait for their return. Definitely a hurry up and wait proposition. But, believe it or not, that's the easy part. The hard part actually comes before the race: getting the word out and, this is the kicker, getting people to register for the race in a timely manner so the committee has a clue as to how many people are going to show up.

The misconception nowadays is that, "It's all on computers, so it won't take but a second." Granted, things are faster, but seconds become minutes, multiplied by the, "Oh, I forgot to register but can I still get in?" folks. Now the committee is using the little hand on the clock to measure the time it takes to get things ready.

Plus, most events have some sort of post-race function that needs to have an idea of how many people are showing up. The food and drink that magically appears has to be bought, based on how many folks are expected, which goes back to registration. No different than having folks over for dinner at your house. Imagine a dinner for six and ten people show up. Awkward.

So, just a reminder that if you're planning to do a club event, race, or a big event like Whidbey Island Race Week, let them know ahead of time, and by that I mean way ahead of time. It'll help the race committee in making sure there's enough sustenance to fuel all those mark-rounding stories.

Everyone is always very good about thanking committees for their hard work after the event, but it's what you can do early that's really appreciated.

Richard Hazelton

Editor

www.48north.com

The text above was taken with permission from 48 Degrees north. SYSCO would like to extend a big Thank-You to them for creating a timely piece and allowing us to reference it.

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