

Starting Line

January 2014



In this Issue:

- From the Commodore
- Fleet Night
- Board Meeting Minutes
- Dysfunctional Family Racing SYSCO Style

Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon

From the Commodore

SYSCO starts 2014 with a great group of volunteers as your board members, committee chairpersons and fleet captains. Tod Bassham is moving on from the treasurer's spot, giving up his title as Tightwad Tod and taking on the vice commodore, race captain, OCSA representative responsibilities, and anything else we can get him to agree to do. Ryan Rogers will take over as treasurer for Tightwad, and Gary Bruner is starting the year as secretary, then Don Woodhouse will step in later. Frank Colistro will slide over into the rear commodore's position after his second go-around as commodore. I think your SYSCO interests are in very good hands with these people. We are also fortunate to have a great group of committee chairpersons, fleet captains and other volunteers who make our sailing/racing experience the best that it can be. I would encourage you to give all of your SYSCO caretakers a great big "thank you" next time you see them. I'll start by saying "thank you" to all our boat show booth volunteers.



The 2013 Dual Bridge Duel was such a success last year we are going to repeat it again this year. Rich Jones was the inspiration for this race. In June, SYSCO will host a fund raising beer can race with donations going to the Prostate Cancer Foundation. The mainstay of SYSCO racing, the spring and summer series Tuesday-Thursday evening races, will proceed as they have in the past. We are happy to say that Rich Jones, our race organizing maestro, will continue as the Principal Race Officer for these two regattas. When things are running as smoothly as they have been, there's no need for change.

On Monday, January 27, we will meet at RCYC for fleet night. This is a time for you to gather with your fellow skippers and crew to plan, scheme, and dream for the upcoming sailing season. We will also be considering changes to the bylaws. But wait, there's more! Dale Waagmeester will also be speaking to us about racing related subjects. Your SYSCO board members and committee members go to considerable time and effort to organize these activities. We do this for you. I hope you will take advantage of these events.

Warren Dalby, Commodore.

Fleet Night

Mark your calendars for the 4th Annual SYSCO Fleet Night from 6:30 to 8:00, on Monday, January 27, at Rose City Yacht Club. Meet others in your fleet, share boat details and racing ideas, plan fleet events and choose your 2014 fleet captain (if your fleet hasn't already done so). You can also pick up your copy of the 2014 OCSA Race Book and Course Chart, and renew your SYSCO membership. In addition, guest speakers will give tips on how to build and promote your fleet and how to prepare for the racing season, while your SYSCO officers will update you on the latest changes to the OCSA General Sailing Instructions and how races are conducted on the river. Finally, members will vote on proposed minor bylaw changes that allow e-mail notice to members.

Rose City Yacht Club has a strict 100 person capacity, so please RSVP early with SYSCO social chair Jaqueline Pitter at otterfuzzybutt+fleetnight@gmail.com, and let her know how many will attend from your crew, so she can plan how much food and drink to order, and to make sure we do not go over capacity. Pizza will be available for \$2 a slice, soda and breadsticks are free, but please BYOB any beer or wine. See you there!

SYSCO Board Meeting Minutes

The January SYSCO board meeting began at 7:00 PM at the Delta Park Elmer's. Attending SYSCO members are as follows: Warren Dalby, Tod Bassham, Frank Colistro, Jan Burkhart, Dave Palaigo, Bill Sanborn, Scott Stevenson, Kristen Pierce, Gary Bruner, Jacqueline Pitter, Mike Daily, and Ryan Rodgers.

New Business,

Bill Sanborn offered to set up the booth for the Portland Boat Show. At the time of the meeting, all of the volunteer spots had been filled.

Revisions of the By-Laws are still in the works. Proposed changes will be presented at Fleet night so stop in and see what will be changed.

SYSCO Fleet night will be on January, Monday the 27th at RCYC. Pizza will be provided for a nominal fee so be sure to RSVP to otterfuzzybutt+fleetnight@gmail.com

The 2014 SYSCO awards banquet will be held at Kell's again.



Membership

Membership for the 2014 racing season is available for purchase on the website. We also accept membership payment through the mail. 44 members have already signed up. Be sure to get yours before the price goes up in February.

Racing

There is nothing new on the racing front, but look for the action to start again in a few months.

Treasury

Membership dues are rolling in just in time to make up for upcoming expenses.

Education

Nicole Sirois has volunteered to put together several educational events for the sailing community so stay tuned for details.

The meeting adjourned at 8:11 PM



Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon

Dysfunctional Family Racing, SYSCO Style

By Tod Bassham

Many sailboat racers manage the difficult feat of devoting maximal time and energy to racing, while also raising a family and keeping the divorce lawyer from the door. But few, it seems, manage to convince their spouses and children to actually crew during a race. Most racers quickly accept Hell No for answer and, perhaps with an inward sigh of relief, call up the usual hard-drinking suspects, and go on to lead happy, well-adjusted lives that do not attempt to mix family and racing. Some of us, however, are made of sterner stuff, and stubbornly keep badgering the spouse and offspring until, in sheer exasperation, the family gives in and agrees to crew for *one* race.

Ah, but which race? A regular regatta or series race with a novice crew would not do. A Friday night beer can is tempting, but a piddling jaunt around the local navigation buoys would not give the family a real sense of what racing is all about: *i.e.* suffering in a confined space while sailing slowly and pointlessly from A to B. What was needed was a long-distance race. That is why I decided on the SYSCO St. Helens Race/Cruise, a two-day race from Portland to St. Helens. More of a cruise than a race, it features a long-distance course with zero mark roundings, beautiful scenery, an overnight stay in charming St. Helens, and the kind of leisurely downwind sail back the next day that is usually necessary to dissipate the hang-over acquired the night before.

Still, convincing the family to embark on a long haul race as their introduction to racing required an extraordinary number of bribes and inducements, including giving in to the kids' request to bring along Loki, the family's neurotic, nausea-prone dog. Fortunately, we had procured an Oregon medical marijuana card for the beast's *mal du mer*, and baked a bucket of cannabis-infused kibble to keep him calm. But this presented a strategic problem to the racing-minded. The Oregon card is no good in Washington, and the border runs down the middle of the Columbia River. This meant that whenever the boat is on starboard tack heading to Oregon the dog could lawfully gulp his kibble, but on port tack heading to Washington the brute would have to go without. Washington had recently passed some crazy law legalizing marijuana, but I was not sure it recognized veterinary usage. Because I am a lawyer in my non-sailing life, I like to stay within (but just within) the letter of the law. Accordingly, I planned a strategy that involved short tacks up the Oregon side and which therefore maximized kibble intake.

Race day dawned with light winds. I bent on our biggest headsail and by sheer luck managed a great start ahead of a fleet of larger, heavier boats. Light air racing demands the utmost attention to sail trim, but I soon discovered that the entire family suffers from Sail Trim Attention Deficit Disorder, better known by its acronym STADD. Studies show that STADD is the single biggest cause of strife aboard sailboats. And, it turns out, my family is the poster child for STADD. The wife plunked herself down in the cockpit and was absorbed in her knitting project rather than paying attention to sail trim, but at least she was not moving randomly about. The kids stomped around the boat without the slightest regard for optimum weight distribution or the hull-wobble effect on laminar air flow across the sails. Meanwhile, the neglected dog had consumed the entire bucket of cannabis kibble, and was now roaming around the deck looking for munchies, and chewing and slobbering on every halyard and sheet in sight.

In exasperation, I ordered my daughter Joie to hold onto the wandering dog, and told my son to go play his game pod in the leeward berth, where he could do the least harm. By this time the wind had picked up a little and, looking back, I could see the bigger boats coming up fast, using their waterline length to overtake our lead. Ahead, I could see the white lighthouse marking the finish line. We needed more speed! I looked around for inspiration, but the only sight that caught my eye was Joie on the foredeck holding the drooling dog, whose long ears were hanging down like limp sails.



Limp sails! I asked her to hold Loki's ears out like airplane wings. If she could tilt the ears at just the right angle of attack, the differential pressure generated by the Bernoulli Effect would accelerate the airflow in the slot between the headsail and the main, increasing lift and hence boat speed perhaps another tenth of a knot.

The race was almost neck and neck, the finish line within a kibble's throw. "Starboard ear up 10 degrees, port ear down 5 degrees," I called out, and suddenly felt the boat accelerate as the improvised earfoil hit the sweet spot. Was it enough?

Then disaster struck. “Dad!” Joie yelled back, “The dog is sick!” I cringed at the thought of what projectile vomiting of half-masticated cannabis kibble would do to our racing trim, much less the spotless deck. But wait a minute. What was the racing rule definition of “finish?” In a flash I knew what to do.

“Hold him out over the bow!” I ordered. Under the racing rules a boat finishes when any part of its hull or *crew in normal position* crosses the finish line. The normal position for a chundering crew member is.....over the rail of course. Joie held the heaving mutt over the bow railing as far as she could. A moment later we crossed the line, winning literally by a nose.

The other boats might protest, but I knew that in the protest room truth, justice and clever lawyering would prevail. It was a sweet victory: the first race—and probably the last—my family would ever crew for me. Thank you, SYSCO, for providing an opportunity to channel family dysfunction into family togetherness.



Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon