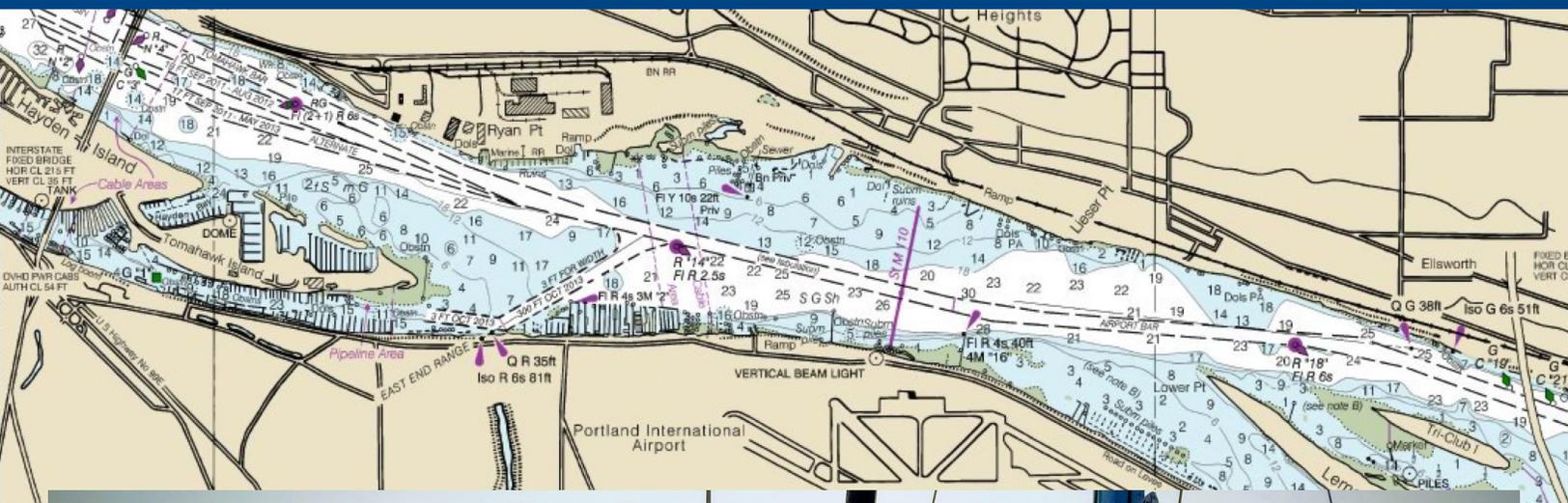


# Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon

# STARTING LINE



*J-105 Free Bowl of Soup heading back to the dock post-Tuesday race during a wild fire-smoked-enhanced sunset. Photo courtesy of Free Bowl of Soup.*

# From the Front

*Michael Morrissey, Commodore*

One of my favorite SYSCO events occurred a few weeks ago: One that drives many a sailor crazy with contrary winds, second-guessing, and a go-for-broke attitude, unlike any other SYSCO race. Of course, it is the Dual Bridge Duel and this year's race lived up to its billing. This year it had a fluky SW wind at the start, then a strong southerly through the middle followed by rain cells that seem to have their own wind at different parts of the course. We saw boats bonking off buoys, running aground to search for puffs and others swearing that they would never enter a race again when #19 was in play. At the start of the race, most boats headed downriver in light air, hoping that it would fill by the time they round #3 near the I-5 bridge. This scenario played out well as a strong southerly came in and after a few furtive tries of close reaching with the spinnaker, it was an easy run with the jib or genoa down to buoy 18 off of government island. However, the run between 18 and 19 towards the I-205 bridge the inevitable happened. Boats that had been strung out over a quarter mile, came together fighting the current, promising their souls to the wind gods for a magic puff, anything to get that final push around 19. It's almost Shakespearean as the joy, sorrow, madness, tragedy, and exhilaration of a sailboat race happens in the last 100 yards around that buoy. Once around, you feel you are on a magic carpet ride with the current pushing you downriver to the finish. It was a classic DBD race and there were stories to share at the SYSCO bar-b-que afterwards.

This year's winners were Rod Buck and his team on *Myst* for the long course, and Michelle Bennett and her crew on *River Dance* for the short course. Rod, who was the first-to-finish winner last year, decided, in true Corinthian spirit, that the short course victor should be the holder of the Columbia Crossings Cup for 2018. At the award ceremony, Todd Basham related the story of how the Cup came to be. It is an ancient Hawaiian bowl with a plaque on one side saying "H.M. Dowsett Jr. Memorial Trophy, Presented by Laura and Herbert Dowsett, Season Championship, Lanikai Junior Yacht Club." Todd, by chance, had spoken with a member of the Dowsett family, and learned a bit about H.M. Dowsett Jr. It turns out that H.M. Dowsett Jr. was a member of a notable Hawaiian family, a sailor who raced as a teenager in the 1938 Star Worlds in San Diego, and an aviator in World War II. He died in a plane crash while flying an experimental plane after the war, and his parents made the Cup in his memory, as a perpetual racing trophy. How the Cup ultimately got from Hawaii to Portland and SYSCO remains a mystery.

The month of August winds down most of the SYSCO events and the Twilight Series will come to an end in a few weeks. The final SYSCO sponsored event is the St. Helen's Race and Cruise. Plans for an end of race bash at the Klondike have to be put on hold as the restaurant has closed its doors due to lease problems. Stay tuned for where to meet for post-race activities.



*Dual Bridge Duel! Photo courtesy of Jeff Eastes.*

# From the Rear

***Bruce Newton, Rear Commodore***

It's mid-August and the SYSCO racing season is winding down. Although great sailing conditions will continue, the shortening daylight hours will limit weeknight racing. I thought I'd take a minute to reflect on the season and the health of sailboat racing in our community. I can't remember a better year for weather conditions. It seems like we hardly got rained on at all in the Spring, and the winds were amazing. Even when the forecast was for light winds, it seemed like the winds were always better than forecast. Our all-volunteer Race Committees are getting better – there were not the occasional screw-ups that we used to see. We should all thank the various Fleet Captains, the SYSCO Race Support Team (Jeff Eastes, Race Captain; Randy Poff, Thursday Coordinator; and Denny Damore, Tuesday Coordinator), the standby PRO assistants, and the folks who provided platform boats. SYSCO is in good shape – our membership is stable and our financial health is good. Some of the Fleets are growing (notably, the Melges 24 Fleet). But there are a few areas of concern that we should be thinking about. Participation in the weekend regattas, the Beer Can races, and the fun races is way down, and the average age of boat owners and crew seems to be creeping up. We moved the Beer Can races from Fridays to Saturdays thinking that traffic was a major factor. Should we be thinking about reinstating the idea of Beer Can themes (pirate night, toga night)? Should we organize post-Beer Can gatherings? How can we engage younger sailors? The Cal 20 Fleet is trying to collaborate with Willamette Sailing Club's youth program to set up a youth team in a boat to race on Thursdays. It will be interesting to see how that works out. What ideas do you have? We'd love to hear from you (feel free to write me at [rear\\_commodore@sycosailing.org](mailto:rear_commodore@sycosailing.org)).



*Spinnaker boats still racing close to sunset on Thursday, Aug 9. Photo courtesy of Nancy Marshall.*

# Notifications and Upcoming Dates to Remember

## **SYSCO Summer Twilight Series**

(Tuesdays and Thursdays)  
July 17 – Aug 30

## **OCSA Beer Can Race**

Aug 18

## **SYSCO St. Helens Race and Cruise**

Aug 25 – Aug 26

## **RCYC Long Distance Race**

Sept 8 – Sept 9

## **Women's Regatta by OWSA**

Sept 15

## **PYC Fall Regatta**

Sept 22 – Sept 23



*Some amazing moments captured by Maria Swearingen of the Laser Pacific Coast Championship on August 4<sup>th</sup>, hosted by the Columbia Gorge Racing Association.*



# Delta Cruise 2018

## *Bill Sanborn, Cruiser Extrordinaire and SYSCO Historian*

As has been the tradition for the last Saturday of July each year we gather at Martin Island to begin our week-long tour of the Columbia River Delta. For a few years Dolphin and Multnomah Channel Yacht Clubs have had their Rock the Cove Party with live music and dancing on their dock, and we are invited to listen in.

Sunday the SYSCO fleet moved on to Cathlamet for showers, renews the ice, and hold a dock party. Vicki and I only joined them there after a road trip via Astoria.

Monday they all made their way through the Island, around Devils Elbow and to the SYSCO Outstation in Warren Slough where we have a chain around the piling for a stern tie.

Not being there and only picking up pieces from Social media, I am sure that some made it to Astoria, Cathlamet, Bat water Station, Longview Yacht Club, and several docks along the Multnomah Channel on their return voyage.

When we visited on Sunday evening the fleet was Boat, Leanalot, Willow, Falkor II, Breakaway, and Blue Heron.

Hot weather, broken boats, Family events, and a few other poor excuses kept a lot of us from making the trip, BUT several have expressed interest in joining us for a Rerun Delta Cruise in September. We are thinking of meeting Friday September 7 at Martin Island, and then Cathlamet on Saturday, and Sunday is a good tide to for getting into Warren Slough for a couple of days. We invite anyone to join us, and are open to other optional dates.



*Eager Tuesday evening Short Handed Soaker artillery on July 31. Photo courtesy of Jeff Eastes.*



*Buoy two dragging some sticks in the high current. Photo courtesy of Kelly Dews.*

## Introduction to Heavy Wind Sailing

***Michael Morrissey, Commodore***

It's been a windy summer and it seems that some boats seem to do very well when it is blowing hard around the 6:30 pm horn. I have asked several racers from different fleets to give examples of a few tricks they use in making their boats go fast while staying upright in the puffs.

## Sailing The Ranger 20 in Heavy Winds

***Gregg Bryden***

For some reason, SYSCO asked me for a few heavy air racing tips, perhaps because Flying Frog has been dismantled in a sudden squall, had a few collisions, and oh, there was that minor knock-down and swamping a few years back... Well anyway, here are a few pointers from this survivor:

1. If it's blowing more than 20 knots gusting to 25 (25-30 mph), stay home. The little swing keels on R20s can only do so much. We are not like the deep keel Cal 20s made for SF Bay conditions.
2. Check your standing rigging regularly, add some extra buoyancy (we use big plastic jugs stuffed under the seat benches), and have a throwable tied to a line on hand, or better yet, a Lifesling. Make sure the scupper pipes that drain the cockpit benches are totally clear—expect to ship some water into the cockpit; but hopefully not in the cabin. Carry a maine radio that can monitor 72 and 16.
3. Triple hand—if nothing else, you'll have the rail meat.
4. A lot of Rangers reef the main and use the working jib when it gets rough. I have an old mainsail with reef points I bring out when it gets nasty.
5. When windward, use the mainsheet to spill off wind. Put the traveler down to twist off some wind aloft. It's OK to sail with a bit of a bubble in the draft— it's faster than getting knocked down.
6. We Rangers don't back down from spinnaker runs unless it's really crazy windy. But always make sure



*Pre-race excitement on June 6, 2017. Photo courtesy of Micheal Morrissey.*

the spinnaker sheet is free to let go when the rudder comes up out of the water. And, we give ourselves a lot more room passing in case of the dreaded round up.

7. Oh, and speaking of spinnakers, putting a twinge on the sheet can really help tame the “death roll” oscillations that R20s seem to be prone to in strong wind and big waves.

8. Learn to surf! When you get up on the wave and feel her start to surf, cock the tiller a bit for an extra push. You can ride a single wave for thousands of feet. Cowabunga!

## Merit 25

### *Michael Morrissey*

1. The Merits are fortunate in being able to change their 155% genoas to 100% jibs. We usually do this when whitecaps are showing up on the river (14 mph) and lately, even in medium air, when puffs seem to frequent the course. If your mainsail is continually backwinding and flogging, its time to change over to the jib.

2. While one can reef the main on the Merits, I’ve never found reefing on our Merit 25 to work well as it tends to distort shape and lose some power downwind. However, if it’s really blowing and surviving is an important factor, a reefed main may be in order – hopefully you’ve practiced how to do it beforehand.

3. There are obvious sail adjustments one can make to flatten the mainsail (and decrease the power) by pulling tight on the outhaul and backstay. Once adjusted, we strap in the main and get the boomvang on tight and we are ready to go. We will adjust the cunningham once we are on the wind and seeing how the backwind from the jib affects its forward shape of the main, so that there is just a slight backwind along the first few inches of the main luff.

4. Some boats play the traveler in the puffs, but we find that with a boomvang on tight we can ease the mainsheet quickly to spill air from the main and still maintain good mainsail shape and speed.

5. The important thing for the Merits is not to let it heel too much in the puffs. The skipper or a crew member is always on the mainsheet letting it out to keep a fairly even keel and the boat driving forward and not standing on its ear. The Merit doesn’t have to be flat in the water to sail well but once it is over 20 degrees you lose efficiency in the sails and tend to move as much sideways as forward through the water.

6. Going downwind is probably the most exciting part of heavy air sailing and those who do it well can pull away from the fleet. Going deep (falling off) in the puffs will increase your speed, let you stay in the puff longer and help you maintain stability in your boat. Having someone call out the puffs for you is important so you won’t be surprised when it hits.

7. Gybes are always a bit tricky in winds over 20 mph but we have learned to tighten down the twangs to stabilize the chute and have an assigned person on the pole adjustment to assist the foredeck person. Remember to make a quick sign of the cross and a thanks to St.



*Tuesday evening Short Handed Soaker racing. Photo courtesy of Jeff Eastes.*

Brendan once the gybe is successfully completed.

8. The biggest thing in heavy air having confidence in your steering ability to handle the puffs and the gybes. This means practice and there are a lot of opportunities to take the old chute on go out on the river on a windy day and practice heavy air sailing with your team.

9. Safety is the most important aspect of heavy air racing. Be sure everyone has a working PFD, and the boat has a throw line and a ladder for MOB situations. Always important that the crew has run through a MOB drill and knows what to do. It can happen to the best of us.

## Cal 20

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### *Brian Breitbarth and Jim Cullison*

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#### 1. Weather Leg:

Add crew to keep the boat flat.

Lots of backstay to bend the mast and flatten the main. This is why keeping your jumpers loose can really help.

Lots of outhaul.

Move the jib lead out from the hatch a couple of inches (you won't want to point quite as high in the chop) and depending on your system move the jib sheet lead up and/or aft to twist the jib and open the top part of the slot.

When a puff hits, first control the heel by easing the main and try to keep the boat driving on just the jib. Feather up only when you really need to.

#### 2. Windward Mark rounding:

Get dead downwind when launching the spinnaker. We launch without the pole to expedite the launch; it will fly dead downwind without the pole.

Find a lane with clean air.

#### 3. Downwind:

If the boat starts getting “rolly” when sailing deep, try twinging down the sheet for a little more stability.

When reaching, don't over sheet the main. Check with the driver regarding how much weather helm he has.

If it's puffy, be ready to dump the main to avoid a round up.

#### 4. Leeward Mark rounding:

Outside the zone get the boat ready to go to weather.

Stow the spinnaker early just inside the zone; this will minimize takedown issues at the mark and get you around it quicker. With the main and jib the boat still moves well.

#### 5. Safety:

Always wear a life jacket (even on light wind days); it takes a long time to get back to your crew if you're overboard.

Keep the throwables handy, and do have a way to get a MOB back on board.

# Racing Report

## *Jeff Eastes, Race Captain*

Hard to believe there are 3 weeks left in the Summer Twilight Series. The SYSCO Racing season has flown by. Summer winds and heat have been all over the board, so hang on for the final 3 weeks. Not to state the obvious, but watch out for deadheads, snags and sand bars as the water levels are at low summer levels. We've all seen that colorful low water level map at Columbia Crossing/Tomahawk Bay that's been posted for a couple of weeks. Wouldn't hurt to check your navigational lights as daylight hours are quickly dissipating as the Summer Twilight draws to a close.

Short-handed Soaker races, both Tuesday and Thursday were moderately attended. Ten boats participated on Tuesday and 18 boats on Thursday. Racers that turned out had a great time sailing and soaking the competition. On Tuesday a five mark was set up where a lot of water battles occurred during the rounding, great view from RC. An unspoken rule for a soaker race is that almost every skipper felt obliged to get his crew as close as possible to RC when finishing for a "GET RC SOAKED" pass. Many boats made multiple passes at RC after finishing. (I won't mention any names). It was all in good fun. Most of the water battles occurred on Tuesday, sunny and 90\* whereas Thursday was cloudy and a much cooler 70\*. Thirty minutes before Thursday's race the river was absolutely FLAT. A perfect no wind course of start- drift/2 - motor/5 - drift /2 - and finish underpower. Thankfully a gentle breeze came up around 6:40 pm and the racing/soaking started. As cool and grey as it was, there were some brave souls dousing boats that came close. As the gentle breeze settled in, we saw a couple brave skippers flying spinnakers single handedly; skill and experience at its best. All in all, everyone had fun. A special thanks to the Thursday skippers and crew that took a chance and came out despite the weather and wind forecast. A big thanks to Rick Samuels/Vaporware and Joe Hoffman/Elixir for platform boats for RC crews.

With showers in the forecast, it hasn't rained for 2 months, the Dual Bridge Duel course were set and a long starting line divided by RC. Racers headed both west/northside of RC and east/southside of RC. Skies were cloudy and wind variable. It was anyone's guess where and when the wind might show up. With 24 boats racing, the majority of skippers rolled the dice and headed west and let the current help them toward marks 2 or 3. The start horn sounded loudly, (the thanks to Bruce Newton's outstanding repair/rebuild job on OTTO) and the boats were off. A couple of skippers tried their luck with a dip start but unfortunately they got boxed out and spent the next 10 minutes



*Gregg Bryden impressively single-handing his Ranger 20, Flying Frog, under spinnaker during the Thursday evening Short Handed Soaker. Photo courtesy of Jeff Eastes.*

trying to make up lost river before they got across the start line. Six skippers headed east, slowly, as the west wind shifted to their favor 10 minutes later. The weather and wind made major swings all day long including a couple of nice rain showers. Finally, the wind settled, coming from the south limiting the effectiveness of spinnakers for both courses. From the RC perspective marks 18 and 19 appeared to very challenging and tested many skippers' skills and resolve. After 4 hours, time had expired and all but 3 boats had successfully completed the course. The favored west start seemed the best choice at the end of the race. Thanks to all the skippers and crew who came out to challenge the bridges. As special thanks to John Osborne and River Weasel as platform boat.

Time to get registered for the SYSCO St. Helens Race and Cruise on August 25th and 26th, [sailpdx.org](http://sailpdx.org).

Thanks to ALL the SYSCO members who volunteered for RC!!!

Have FUN and be SAFE!

# August 2018 SYSCO Board Minutes

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## **Gary Bruner**

*The Board meeting on Monday, August 6, was held at Elmer's Delta Park and began promptly at 7 PM. Present were: Commodore Michael Morrissey, Vice Commodore Jeff Eastes, Treasurer Scott Stevenson, Rear Commodore Bruce Newton, Mike Daly, Warren Dalby, Naomi Reichmann, Fred Hazzard, Cheryl Watson, and Gary Bruner.*

The meeting began with brief introductions and a welcome.

## **Membership**

Chairperson Jan Burkhart was not present but sent word that there have been no new memberships. Currently SYSCO has 120 members.

## **Treasurer**

Scott reported that SYSCO got a \$600 check from Regatta Networks, which is more than usual, largely because a number of folks paid late fees or chose to pay the 'per event' price rather than become members. Our current year operating balance is \$7,527.47. The major upcoming expense is \$6,000 budgeted for trophies at the end of the season. The Pancho Reserve Fund currently stands at \$3,691.21.

## **Racing**

Jeff Eastes stated that there are currently 43 boats racing on Tuesdays in the Summer Twilight Series and 53 boats racing on Thursdays. Jeff reported that only about 10 boats participated in the Short Handed Soaker on Tuesday night last week, and about 18 on Thursday. With that in mind, it was approved that next year there be just ONE soaker, to be held on Thursday evening.

There was no report on participation in this year's Delta cruise, which was the reason for the week off of racing last week.

The next special event will be the Dual Bridge Duel scheduled for Saturday, August 11. At this time, there is help needed for the barbeque to follow. Bruce will send a request to the members who checked "social" on their membership forms and ask them to contact Naomi. Columbia Crossings is providing the food, and John Osborne's River Weasel will be the platform boat for the Duel. There was discussion about the communication necessary to avoid confusion in the race. Also, it was

suggested that eastbound boats start on one side of buoy 14 while westbound boats start on the other. There will be one restricted finish line. Jeff will send an email to participants with clarifying information.

The long distance race/cruise to St. Helens in September will culminate with a gathering at the Klondike restaurant, where participant glasses will be presented. The gazebo is booked for another event that day. Michael suggested using the \$150 deposit to the Klondike for free pitchers of beer to selected class winners at the end of the 'race'. Each boat will take its finish time as it passes Warrior Rock beacon. Note: alternative plans are being made as it was recently found out that the Klondike restaurant permanently closed due to lease issues.

There was discussion about limiting all Twilight Races to one race per fleet after August first, but the consensus was to leave that decision to the RC for each evening, since early, fast starters might well have a chance to finish a second race, even with earlier sunsets.

Otto Horn was experiencing some problems, but Bruce Newton has fixed it up for about \$100 in parts. The bill will be submitted to OCSA which owns the automatic starting system shared amongst various clubs.

Since there is some risk of damage to any boats serving as RC platforms, it was mentioned that any boat volunteering to serve must have adequate insurance, as SYSCO's insurance is only for club liability. Any boat contacting and damaging an RC platform boat will be expected to be responsible for any repairs. Gary Bruner volunteered to contact Colleen Bennett of Columbia River Marine Assistance to see if SYSCO could purchase a membership, intended to cover any assistance that may be needed by volunteer RC platform boats.

PYC has offered to work with SYSCO for an educational/social event on Sept 29th at their clubhouse, but there has not been a decision about a speaker or a theme. The board agreed to authorize Michael Morrissey to spend up to \$300 to invite in a guest speaker. Suggestions of Andrew Kerr to present a 'race clinic' were spoken both for and against, as it was felt that a clinic would be far more useful in the spring than at the

end of the season. Michael will be working with Denny Damore of the Cal-20 fleet who will determine whether to co-sponsor the event at their Board meeting.

Lastly, there was discussion about what might be done to increase participation in Beer Can Races, now held on Saturday afternoons. There was discussion about the idea

of a 'theme' for each week, and the need for a common 'drinking hole' after each event for socialization afterwards, since so many boats dock at different locations, but there was no action taken.

The meeting adjourned a bit before 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Substitute Secretary Gary Bruner

