

May 2019

From the Front

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Grow the Sport

Event Notices

Racing Report

May 2019 SYSCO Board  
Meeting Minutes



# Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon

# STARTING LINE



*Tuesday night - looking for wind and current relief near the Oregon shore.  
Photo by Michael Morrissey*

# From the Front

*Anna Campagna, Commodore*



*Andy's Adventures on Abstract - Screen shots from KPTV Channel 12 that you can view on YouTube*

Your sailing Clubs are making a big effort this year to promote sailing and sailboat racing. Besides the *EPIC* Grow the Sport event, for which Bruce Newton put in a *heroic* effort to pull off (see his story later in this publication), in April a film crew from KPTV Channel 12 boarded the J/105 *Abstract* for the second race of the Spring Series. It was a heavy wind night that made for some great footage. See the news story [here](#). Many thanks to Doug and Gail Pihlaja and the crew of *Abstract* for volunteering their boat for what must have been a pretty big distraction – a reporter who knows nothing about sailing trying his hand at driving and foredeck, with a cameraman following his every move. Despite the travails, *Abstract* placed second in the race that night! Thanks also to Jacqueline Pitter for the connection to Andy's Adventures.

This issue is chock-full of useful articles, event notices, and some admonitions. Among them comes a story about getting stuck on the mark, and barge-blast avoidance. Regarding the former, eight or ten years ago I was at a free racing seminar hosted by our friends at North Sails, and I'll never forget one great rule of thumb for mark rounding, taught by Caleb Borchers. He suggested we apply the **Jenny Craig Method of Mark Rounding**: *Go in fat. Come out thin*. Not only does it allow you room for error, but it sets you up to be lifted toward the next mark.

I also have experience catching an anchored and therefore immovable object: the Committee Boat! In 2007 I was driving *Bite Me* in the OWSA Women's Racing Series. I was pretty new to racing, and it's fair for me to admit, really new to driving. Perhaps I got a little cocky on the start on the third race of the night – I was driving too close to the Committee Boat at the start, and caught her anchor line! Let me just put it simply – if you catch the anchor line, there **will** be boat-to-boat contact. We swung in to kiss the Committee boat, and fortunately her fenders were in the right place. Without a thought I jumped off the rear transom (sans life-jacket – bad!) and stood on the line trying to free it from our rudder. Nothing doing. The only way we could see to get off was to have the committee boat relieve the pressure by motoring forward. I kicked the line off my rudder - and then didn't have anything to stand on, so I was left hanging from the rear transom. Somebody on my crew took the tiller and the others dragged my ass back on board, captured perfectly by Dena Kent's quick camera shutter. *Tres elegant*.





# From the Rear

## *Michael Morrissey, Rear Commodore*

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At the last SYSCO Board meeting we had a lengthy discussion about mark buoy entanglements and the responsibility of SYSCO members to replace equipment if equipment is lost and the boat is at fault. Our Commodore, Anna Campagna, asked if Board members could write their thoughts on hitting the mark and how they disentangled or got help. I've had two such encounters, one last year and another one more recently and was lucky enough to bounce my way through both. So here goes, and hopefully some lessons learned.

### **2018**

It was only a few weeks previously, I had given a short presentation at the SYSCO Race Clinic on how to make a good start in a race. How to do some race planning, choose the favored end, be careful of the current and not get trapped by a leeward boat. This all went out the window in the second race of the 2018 season. Boat position below the line was good but we were a bit early, the current strong and there was *Raicilla* to leeward, with a nicely timed run at the line, gently reminding us of their rights as leeward boat. The green buoy end seemed to be looking at us saying "what are you going to do now?" as it got closer. We tacked away, tried to stall and tacked again onto starboard and then got swept into the green monster sideways and watched it slowly roll along the side of OB1 towards the stern, catching on the rudder, and stopping us dead in our tracks. What a nightmare. We were going nowhere, and holding onto the tiller became a struggle. There is no manual for how to disengage from a SYSCO buoy; it's a complicated underwater system of chain, rope, window sash weights, anchor. Whatever it was, it had us in a death grip, but we kept pretty cool and didn't say much (in truth I was more embarrassed than anything else, figuring that the RC was having a good laugh at the comedy show at the pin end). Son-in-law Dan sprang into action, assessed the situation, looked at me and said, "We got a problem here." He told me to swing the tiller back and forth as he balanced over the transom and started kicking the buoy with his foot. After about 4 or 5 minutes, the river gods decided they had enough fun with OB1 and suddenly we were free. Not sure how. We trimmed in the sails, decided we were still in the race, did some penalty turns, and headed for the windward mark which the rest of the fleet was rounding. The crazy thing about Spring racing in light air is that you are never out of the race until it's over, as we could see our fellow Merits and all the other classes struggling to go downwind. We made a good rounding and set the chute and gybed over as the best wind seemed to be in the middle of the river. We looked around and realized that somehow we had crawled back into the race so we got serious and forgot about the green monster. As Yogi says, "It's not over till it's over" and somehow sailed back into second place, thinking never again will we hit the starting buoy.

### **2019**

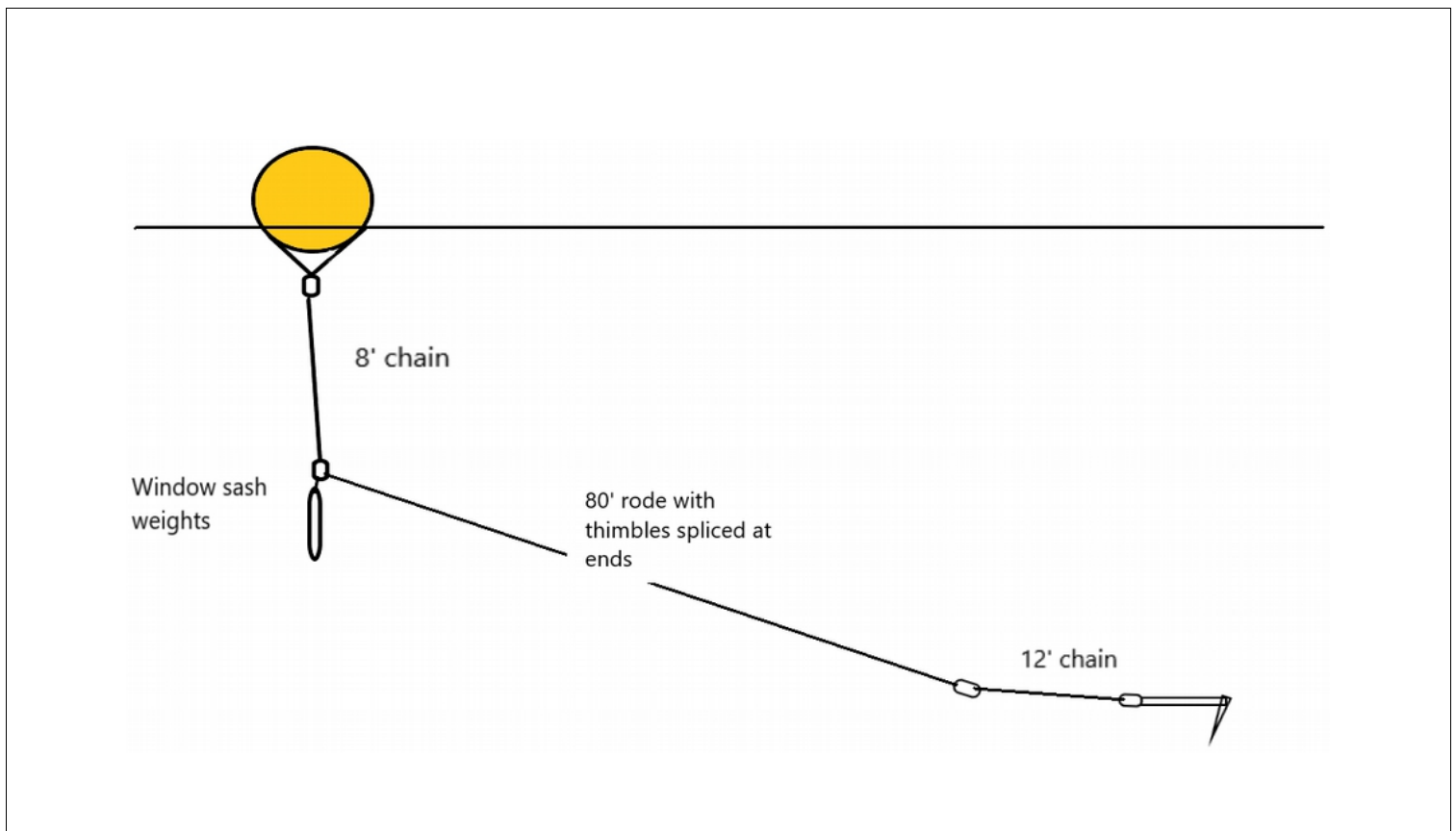
Well, that lesson lasted about a year until the "Grow the Sport Race". This was a Tuesday night fun race with new sailors onboard showing what keelboat racing is like on the Columbia. Beautiful Spring evening with unusual high temps in the low 80s and a good wind from the north. We had Tammy onboard as the newbie and she had some experience with keelboats in the Seattle area. There was enough wind for two races and the courses were short with a buoy more towards Ryan's Point near the WA side of the river. Halfway up the second windward leg, Pati first said, "Michael, do you see the buoy?", "Yeah, thanks", then Sara "Dad, do you see the buoy", "Sure, sure" – thinking they were talking about the windward mark, in a strange location, 400 meters south of buoy 2 near the Washington shore and easy to overstand. Then everyone shouted "MICHAEL, THE BUOY!!!" as I watched in horror as it slid along the starboard side of the boat and finally catch on the rudder stopping us dead in the water. What are the odds of hitting the starting buoy in the middle of the Columbia twenty minutes after the start!? We dropped the jib, and the boat started to swing back and forth stuck in place, with us pushing on the buoy, to no avail. First, Sara tried, and then we both tried, going nowhere. Then I remembered Dan's technique from last year and bounced on the buoy ball while Sara swing the rudder back and forth, and by some miracle we came free. Hooray! Sailed the rest of the race, happy that was over and knowing that our new sailor, Tammy, got the full experience and now was a seasoned racer on the Columbia.

## Lessons Learned for OB1 (Hopefully)

1. Always listen to a crew member telling you about a buoy (or any obstacle) in the river.
2. Most keel boats have the front of their keel slanted aft so the buoy often slides to the back of the boat off the keel to the rudder which is vertical.
3. Keep calm – your boat might swing wildly and the tiller will feel like it will fall off in your hand, but keep a firm grip and tell your crew get in a safe spot and be sure that all crew members have their life-jackets on.
4. Drop your jib and strap in your main. This will allow some control.
5. Radio the RC and if possible, they will send Pancho over to standby.
6. Assess the situation and if hung up on the rudder (most likely) try swinging it back and forth to help free the chain. You may also try using a long-handled pole or brush to coax the chain off the rudder.
7. Last resort is to have a crew member (or yourself) push down on the buoy with one foot as another member works the tiller. This is somewhat hazardous because if the crew falls in the water, you will not be able to pick them up. All crew members should have their life jackets on.
8. If you feel uncomfortable with the situation, drop your main (jib is already down) and call RC for help. Pancho will come by soon to assist in freeing the buoy. (Pancho would likely try to tow you upststream, and off the mark.)
9. The chain may ding up the rudder or keel so you may wish to inspect it soon after the incident.

Again, every situation is different; wind velocity, current strength, crew experience, etc. Safety is the most important factor in getting off the buoy. Sailing the Columbia can be tricky with the currents and many of us have bounced off buoys and have had problems at times. Don't hesitate to call for help if needed and be ready for the race the following week.

*Costs of replacing lost ground tackle and anchor can run upwards of \$220. If we lose a mark, it can run up to \$550.*



# Sailboat Racing PDX Summer Saturday Beer Can Races

Crew on a Columbia river sailboat ▪ Try racing your boat in a casual goofy race ▪ Meet other sailors at the post-race social

For Info visit  
<https://sailpdx.org/welcome-to-portland-sailing/> or call  
503-789-0586



**June 1 - Pirate Night** Dress up as your favorite Pirate. After the race head to **The Deck** for a post-race costume party and drinks. If you care to donate a small taster of rum or another spirit to the race committee, it will go into the prize baskets for the costume contest.

**June 8 - Water Guns** Bring out the water cannons and do battle during the race. After the race dry off at the **post-race party at Island Sailing Club** at the end of D dock at Tomahawk Bay Marina.

**June 15 - Single-Handed** Test your mettle in single-handed racing. After a first start for the less courageous boats, the second start will be for single-handed boats. Gather your fleet mates or skip-pers from similarly matched fleets and create some exciting boat-to-boat competition. **The Sextant**

**June 29 - Fly Your flag** The RSS prohibit flying a flag while racing, but that rule is waived for this race, the last beer can before July 4th. Fly the biggest baddest flag or ensign you can find, or as many flags as you can fit onboard. Fly the national ensign or yacht ensign, along with national flags of crew members, club burgees, specialty flags, etc. Post-race social at **The Sextant**

**July 20 - Family Night** Gather your parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, siblings, etc. for a fun evening of sailing. Then relax on the veranda at **Portland Yacht Club** to watch the sunset.

**July 27 - Rum Run** Entry fee: 1 bottle of rum, handed to RC or brought to **Rose City Yacht Club** clubhouse post-race, where mixers will be provided for exotic rum drinks with and without umbrellas.

**Aug 3 - Mardi Gras** Make the race a New Orleans Mardi Gras parade. Costumes, beads, wigs, makeup, props, music - anything goes! Laissez les bons temps rouler! Post-race social at **The Sextant**

**Aug 17 - Sport Your Colors** Show your team spirit by wearing jerseys, hats, head and wrist bands, face paint, or whatever of your favorite sport team be it professional, college, recreational, women's, men's, kids, NFL, NBA, MLS or your local bowling league. Crazy and full regalia takes the day! Post-race social at **The Sextant**.

**Sept 14 - Crazy Wigs** The title says it all. Dust off your crazy wig and sport it during the race. No promise that photographic evidence will not appear on the internet. Post-race social at **The Sextant**.

# Help Grow the Sport

**Bruce Newton, OCSA Commodore**

## *Grow the Sport Races were a success*

SYSCO held a promotional event, the Grow the Sport Races, on May 7 and 9. Forty-seven guest sailors had signed up to try out sailboat racing on the Columbia. Most of the guests had some sailing experience but eight were new to sailing. Thirty two boats registered to take out guest sailors (sixteen on Tuesday and sixteen on Thursday). This is out of eighty-seven boats racing in the Spring Series. Despite a lot of nail biting on the part of the organizers, it all worked out and there were enough positions available on the boats to accommodate all the guest sailors. In fact, thirteen guest sailors were able to go out on both nights.

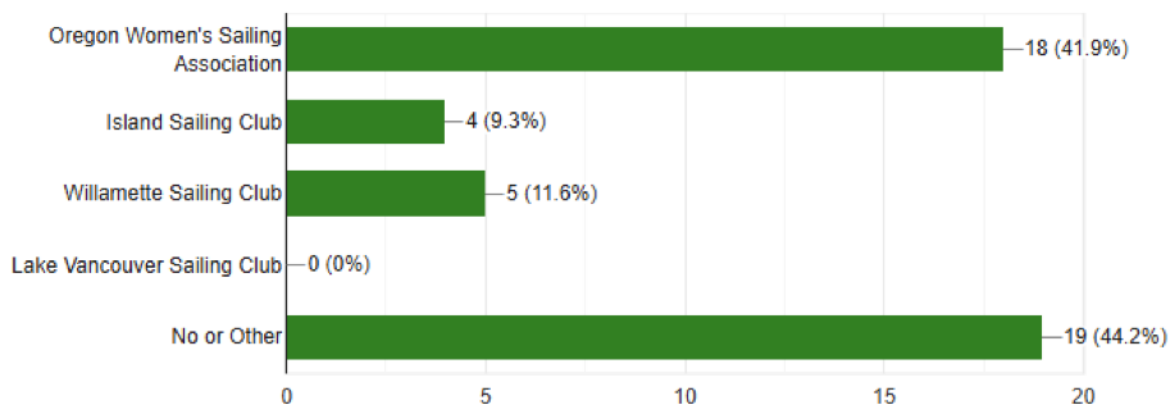
Tuesday had plenty of wind (14 gusting to 20) and the race committee got two races in for all four pennants. Thursday was a different story with an east wind that started around 9 then quickly faded. Only two boats were able to finish a shortened course. We are in the process of collecting feedback from both skippers and guests through two online surveys. The initial responses are uniformly positive. All of the skippers who completed the survey said they would do this event again.

So, should SYSCO do this again next year? On the plus side, we were able to expose a lot of people to sailboat racing that might not have otherwise had the opportunity. On the minus side, it was a lot of work for the organizers and it required an extra set of assigned race committee dates for the Fleets in the annual calendar. Also, if we did it next year and got a bigger response we would need a better turn out of boats. Let Anna Campagna know your thoughts.

We also have a list of ten participants who are looking for a permanent position on a racing team. Contact me if you are interested. Bruce Newton <Commodore@sailocsa.org>

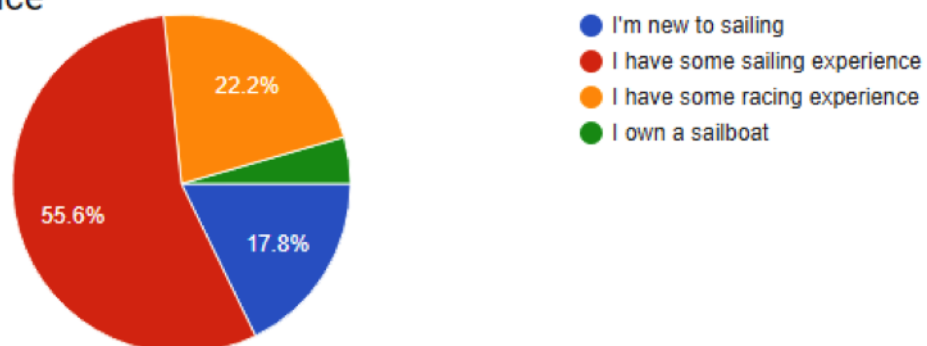
### Are you associated with a sailing club?

43 responses



### Sailing experience

45 responses





# Notifications and Upcoming Dates to Remember

## **SYSCO has open positions! Consider volunteering!**

As a completely-volunteer run organization, our volunteers are the heart blood of our continued success. There are currently three positions needing to be filled who will be working closely with the SYSCO Board. If you, your crew, spouse, or anyone you know would be a good match for any of these positions, we would love to hear from them!

Please have any potential volunteers contact Anna at [commodore@syscosailing.org](mailto:commodore@syscosailing.org) or text or call her at 503-789-0586. Thank you!

**Open positions:**  
**Newsletter Editor**  
**Sailing Marketing Intern**

## **ISC “Pirate Night” Beer Can Race**

Saturday, June 1

## **SYSCO Single-Handed Beer Can**

Saturday, June 15

## **PYC Rose Festival Regatta**

Sunday, June 2nd

## **Andrew Kerr Seminar**

Sunday, June 16 (see below for details)

## **SYSCO Summer Evening Series**

Tues and Thurs, June 4 – July 11

## **RCYC Medium Distance Race**

Saturday, June 22

## **ISC “Water Guns” Beer Can Race**

Saturday, June 8

## **Your Fleet's Summer Party**

Plan it! And submit your \$50 receipt to the Treasurer

**Beer Can Races** this year are on select Saturdays from May to September. They're a casual race on a Saturday afternoon, and if you own a boat and are interested in trying your hand at racing, or know someone who does, this is a great opportunity. Each race is sponsored by a different club, and there's a theme to make it more fun and even somewhat goofy. If you are a skipper in need of mentoring, or your boat wants to take on a Grow-the-Sport Crew member, or if you are a crew member wanting a ride, let me know at [commodore@syscosailing.org](mailto:commodore@syscosailing.org).

There is a big push this year to revitalize the Saturday Beer Can Races. The first one is this Saturday June 1, and the theme is Pirate Night (it was rescheduled from two weeks ago). Get out that jolly Roger flag. Bedeck yourself with sabers, eye patches, hooks, etc. Come out for a crazy, goofy race. Then head to The Deck restaurant (McCuddy's Marine Drive) for a pirate party with prizes for the best costumes. Help make Portland sailing weird again. Race starts at 5 pm around Buoy 14. Hosted by Island Sailing Club.

**Andrew Kerr Seminar** is on June 15th/16. Cal 20 fleet hired famous sailor and educator Andrew Kerr for June 15. OCSA jumped on the opportunity to have him stay over and give the same on-the-water seminar Sunday, June 16, 9 am – 5 pm at RCYC, for like-phrf boats including J-24s, Merits, and Martins. **Any sailor may attend a free, OCSA sponsored classroom session from 9 am -12 pm on Sunday, June 16 at RCYC.** Topics will include tactics and strategy, including techniques for current. Contact Nicole Sirois if you want to attend at [education@sailocsa.org](mailto:education@sailocsa.org) or for more info.

# Racing Report

**Gregg Bryden, Race Captain**

## ***SYSCO Summer Series Count Down is On!***

The SYSCO Summer Series is just a few days away! Tuesday racers start 4 June, Thursdays 6 June. Make sure you have registered— regular registration ends 48 hours before the first race. Wow, Summer is right around the corner. Make sure you are there! And urge your fleet mates and dock neighbors to sign on too. [Click here](#) to register.

***SYSCO Spring Series*** in full swing and so far, we have had great wind and weather. There was enough wind and light last Thursday to get a second race off. It's all going so well thanks to the great RC volunteers. Keep it fun, safe, and professional. Racers, do watch out for those marks! We have had one finish line mark mishap already. The mark is getting new ground tackle and the responsible skipper's wallet is a getting a little lighter. That's my reminder that damaging a mark is not only humiliating-- it can cost you some money.

## ***Ranger 20 on the Mark***

Yes, Flying Frog has been there. The usual story; we rounded the leeward mark and didn't leave room for the raging current. Next thing, we're not going anywhere. Ranger 20s have a swing keel that is not likely to snag, but the rudder is a different story. Sure enough, we are on the mark line. When the current is strong (like always), no amount of rode, chain and sash weight is going to make the mark ground tackle go straight down. I cut it too close! Sails down. This race is over for us. So there are two options:

1. We use the oar (no boat hook, alas) to try to push the mark line down, but R 20 rudders are deep, and the strong current is impossible to overcome. So...
2. We take off the rudder.

This too is a struggle with all that load on the pintles and gudgeons. We were sure to tie a securing line to it so we wouldn't lose it. One has to take the tiller off to remove the R20 rudder—takes tools. I had the outboard down in neutral to have some steerage. Finally we are off to the cheers of the boats rounding around us. Live and learn.

## ***Sailboats versus Barges***

This is a no-win situation. Not only might you die, but you will definitely be disqualified by Race Committee if you are the recipient of a barge's five horns. Recently racers got more than a dozen of the longest blasts I have ever heard during a race. Two big barges came through the race course. Expect this to happen. The math is simple. Barges are big. Barges that are going downriver need to go faster than the current to have steerage. They need to stay in the channel. This is why they start warning us more than a mile upstream. Why they have the right of way.

So don't think you can stay on that tack across the channel and hug the Washington side. Know where the channel is, and when a barge or any big ship is in-, or especially *outbound*, stay the hell out of the way.

Columbia River sailboat racing is a privilege granted under an annual Coast Guard Permit. Complaints from other rightful users of the Columbia could put our permit in jeopardy. More importantly, no one should risk being killed doing what we love. Thank you for responsibly sharing our river safely.

RC Gregg



*George definitely got five blasts for this bone-head maneuver.*



## Other Clubs' Business

### Enter into the Portland Yacht Club Rose Festival Regatta

With a little over a week to go, we only have a seven boats entered. Is anyone else planning to race? The annual PYC Rose Festival Regatta is Sunday, June 2. The first warning signal is scheduled for 1300. Visit <https://sailpdx.org/notice-board/> to register. PYC doesn't want to cancel this, but we need more entries by mid-week in order to hold the event, so please get your entry in ASAP. It's a one-day Regatta, with an all-you-can-eat lasagna buffet available after racing, along with results, trophy presentations, and event shirts available for purchase. Rumor has it that there will even be a small vegetarian lasagna for those who don't eat meat. The PYC bar will be open, so there will plenty of room to meet up with your friends and competitors, have some drinks (and food!), tell a few tall tales or sob stories, and generally have a great time!!!

I hope to see you all there.

Mary Stainsby, PYC Sailing Captain



*Clockwise from left:*

*Junovia was a grand committee boat for a light wind night, when strong current made for some tough starts on the last day of the Spring Series for Tuesday Night racers. No J/105s raced (DNC) and only Myst competed in the Melges class. But at least one boat in each class got through start line and was able to finish. The rest retired or TLEd (Time Limit Exceeded). Clearly, patience and current relief paid off.*

*Life aboard Bad Habit – in light rain and light wind on the second-to-last Tuesday of the series.*

*Gotta love those dramatic Columbia River sunsets.*

*Photos by  
Anna Campagna*



# April 2019 SYSCO Board Meeting Minutes

## **Lynn Eastes, SYSCO Secretary**

*Bill Sanborn, Gregg Bryden, Kelly Dews, Jacqueline Pitter, Bruce Newton, Michael Morrissey, Scott Stevenson, Anna Campagna, Jan Burkhart, Lynn Eastes, Gary Bruner, Cheryl Watson.*

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Commodore, Anna Campagna at 7:02 pm

**Newsletter:** Newsletter will be done this month by Anna. We are actively seeking a Newsletter editor among the ranks of SYSCO members! Anna is soliciting content.

**Webmaster:** Kevin Shattuck has agreed to be the new webmaster and redesign of the new SYSCO site. Kevin was a sailing instructor for 4 years and taught at a large sailing camp on the East coast in North Carolina. He also has a merchant marine license. He is a systems administrator for several companies. He was looking for volunteer opportunities and liked this opportunity because it was within the sailing community.

The most important thing needed for the newsletter is content/media: High quality photography. Go PRO footage, drone footage, solicited from SYSCO Members.

Other plans include:

- Event calendar and create the ability to sync it to the calendar on your phone.
- Figure out analytics (where our website visitors are clicking the most).

The group discussed the fact that we have a Facebook page. Two professional photographers, Dena Kent and Maria Swearingen, provide a lot of content for us for free. Discussion about posting for-sale boats and a gear swap list on the website. Kevin suggests linking to Craig's List, which would give the SYSCO Web site a better search engine ranking. Anna suggested that it would create a lot of work for the Newsletter editor and the Webmaster to allow this kind of commercial posting – is it really worth it?

Action: None required at this time. Input from the community is welcome.

### **Marketing Report:**

Anna has sent emails to several places looking for a marketing intern. So far we have no applicants. We will offer a small stipend. Intern advertisement is on the sailpdx.org website. Gregg suggested that we reach out to the Society of Marketing Professionals. OCSA is putting up the funds for the stipend.

Bruce Newton gave the committee a Grow the Sport Race Report (see attachment at end of this report)

Gregg suggested scoring the race and sending the results out to the guests. Bruce will use Survey Monkey to gather opinions from skippers and participants.

Fox News (Andy's adventures) did filming on one of the nights, and it will air once an hour during "Good Day Oregon" and then will re-air during most of our afternoon and evening newscasts. Gary recommended contacting Oregon Field Guide, however, Anna did a few months ago and they were not interested. Grant's getaway might be another option.

June 30th will transition from South Coast Web to another web hosting company.

Action: Decide on the new hosting company

## **Membership**

(Jan Burkhart)

New members were reviewed:

- JJ Miller with Olson 29. Willing to do mark boat
- Mark Sekol -Santana 35
- Robin Smith – Martin. Help with banquet planning
- Jessie Whitethorn – Catalina 22

Gregg Bryden moved to accept all of these new members. Michael seconded it. Approved unanimously.

We have 12-13 Associate members.

Total of 100 regular full members and 12 associate memberships. Our goal for the year is 120 total and we are at 112.

Further discussion about the fact that the SYSCO membership goes with the boat. The OCSA membership goes with the skipper. If a member has two boats that he/she races, then two SYSCO memberships are required.

**Action: None Required**

## **Treasurer**

(Scott Stevenson)

Scott Reported the following: Currently

\$7632.28 checking

\$ 5128.45 savings

\$12,7860.73 total.

## Racing Report

Races are going well.

There have been some problems with late entries. Gregg is being lenient this time only and will be more rigid for the next series. This really creates a lot of rework.

Issues that have come up: PHRF spreads are very wide, particularly in the C group. Time limits are difficult because of the large spread. Gregg is requesting the ability to extend the time limit from 30 min to 45 min. This would have to be done through the OCSA notice board. Gregg asked if this is something that SYSCO wants to do?

Bruce proposed a motion that gives the race captain the discretion to add 15 minutes to the time limit when he identifies a very large spread in the PHRF speeds. Motion seconded by Anna. Vote: Motion passed

One of the boats struck a mark. We have one bent up anchor and some expense for Ace hardware. North sails repaired the mark. Owner will be charged for the damage. Motion made by Gregg to sum up the cost of damage and send the owner a bill minus the donation. Lynn seconded motion. Motion approved.

Issues with check in sheets. Check in sheets have been used to finish boats. Gregg is trying to address this. Comments about communications between RC and sailors. Gregg reminds everyone that you cannot help sailors, need to keep it professional. No joking, no helping with course, etc.

**Action:** None required

## Other Business

SYSCO is going to do the **Social Event Allowance** this year for fleets. This is a once-a-year grant for a fleet to throw a social event. We will let fleets know and those that respond will get the \$50.

Denny Demore One design racing in September. Looking at Sept 7<sup>th</sup> around the buoy racing with shorter races. Match racing September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Denny, Michael Morrissey and Craig Garrison have been organizing events. They will report back at next meeting and write up general overview of events in May newsletter.

**Dates for 2020 Ranger Nationals:** The date proposed by the Rangers for the 2020 Nationals is the weekend of August July 30 – August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Would align with the second portion of the Delta cruise. Michael suggested adding another day (starting on Thursday, July 29) in case the wind is bad.

Other small issues: Avoid Easter weekend for any races in the future

Meeting adjourned 8:27 pm



Panorama feature on the iPhone camera is so cool!