

JULY 2021

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SMALL YACHT SAILING CLUB OF OREGON

STARTING LINE



Cando June 24 Race - Photo by Pam Sesar

FROM THE FRONT

GREGG BRYDEN – COMMODORE

SYSCO Roars Back to Life!!

It was wonderful to see our members' smiling faces in person at the SYSCO Summer Barbeques. Wow, at the beginning of this year, we had no idea when we could resume full racing and the activities that make being a SYSCO Member such a valuable experience. Now, the Summer Series saw full complements of crews, great Race Committees with flags, course boards, and everything! Hooray!

And we capped off the Series with a couple of super fun Barbeques on the Columbia Crossings Lawn. Many thanks to all the volunteers that came together to feed hundreds of hungry sailors.

Special thanks go out to our Rear Commodore, Anna Campagna, for doing much of the planning, purchasing, and prep work. Membership Chair Carisa Bohus rounded up many helping hands (mostly our Sister sailors from OWSA), and designed a great ice breaker BINGO game that got folks making new acquaintances. The BINGO prize: a very cool bottle opener designed and acquired by Anna! Also Kudos to the deft burger flipping Grill Masters Erik Bodegom and Jim Foster.



Tuesday: Grill Master Erik Bodegom wields a mighty spatula.

FROM THE FRONT

GREGG BRYDEN – COMMODORE

As they say, a picture is worth a thousand words, so here are a few highlights from the Q's.



Thursday: Secretary Sloan Kimball doles out the Bingo prizes.



Thursday: More volunteers!

There is much more SYSCO fun under the sun! The Twilight Series starts right up where the Summer Series left off, and the 27 July SYSCO Soaker will be a fun way to beat the heat. Then the ever-popular Dual Bridge Duel on 7 August will challenge your sailing skills. I hear the Ranger 20s are doing it Single-Handed! Be sure to clear your calendar for the SYSCO St. Helens Race and Cruise 21 & 22 August.

FROM THE FRONT

GREGG BRYDEN — COMMODORE



It is truly awesome what can happen when a bunch of sailors step up and volunteer...

Tuesday: Happy Volunteers



Thursday: And Burger-maestro Jim Foster keeps up!

FROM THE FRONT

GREGG BRYDEN – COMMODORE



Thursday: The line moves quickly...



Your Faithful
Commodore
Gregg Bryden

FROM THE REAR

ANNA CAMPAGNA — VICE COMMODORE

Race Committee Rocks

Race Committee! If Commodore Gregg didn't already get through to you the idea that SYSCO racing happens because SYSCO members and crew step up to volunteer to run the races, I am here to remind you of that fact.

I am also going to let you know that Race Committee can be such a charge! What could be more fun than joining a bunch of friends and worthy adversaries — disparate members of your fleet, skippers and crew members alike — together on a boat that is anchored in the middle of the Columbia River, to support the sport that we love?

Recently I volunteered for Race Committee on both Tuesday and Thursday. It was a tough week to be managing RC because the Offshore took so many people out of the picture. So we made do with a J/24 as a racing platform with four people signed up. (That included one Pancho driver and one mark-puller.) Four is the absolute minimum of RC staff, and really was two people short. But we ran a flawless night of racing because the wind was steady and predictable, and our experience level was high.



Thursday's RC had more staff, but was a little more disparate in RC experience. The wind was at zero when we anchored, and our windex went in circles for a bit before a bit of breeze started to show ripples on the water at around 6:30. At 6:35 we started the sequence rolling with very short courses for all five starts. Well, as many of you know, chaos ensued as the breeze miraculously filled in and boats finished their courses in short order. We had boats finishing on top of one another and in both directions! Had we set longer courses, we might have stretched out the finishes. But if the breeze didn't come up, we would have had a lot of sad faces for lack of races. What to do?

FROM THE REAR

ANNA CAMPAGNA — VICE COMMODORE

Here are some DOs and DONT's for Race Committee:

DO: Look at the schedule and rally your fleet to volunteer for RC a month before you're due.

DON'T: Wait until three days before to tell RC Denny you're having trouble finding volunteers.

DO: Use the radio to let racers know what's going on - barge traffic, clarity on where marks are set in the river, individual over-early sail numbers.

DON'T: Give any racers an advantage by overly-verbose radio chatter. Or tell jokes. Bad or good, no jokes over the radio.

DO: Leave plenty of time to gather your crew and anchor the Committee Boat (anchored by 5:30 is advisable).

DON'T: Be late for your RC duty and hold up the whole works. Unless you have a bleeding head wound. But even then, it's a bummer if you're late.



DO: Read the instructions on the c heck-in and finish sheets.

DON'T: Try to score boats using the check-in sheets. (That's what FINISH sheets are for!)

FROM THE REAR

ANNA CAMPAGNA — VICE COMMODORE

DO: Have two people writing down finish places and times on two (redundant) finish sheets.
DON'T: Neglect to write redundant finishes, even if it seems redundant. Just focus on getting the finish order written down correctly. Because if you get it wrong, you're gonna hear about it later—trust me.

DO: Have plenty of snacks and drinks on board for your RC duty, because you may be out there after sunset.

DON'T: Drink too many alcoholic beverages before your RC work is done, or you're going to make mistakes.

Also, don't bring salad on a sailboat. Lettuce just flies everywhere in the wind. And don't bring red wine on a boat because it stains the gel-coat.



DO: Invite people who don't race to come out and do Race Committee if you're having trouble getting members of your fleet to step up. Because a scribe is a scribe, and you may be opening someone's eyes to the sport that you love and want to share.

DON'T: Blow off your Race Committee duties, because SYSCO is run by volunteers — that means YOU!

Anna Campagna

Rear Commodore

RACING REPORT

DENNY DAMORE— RACE CAPTAIN

Choreographing the Dance

I'll admit that I don't get modern dance or, more fundamentally, how one choreographs a dance and plans out dance steps. It always seemed to me that a dancer's movement should just flow when music starts. My lovely wife has explained to me that I'm wrong, of course, and that the choreography is where all the best dances start – it is the script and the design that leads to the execution, beauty, and emotion of the movement. It wins the competitions. She patiently explains this to me over and over while watching person after person on the show, "So You Think You Can Dance." There is always a sparkle in her eye and a knowing smile on her lips about the grace and dynamics of the different kinds of dances they perform and the choreography that created it.



Melges Fleet at the Start - Photo by Dena Kent

While I do appreciate the leaps and the complicated steps intellectually, I just don't get moved to some emotional high on the elegance of the choreography like she does. But, on the other hand, give me a perfect gybe where the snap, snap of the sheets and the perfect fill of the kite surges the boat forward, and I start to get that metaphorical lump in my throat, maybe even a little wet around the corners of my eye. I understand that kind of choreography. To me that perfectly timed gybe is pure art, pure elegance.

So why am I writing about choreography this month. Well, I think that all our moves as racing sailors are a kind of dance with each other as crew, the boat, the wind, and the water. Every movement we make with our body weight or the tiller or even how we stand over a winch to

RACING REPORT

DENNY DAMORE— RACE CAPTAIN

grind has an effect on the outcome of our race. If your boat is light like the Melges, weight shifts can pay dividends or give you a bad case of the slows. If your boat is big and heavy like, say, Fury, your weight shift may not affect your tack or gybe, but an override from a new crew member who doesn't have the proper winch loading technique can cost you when they can't grind the jib in to the final set.

If we think of choreography as simply coordinated, planned movement, the connection to sailing makes perfect sense. As the helmsperson moves the tiller to make a tack, do they do it at a speed that doesn't burn off momentum, and then does the crew bring it in to a point where the boat can build speed before then doing the final bit of tweaking to gain point? That's choreography. Does the skipper turn the boat downwind slightly just before the douse so the crew can float the asymmetrical's clew clear of the forestay on a port side douse? That's choreography.

When the crew goes to set the chute does the person jumping at the mast have to continually call for slack to be taken up by the pit crew or does the halyard just flow through the jammers? Again, choreography.

And it's not just about big tasks.

Even the small

things need to be planned and practiced so that the smoothness and flow keeps every movement from getting in the way of pace and momentum. Where do I put my hand on this task? Where do I stand? Who grabs which line and when and how is it done? Who moves to the rail first, how far forward do they sit, and then who comes off the rail first and where to they go to build energy into the tack. It all matters. Further, when you get a new dance partner, I mean crew member, they need to get into the groove with each member of the crew



Poncho - Photo by Dena Kent

RACING REPORT

DENNY DAMORE— RACE CAPTAIN

and the driver. Choreograph their moves by talking them through each of their tasks ahead of the need. Demonstrate the move and be clear about the commands that will be used and the pacing of all the key tasks during the start, beat, first set, douse, etc. Leave nothing to chance and plan every move.

So what kind of dancer are you? What about your crewmates? Do you clump around ignoring the beat? Or do you effortlessly move from task to task with no wasted movement and in time to the rhythm of the race and each tack, gybe, set, and douse? Are you late and behind the pace or right there when the task demands? Do you and other crew and the skipper move as one well connected body or as a bunch of disjointed appendages? Watch an old Fred Astaire and Ginger Rodgers movie sometime just to see what perfect timing and flow look like. It can almost similarly look as perfectly timed on a sailboat during a race so long as the choreography has been done way in advance with tons of practice on the water thereafter.



Bite Me - Photo by Dena Kent

One of the reasons we all love sailing is because every single moment something is changing. There is constant movement inside and outside the boat. We hear the whistle of the wind in the rigging and feel the beat of the waves on the hull. Since you already dance to the music of the race whether you think about it or not, why not channel your inner Bob Fosse and choreograph your team to glide and slide to elegant moves and more wins. You'll have the added benefit that you can experience some of the same exhilaration that Astaire and Rodgers felt without having to wear a tux, ballroom gown, or dancing shoes.

See you on the river.

Denny Damore

Race Captain

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR REPORT

CARISA BOHUS – MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

We did it! Two SYSCO Barbeques! JULY 2021!

It takes a lot of people to pull off the magic of two SYSCO Barbeques and I have a lot of gratitude for all the little things everyone pitches in to make it happen! Thanks to everyone for making the picnics fun!

A special shout out to our Grill Masters! Erik Bodegom and Jim Foster! They took on the hot coals for your dining pleasure!

Many cheers to my OWSA sisters who answered the call for help: Melissa Cearlock, Jean Donnelly, Katie Braun, Lisa Pasquantonio and Sally DeWitt!

I also want to recognize the brains behind the BINGO game construction: Gary Bruner, Bill Sandborn, Jan Burkhart, and Anna Compagna! And special thanks to Michelle Joy who handed out BINGO cards, explained the game, and awarded the fabulous bottle opener prizes!

Anna Compagna did the heavy lifting with all the food shopping, transportation, and stuff lugging! And no slouch on the lugging of stuff is Bill Sandborn who brought all the serving tables!

It was so great to actually see everyone! And talk! Sailing brings out the best in barbeques! Thanks for a good time!



Photo by Dena Kent

Carisa Bohus
Membership Chair

SYSCO BOARD MEETING MINUTES

JULY, 2021

There was no board meeting, so no minutes.



Photo by Pam Sesar