

February 2015

From the Commodore

From the Rear

What is a Delta Cruise?

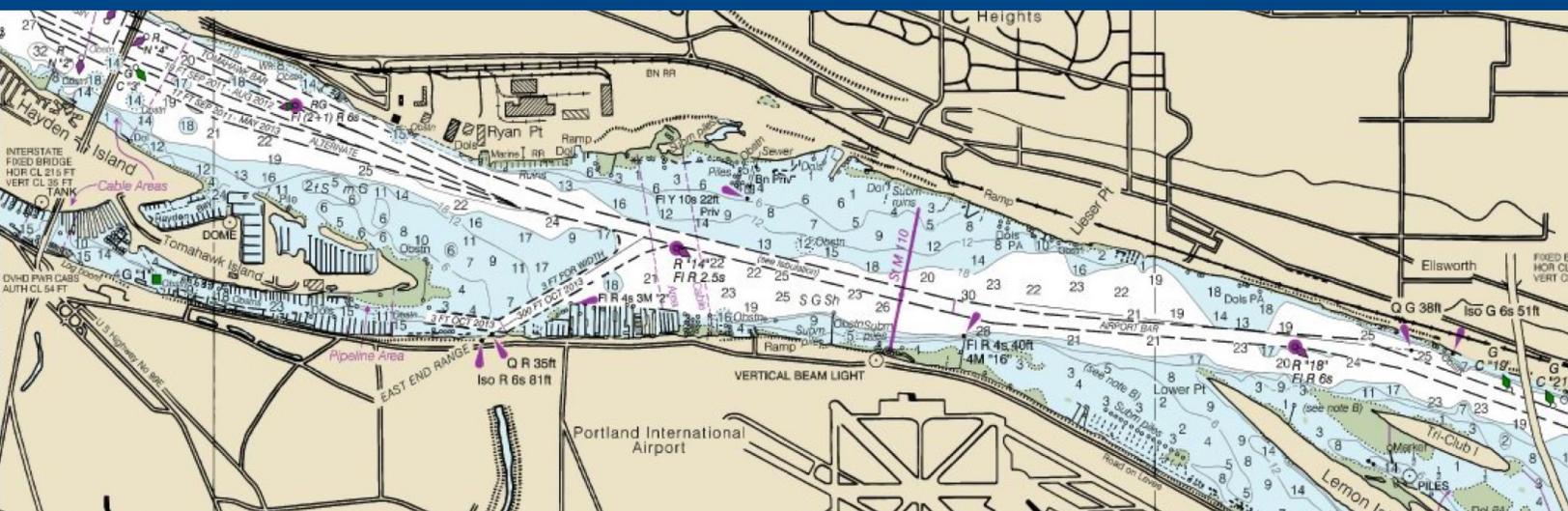
Board Minutes

PRO Opportunity

Poetry ... and more!



# Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon STARTING LINE



# From the Commodore

## Tod Bassham, Commodore

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The lull after the storm: after the twin cyclones of the Boat Show and Fleet Night, now the smiling staff at SYSCO World Headquarters can relax for a little, enjoy sailing on Sundays, and start prepping the boat for the first race of the season: the Daylight Savings Dash, coming this March 8.

Flight Night was a success, marred only by this newbie Commodore's failure to post enough gate-openers, with the result that a few later-arriving members were unable to get in the RCYC gate and attend the meeting. My sincere apologies to those who had to wait or who turned around and left. Lessons learned: line up plenty of gate-openers and post a cell-phone number to call as a backup.

That snafu aside, it was great to see so many SYSCO members, new and old, gathered in one place. We didn't quite reach building capacity, but got pretty close. Many thanks to our new social co-chairs, Tara Powning and Heather Zeiser, for arranging the pizza and soft drinks. Thanks to Gary Bruner, door-keeper, who kept us all afloat. Anna Campagna from OCSA gave us the run-down on the new OCSA membership process, and sold a lot of racebooks. Kerry Poe from North Sails gave us an inspiring talk on teamwork. And then the Fleets elected fleet captains, and some of them discussed whether they wanted to race handicap or level. As it turned out, the only fleet that voted to race handicap was E Fleet. Our Vice-Commodore and Race Captain, Nat Powning, will be working with E-Fleet and E-Fleet wannabes to work out the details before the start of the Spring Series. Contact Nat at [race\\_captain@sycosailing.org](mailto:race_captain@sycosailing.org) if you have questions.

Speaking of SYSCO races, registration is now open for all SYSCO races. Great work, Nat, Scott Stevenson and others, for getting the races posted and on-line registration up and running. Go to [Sailpdx.org](http://Sailpdx.org) and sign up early and often. Early registration is especially important for the Daylight Savings Dash March 8, which will include a staggered pursuit start. If your boat is in the water, or you can find a boat to crew on, you won't want to miss this challenging medium distance race, with two mandatory simulated crew overboard drills, one each on the upwind and downwind legs. Haven't practiced a MOB drill in a while, or under race conditions? Now is your chance.

What else is going on with SYSCO? Well, about 10 people signed up at the Boat Show for our Racing Mentor initiative, which pairs new skippers with experienced racers to show them the ropes. We're in the process of pairing up skippers and mentors, and hope that this will introduce a few lucky folks to the joys and sorrows of racing their boat. By the way, this program is open to current members too. If you are new to SYSCO, or new to racing, and would like to meet with an experienced mentor, give me a shout at [commodore@sycosailing.org](mailto:commodore@sycosailing.org).

But SYSCO is not all about the racing. Unique to paper clubs, we also have a strong cruising arm, led these many years by club Historian Bill Sanborn. Bill usually "organizes" several weekend cruises, as well as the famous week-long Delta cruise down to the mouth of the river in late July. This year, Bill is busy, and can lead only the Delta cruise. He is looking for someone to help organize a weekend cruise or two. No pay, no benefits, not much work, just the fun of cruising with a bunch of fellow SYSCO-tarians. Contact Bill at [cruise@sycosailing.org](mailto:cruise@sycosailing.org) for more details.

Whether on the race course or cruising on the river, I hope to see you out there on the water.

Tod Bassham  
[commodore@sycosailing.org](mailto:commodore@sycosailing.org)

# From the Rear

## Warren Dalby, Rear Commodore

There are some new faces in the SYSCO caretaker family. We have been fortunate to have several people step up in the past few weeks to take over some duties that had been left open.



Nat Powning has taken over the Vice Commodore / Race Captain / OCSA liaison responsibilities, and anything else we can talk

him into. Nat has a tech background, so dealing with Regatta Network, which has been a struggle for some of us, is a perfect fit for him. He races on Elixir and is active in Island Sailing Club's racing activities. He has jumped right into the online set-up work and had the entire season finished in a few days with no help. Nat and his infinitely better half, Tara, just bought Junovia, a Pearson 422. Ask him to tell you about the bridge incident. I'm excited to have Nat onboard. He has already taken over the things that need to be done and much more.

Adrienne Lacavaro has agreed to oversee the needs of Pancho. Adrienne is an East Coast



transplant and spent some time working at the North Sails loft, so she knows how to fix things that we sailors break. You will see her on the race course on Elixir and Second Half. If you were out on D row at Tomahawk Bay moorage this summer, you probably saw her in a cloud of dust or resin fumes working on her first love, a 1963 wooden Thunderbird. The first serious sail she had on Peregrine was the Leukemia

Cup Regatta in September. I got to go along on that maiden race and as soon as the wind piped up we started breaking things. By the end of the race the list of broken stuff got very long. Adrienne didn't have enough things to fix anyway. She's the perfect person to take care of Pancho.



Finding a replacement for SYSCO's social chair, the lovely and really smart Jacqueline Pitter, aka

otterfuzzybutt, wasn't easy but we succeeded. The 2015 social chair is going to be a co-chair arrangement. Tara Powning and Heather Zieser are going to team up to feed us and keep us entertained. Tara races on Elixir and Second Half and skippers in the Island Sailing Club races. She is also a musician, primarily a low brass player on euphonium, but she can perform on trumpet, too. When you are out racing with Tara, you will find that she's more than a little competitive. Tara has some REALLY BIG NEWS, but I'll let her be the one to tell you. Heather found her way on Second Half through an OWSA sail. It was her first time on a sailboat. The next thing she knew, she was on the foredeck racing. During her first season, she has figured out how to handle the whisker pole better than anyone on the river. She has also figured out how to get to the island during the afternoon rush hour traffic on time: ride a bike. When Heather is not on the water sailing, she is in the water fly-fishing, and when she's not doing those things, she likes to dance.

We are very fortunate to have such an awesome group working with us to make your racing time on the river the best it can be. When you see these people, please give them a big "Thank You" for their work.

# What is a SYSCO Delta Cruise?

*Bill Sanborn, Cruise Director*

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In 1984 several of us who had mortgaged the farm to buy a 22 foot sail boat realized that for a summer vacation that year the choice was a staycation, or figure out some way to vacation cruising on the boat we were paying for. The Six Pac series was the perfect option racing the boat to Astoria, but Admiral says “we’re not taking the kids and all the cruising gear and racing every day”. So Plan “B” was looking at the Six Pac itinerary and planning a 100 mile down river cruise visiting where they weren’t going to be, and that is when we were introduced to the lower Columbia River and Warren Slough.

The River runs thru a well defined gorge as it passes thru the Coast Range toward the ocean, and I believe a line drawn between Bradwood and Cathlamet mark the end of the River as it then fills into several channels between low Islands that form the Delta area (see chart #18523) with the main dredged channel along the North shore. The River then joins several other smaller rivers forming four bays in the Astoria area, and finally it drains into The Pacific thru the Columbia River Bar. Our journey is into the islands of the Delta area, and across the Bays to Astoria.

For some of us who have done this cruise over the years it is an annual ritual like Christmas or Thanksgiving that is not to be missed. I have no idea of the number of boats and sailors who have joined us on this Cruise over the years, but each year the group’s dynamics change. We have watched families start with kids in diapers and seen those kids thru college, and now these folks are sharing their love of boating with Grandkids. Those of us who have a long record of making this cruise always get that good feeling, when we have introduced a new friend as a SYSCO Delta Cruisers.

Jump forward 30 years and the Six Pac is no more, but the SYSCO Delta Cruise is still going strong, with each boat following its own Float Plan. We meet on the last Saturday of July at Martin Island, and the cruise officially begins when you join the raft up there. Sunday we will motor, sail, or get towed to Cathlamet where we get showers, have a major party, refresh ice, and resupply for Warren Slough. Monday morning on the dock is always a lot of discussions of what time do we depart Cathlamet for crossing to Devils Elbow at Horseshoe Isl., and for 2014 a high tide of 7.1 feet is at 16:10 hrs. so our goal is to be thru Devils Elbow by 15:30 We will then arrive at the lonely piling (aka: “SYSCO’s Out-Station”) in Warren Slough for a major raft up, and in time for afternoon tea.



SYSCO Out-Station

## What is a SYSOCO Delta Cruise? Continued ...

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This is not a structured cruise, and each boat follows their individual Float Plan and has the options to choose where they want to spend their time. Last year is a perfect example: 15 boats left Cathlamet for Warren Slough and a couple boats went directly on to Astoria. About half left Warren Slough on Tuesday's tide for Astoria, on the Wednesday tide 5 or 6 more boats left for Astoria and Cathlamet, a couple more arrived at Warren Slough to join the remaining raft up for another day and then on Thursday some boats left for Astoria while others were returning to Cathlamet to join boats that had opted to just enjoy time at the Cathlamet docks. Usually by Thursday or Friday boats stop off in Cathlamet as they begin the trip home and plan overnight stops along the way, while some opt to spend more time in the lower River.



Typical Warren Slough raft up (Jay Densem)

The River and the communities along the river are very cruiser friendly and all welcome us to come with good facilities at very reasonable prices. You can find the three most needed items at several locations (showers, ice and fuel); there are lots of restaurant options in St Helens, Rainer, Cathlamet, and Astoria. For those who enjoy time on the hook there are good spots all along the river, Martin Island, Sand Island (Goble), Walker Island, Fisher Island, Gull Island (with experienced guide), Bradbury Slough (Bat Water Cove), Beaver Slough, Welcome Slough, several options among the Delta Islands, Steamboat Slough, or Mott Island.

One caution is to be aware of water depth when leaving the main channel of the river, and know that there is a typical 5 to 7 foot tide change. Over time the river has moved the bottom sand and charted depths of the area are not current, and some buoys have not been relocated to where they should be, or have been removed. We have learned the safe routes for transit with a 6 foot keel, after our surveys made during low tide with dingy and kayak.

Our next SYSOCO Delta Cruise will start on July 25, 2015 with the meeting in Martin Island pond. We invite you to cruise with us for the week, weekend, or join us for the Sunday potluck party in Cathlamet. And if these dates don't work, the river is always open and we encourage you to enjoy this area when you can. And we are always enthusiastic about sharing our local knowledge with those venturing into the Delta.

# So you always wanted to be a SYSCO Principal Race Officer? Now is your chance!

*Nat Powning, Vice Commodore*

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SYSCO has been extremely fortunate the past few years to have a great dedicated principal race officer, Rich Jones, running both the Tuesday and Thursday races for SYSCO Spring and Summer series. However, Rich has to take a break for most of 2015, so SYSCO is looking for two temporary PROs. Why two? Because most of us race our boats on one night or the other. With two, one PRO would run the Tuesday races, and race on Thursday, and the other would run the Thursday races and race on Tuesdays. Of course, if we can find someone like Rich who is available both nights, that will work too.

Compensation is available, commensurate with experience. Interested, but not sure you have enough experience? Talk to us. There are many resources to help, including advice from Rich. The important thing is reliability and consistency across each series.

If we can't recruit one or more qualified temporary PROs, we will go back to the good old days where each Fleet Captain acted as PRO. That works fine, but consistency tends to suffer. To maintain the high standards set in recent years, we'd prefer a dedicated PRO. If you, or someone you know, might be a fit candidate please contact [race\\_captain@syscosailing.org](mailto:race_captain@syscosailing.org), or give me a call at [\(503\) 367-5345](tel:5033675345).



# Board Meeting Minutes

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## Gary Bruner for Don Woodhouse

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The board met at Elmer's, Delta Park on Feb 2, 2015. In attendance were: Commodore Tod Bassham, Thomas MacMenemy, Scott Stevenson, Kris Amundson, Mike Daly, Tara and Nat Powning, Steven Nance, Jules Takashi, Heather Zieser, Michael Nance, George Brown and Gary Bruner.

The meeting was called to order promptly at 1900 and began with a welcome and introductions all around.

### **New Business**

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The first order of business was discussion led by Steven and Michael Nance about their plan to develop new software for SYSCO to use, first for membership data, later, email, and eventually, race information. They are currently underway with developing the first stages. They are searching now for an appropriate domain name and hope to have the site ready for testing within a month or so. It is hoped they will have a site completely ready for operation by June.

### **Treasurer Report**

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Bruce was unable to attend the meeting, so there was no report, though he sent word that there were no outstanding issues with the treasury.

### **Membership Report**

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With Jan's absence, there was no membership report.

### **Race Report**

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Vice Commodore and Race Captain Nat Powning reminded us that Rich Jones is having knee replacement surgery and will not be available to be our paid PRO for the season. Nat will write up an invitation 'blurb' for the upcoming newsletter to see if someone is interested in taking that on. There was discussion about the possibility of hiring TWO individuals: one to handle the Tuesday night series and another for Thursday night, leaving each person free to race his/her own boat one night a week. Please contact Nat, if there is interest in these positions....

March 8 is the Daylight Savings Dash, featuring 2 MOB drills during this pursuit start race. Early entries would be appreciated since the starting sequence needs to be considered. Nat will write up an article for the newsletter and contact OCSA and ask if they can invite folks on their email list. There will be no charge for this inaugural event. Tod will finalize wording for the 'rules' of the MOB drill and include them as an SI for the event.

### **Race Clinic**

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This event, primarily for new racers, is a review of rules, flags and info needed in order to be knowledgeable on the course. Experienced folks are invited to brush up on basic information. It is hoped that Dale Mack will again present, along with his power point, but Tod will ask for a 'color commentator' to assist Dale in tackling more complicated, involved questions from the more experienced sailors in the house.

### **OCSA**

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OCSA website is now up and running live for those who wish to race but don't need a print copy of the race book. Online payment and an e-book are available now....and required for anyone from any club wishing to race in events this season.

### **FLEET NIGHT recap**

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Tod reported good attendance, but also stated that some people were locked out at the gate and not able to get in. We need a good number to call next time for those who arrive late. Also, we need a better sign up system that doesn't assume that everyone coming will want to eat pizza! E fleet was the only fleet that opted to try the PHRF handicap system for the first series to see how it goes. Everyone else opted for level fleet racing. There was lively discussion, but no decisions, surrounding the idea that boats might well be moved from fleet to fleet if they proved to be extremely faster than others....or slower, as the case may be. All this would be in the interest of keeping racing more fair and less discouraging for those who are perennially at the back of the pack.

## **Boat Minutes Continued ...**

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### **Boat Show Recap**

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In spite of the beautiful new booth built by Jim Severs, visitors at the booth still seemed somewhat illusive. There seemed a consensus that we need a bigger HOOK to draw sailors to the booth, not unlike "FREE" ...something. We picked up a few sailors interested in the new Mentorship experiment. They have all been contacted and we are working on pairing those who follow up with an experienced sailor willing to advise. There is still time to volunteer to be on that list. We are also going to contact all SYSCO members who have not raced in SYSCO events to see if they could benefit from having a mentor's advice and help overcoming any angst. Gary Bruner will take the lead on that, with Tod's input. Scott Stevenson will take the lead in printing new paper sign up forms, as the old ones are incomplete. Nat suggests we have a script for booth volunteers, with such information as, "How we are different than CYC", for instance.

### **Social**

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Tara Powning will be speaking with Kell's this week to secure that venue for our annual awards banquet. She's been approved to give them a deposit check.

### **Newsletter**

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Editor Kris Amundson requests articles about fleet night and the boat show as well as any other articles of interest, even news from an individual fleet. Pictures of quality are also needed by Kris. His deadline is the Sunday following each month's board meeting.

### **More New Business**

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The Opening Day Regatta is to be a combined effort with SYSCO and PYC. Since SYSCO collects the entry fees, PYC has requested \$250 to help defray their expenses for their facility and food at the after race party. Since SYSCO uses entry fees to pay for a PRO as well as trophies, there was consensus around the plan to counter-offer \$250 if PYC will provide a PRO for the event.

### **Cruising**

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We have had a number of inquiries from new members, especially, about cruising events. We've

advertised the fact that we DO do cruises, but Bill Sanborn is 'down-sizing' and wants to just take the lead on the Delta Cruise. Scott Stevenson will send a survey out to members to see if we can get volunteers to step up to lead some cruising adventures for any interested people, perhaps up to one a month. It was suggested that we check with the CRYA before scheduling to see which groups have signed up for various locations in the area already to avoid showing up and finding no room at the inn.

The meeting was adjourned at 2030 hours.

Submitted by substitute secretary,  
Gary Bruner

# To Race ...

## From Tod Bassham

### The Rounding

Like a whetted blade  
To windward, clawing  
On the bow, the girl  
Clips one-hand the guy  
Calls o'er her shoulder:

the sharp prow carves  
to reach the mark.  
grips the steel rail,  
in the pole jaws,  
"Ready for launch!"

At the zone the helm  
The overlap, bears down  
Against the attack,

points high to break  
to shut the door  
steers for the mark.

Rounding, mast hauls hard  
Until the bright sail  
Trim hauls sheet and guy,  
Crumpf! The deep chute fills,

hand over hand, heaves  
is mast-headed.  
spreading wings wide.  
broad-shouldered.

Steel and sinew take  
Loads to winch and hull.  
The bow lifts, stern sinks,  
Rises on a plane,

the strain, transfer  
On the wave-top  
and the sleek hull  
effortlessly.

### The Broach

The gust hammers the raceboat  
Top of the wave. In his hands,  
The tiller go slack, he knows  
Has no grip in the wave-froth.  
As the boat yaws, twists, tumbles  
The spinnaker gyres and spins,  
The boat onto its beam-ends.  
Wash the cockpit, overtop  
And flood the boat's buoyant heart.

Rise, rise she will not. The wind  
down. presses her sails down,  
No mercy there, nor pity: Only what good men  
Can do to aid each other when maelstrom rules all.  
Two men are in the water, The rest lie tumbled  
Where fate left them. Only one can reach the jamméd  
Mainsheet. No knife, keen-whetted, lies at hand, but strength  
Comes with fear, and one  
massive  
heave  
breaks free the sheet.

Now the heavy-laden main  
And she rises, O she stands,  
Water streaming from her back  
Swiftly order is fashioned  
Hauled aboard, the tiller manned;  
Flogging sails taught to obey.  
Fills with an almighty crack!  
Again to helm and hand. Now  
She pursues the fleeting foe.

# Dates to Remember

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**TSF Safety At Sea  
Seminar**  
March 15<sup>th</sup>

**Daylight Savings Dash**  
March 8<sup>th</sup>

## From the Editor

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**Kris Amundson, Newsletter Editor**

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January brought us a neat SoS race attempt in heavy fog. On Shamrock we fired up the radar for some practice identifying objects. We had some barges parked out in the channel as well. Some folks anchored, some motored in circles, but in the end race committee was convinced to start and call a race to get those of us slogging it in this fog at least a DNF point for the day. The fog seemed to be just on the river; while driving up MLK home to NE the fog parted up the hill and Portland itself was having a nice, sunny day.

