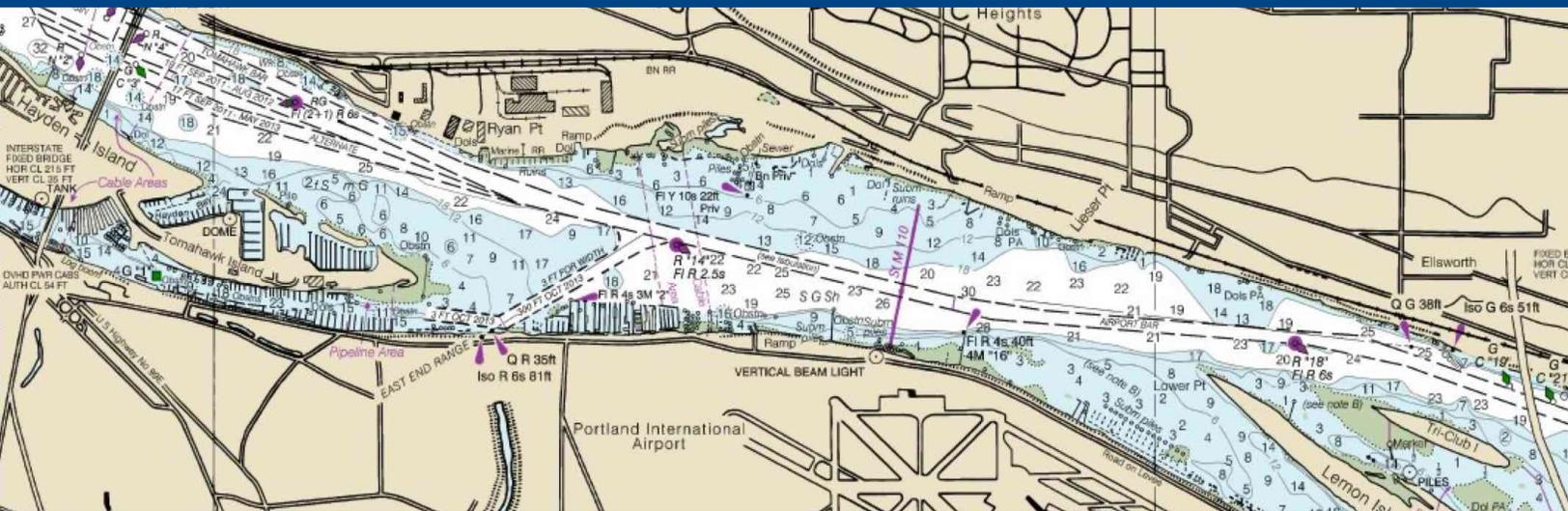




Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon STARTING LINE



Cal 20 Fleet, racing in good wind on May 5, 2016. Photo courtesy of Ray Terrill.

From the Front

Nat Powning, Commodore

It might be a testament to your Commodore being more of a figure-head than a real contributor. Or, perhaps you're blessed with a very capable leadership team. Whatever the reason things have been going fine while I've been largely absent for the past month. Thanks to Bruce and Gary the prop issue with Pancho has been settled and he's running great. Bruce and his team have done an excellent job kicking off the new racing season with relatively few hiccups. And, we're starting to line things up for weekend events on the horizon.

Since I've already held up this newsletter edition long enough I'll save for the next one a write-up on how I discovered that it's not necessarily smoother "sailing" on a large luxury power yacht in big confused seas than it might be on a smaller sailboat. Besides the relief of finally reaching flat water, crossing the bar came with quite a treat of watching the Oregon Offshore fleet head the opposite direction at 5:30 Thursday morning. I wish every boat good breeze and a safe sail to Victoria.

For now I'd like to share that we have a couple excellent core volunteer spots available. If you have any interest in either technology or boats the Webmaster and Pancho Engineer positions offer great opportunities for you to give back to your Portland racing community. For the real skinny on what these jobs entail corner me the next time you spot me at a social event, or drop me an email or call any time.

Fair Winds and Following Seas



Cal 20 spin run on May 5, 2016. Photo courtesy of Ray Terrill.

Bringing Up the Rear

Tod Bassham, Rear-Commodore

One of the better parts of being rear-commodore, and hence surplus to the requirements of the service, is that I get to lift my gaze from the hurly-burly and day to day focus of pretending to run an active racing and cruising club, and spend some time thinking about the long-term perspective, or what the philosophers, when deep in their cups, call *sub specie aeternitatis*. Of course, in the long run we are all dead, but sometimes I find myself sitting around, drinking beer, and wondering where will SYSCO be in one year, five years, ten? Generally, the bottom of the glass holds no answers to my questions, but this time I did catch a glimpse of something that I hope will turn out to be a new and exciting twist on an old SYSCO tradition.

Yes, I'm speaking of the venerable St. Helens Race/Cruise, to be held this year on August 27, the weekend before Labor Day weekend. Every fall for many generations, SYSCO-tarians and their guests have chosen to migrate northwest toward the charming riverside burg of St. Helens, to celebrate the end of another great season of racing and cruising. This free event, with its unique blend of casual racing and slightly more serious cruising, is also a great way to introduce friends and potential new members to the club.

As long-timers know, the St. Helens Race/Cruise starts off with a friendly 15-mile race, sometimes with a rabbit start so the race captain can join the fun. Usually a water cannon fight breaks out somewhere around the Sauvie Island nude beach. I think correlation but not causation is at work there, as I am not aware that water cannon fights cause nudity or vice versa. Anyway, after a few hours of trading tacks and water-cannon broadsides, the fleet passes the Warrior Rock lighthouse, which marks the finish line for those compulsive few who care about such things. The fleet rafts up at the St. Helen city docks, a well-maintained free facility. Here, each participating skipper is awarded two commemorative wine glasses, and the serious socializing and imbibing begins. The compulsive types will attempt to boast about their racing prowess, which usually ends with everyone else politely shoving them into the river. After a while, the party breaks up and groups walk into town for dinner at one of St. Helens' restaurants. The next day, the fleet arises in whatever manner they are capable of after the night's festivities, have brunch or lunch or whatever is the appropriate mealtime when they awake, and then disperse towards various fall cruising destinations, or head home after a satisfying weekend.

Hard to improve on that basic scenario, but we'll give it a try. One big difference this year is that SYSCO will award its racing trophies at the OCSA Tropical Party, rather than at SYSCO's own awards party. This change has many consequences, some good, some not so good. A good consequence I think is that the St. Helens Race/Cruise will now assume its rightful place as the culminating club-specific social event of the season for hard-core SYSCO members, a last chance for us to let down our hair amidst our fellow members. So what can we do to make the St. Helens Race/Cruise an even better party?

Well, SYSCO has rented the gazebo there at the St. Helens waterfront park, so we can host a potluck dinner, and maybe honor some members with special club awards, like Sailor of the Year. Afterwards, the guitars and ukuleles might come out for an impromptu music jam and Jimmy Buffett marathon. If for some reason you can't sail that weekend, but still want to pick up some commemorative wine-glasses, receive any club awards, or just join the party, well, St. Helens is only half an hour's drive from Portland.

Saturday, August 27 seems like a long way off, but *sub specie aeternitatis*, it is just around the corner. So put Saturday, August 27 on your calendar for the SYSCO St. Helens Race/Cruise, plan your potluck, bring your guitar or ukulele, and let's have another great SYSCO party.



Spring Evening Series, May 5, 2016. Photo courtesy of Ray Terrill.

Racing Report

Bruce Newton, Vice Commodore/Race Captain

The SYSCO Spring Evening Series is well underway. We have eighty six boats registered between the Tuesday and Thursday series. The winds have been light for the first few weeks and the unusually warm weather has accelerated the melting of the snowpack resulting in high water and fast current in the Columbia. The combination of light wind and strong current has made for some challenging evenings for both racers and race committees. But at least it hasn't been raining. Let's hope our normal blustery weather returns soon.

SYSCO reestablished a committee for racing this year and it has been working very well. The committee consists of Bruce Newton, Randy Poff, Lynda Davis, Jerry Armstrong, Nat Powning, and Tod Bassham along with ten Fleet Captains. Everyone has been pulling together to bring high quality racing to the community. There are always opportunities to help out and, if you would like to learn more about what it takes to put on races, please contact me.



Pancho doing Pancho things. Photo courtesy of Nat Powning.

Please register early for the SYSCO Summer Evening Series. And it is always a good idea to double check the list of registrants at sailpdx.org after you register. Occasionally something goes wrong at the Regatta Network site and a registration fails to process correctly. The deadlines are May 29 (for the Tuesday series) and May 31 (for the Thursday series).



Rafting up on a windless race night. Photo courtesy of Nat Powning.

Upcoming Dates to Remember

**SYSCO Spring
Evening Series
(Tues & Thurs)**

April 19 - May 26

**PYC Beer Can
Race**

May 20

**RCYC Medium
Distance Race**

May 21

RVYC Swiftsure
May 28 - 30

**SYSCO Summer
Evening Series
(Tues & Thurs)**

May 31 - June 30

CYC Beer Can
June 3

**PYC Rose Festival
Regatta**

June 4

**OWSA Race Clinic
& Regatta**

June 6 - 27

OWSA Beer Can

June 10

**SYSCO PCF
Beer Can**

June 17

**SYSCO CC Dual
Bridge Duel**

June 18

RCYC Beer Can

June 24



Bite Me racing on May 5, 2016. Photo courtesy of Ray Terrill.

SYSCO Board Meeting Minutes – May 2, 2016

Don Woodhouse, Secretary

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Bruce Newton (sitting in for Nat).

Dual Bridge Duel is just 6 weeks away as is the Prostate Cancer Beercan.

Attendance

Tod Bassham, Don Woodhouse, Bruce Newton, Jan Burkhart, Heather Ziezer, Scott Stevenson, Mike Daly, Warren Dalby, Lynda Davis.

Membership (Jan Burkhart)

We are at 108 members. Two new members were voted in. Stewart/Kathy Carter and Dana Sibia.

Treasurer's Report (Scott Stevenson)

We have received about all of our membership income for the year, with the exception of a few new members and late payers. This puts us slightly below our projection, mainly due to the decline in numbers of members and partly due to a lower percentage of Gold Level memberships than anticipated.

Other Business

We are looking into another email system.

We anticipate receiving some Race Income from non-members entering SYSCO events.

Open Board Positions

Webmaster , Pancho Engineer

We had a major expenditure from the Pancho R&R account for the outboard but there still is money there.

Race Captain's Report (Bruce Newton)

We have 86 registered for the Spring Series and have been challenged by the light/no winds, strong current and darkness. Remember, If you feel the conditions present a safety hazard to you and your crew, withdraw from the race.

The Volunteer RC program is doing great. Big thanks to Nat, Tod, Lynda, Randy and Jerry.



Photo courtesy of Nat Powning.