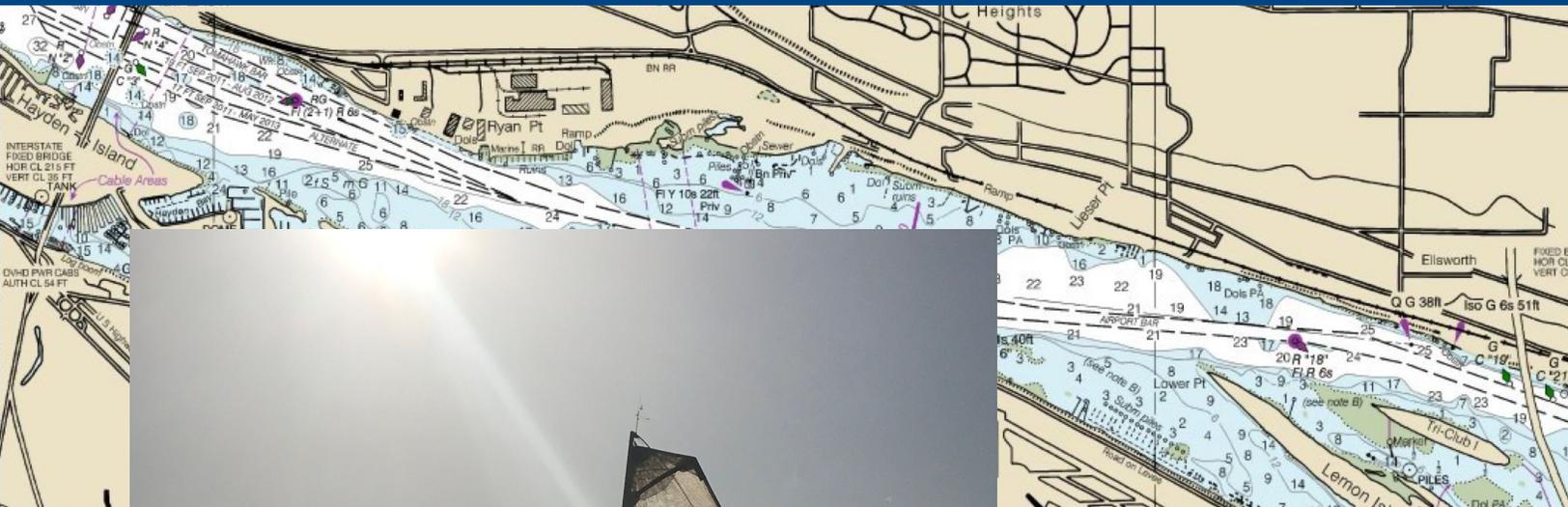


Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon

STARTING LINE



Surge's back lit spinnaker on the SYSCO Summer Series race on June 5. Photo courtesy of Sara Morrissey.

From the Front

Michael Morrissey, Commodore

The summer season has begun and I've had a chance to experience SYSCO sailing from a different perspective. The first Summer Tuesday race I was a crew (rather than skipper) for son Tomas as he very ably took the helm and steered us around the course finishing a solid third. A great start, light winds, a barge in the middle of the race (which we went the wrong side of – my bad) and the usual congestion at the leeward mark. It was fun and although there was some good natured ribbing of me being a better skipper than a crew, a good time was had by all. Then, Thursday night had me on Pancho doing mark duty for the race. I had an able assistant, Regis, who did the heavy lifting of setting the marks and an experienced RC with Thomas MacMenemy and volunteers. Although the race was abandoned for lack of wind, it was an excellent demonstration of why SYSCO works so well. As the SYSCO web-page simply states: "the mission of the Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon (SYSCO) is to provide Columbia River sailors the opportunity for racing, cruising, and recreating at modest cost." I would probably add that in many subtle ways, SYSCO promotes sailboat racing through personal experiences and volunteerism. The personal experiences can come in many forms, whether that is teaching a family member or friend what racing is all about, or setting up a partnership with a fellow sailor to race a boat that might be out of your financial reach all on your own. There are many variations on this theme and no shortage of innovative ways to get folks racing on the Columbia. The volunteerism aspect is what really makes SYSCO work. Fleet Captains do a great job getting sailors to volunteer their time and sometimes their boats as platforms to make sure that courses are laid out ahead of time, boats checked-in and finishes scored. Somehow it all works, and although there can be a few glitches, usually brought on by the capriciousness of wind, current or barges, good racing gets done.

There is a new/old event that was requested by a member and added to the SYSCO Beer Can races this year. We are bringing back the single-handed race that will challenge the skill-set of all races new and old. This will be held June 16 and we will combine it with the regular Beer Can race. There will be two starts, the first will be the standard Beer Can with the normal 14-2-14 course, and then 5 minutes later the Single-handed Beer Can will leave the gate with a shorter course but featuring several turns at the buoys to test their skills. Check with the RC for the course buoys. It should be fun and like all Beer Can races there are no awards but bragging rights at the bar afterwards of who can handle the Columbia all by themselves.



J/24s rafted up on a windless June 7 race. Photo courtesy of Kelly Dewes.

From the Rear

Bruce Newton, Rear Commodore

Summer is here with beautiful balmy evenings and sunsets approaching 10pm. Now is a great time to have a Fleet party! Part of SYSCO's mission is to build the sailing community and toward that end we will reimburse up to \$50 the cost for a Fleet to hold a social event. Just keep your receipts and give us a short description of your Fleet event.

Summer Series BBQs

The SYSCO Summer Series BBQs are coming up. These follow the racing on Tuesday, July 10, and Thursday, July 12, and mark the end of the Summer Evening Series. The BBQs are held on the lawn at Tomahawk Bay Marina. We supply the food and soft drinks; bring your own beer and wine. Naomi Reichmann, chair of the Social Committee, is looking for volunteers to help set up and do the cooking. This is a really fun event to volunteer for. Contact Naomi at social@syscosailing.org.

Beer Cans

The Beer Can races have moved! They are now held on **Saturdays** at 5pm. These are great opportunities to take friends out to experience sailboat racing. They are also great opportunities for folks new to racing to learn the ropes in a more casual setting. Gather up some friends and family and take advantages of the Beer Cans. There is a Beer Can scheduled for nearly every Saturday in June, July, and August.

SYSCO Single Handed Beer Can - June 16

SYSCO is throwing in a wrinkle for the Beer Can we are holding on June 16. After the regular start a second start will be held for single-handed boats. Get some similarly matched boats together and test your skills in single-handed racing. See the Notice of Race at <http://sailpdx.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/SYSCO-SH-BC-6-16-18.pdf>



The J/24s raft up on the river under anchor during a no-wind race on a recent Thursday. Photo courtesy of Jenn Thompson.

Notifications and Upcoming Dates to Remember



Eight Bells for Rod Dawson

Rod Dawson was a long time SYSCO Sailor and served as Commodore in 2007. He started in the Ranger 24 Fleet, and his final boat was the J-30 "Sugar Plum."

Rod passed last month at his home in Seaside.

SYSCO Summer Evening Series

(Tuesdays and Thursdays)

June 5 – July 12

PYC Mauni Elliot

(Wednesdays) June 6 – 27

SYSCO Single Handed Beer Can Race

June 16

OWSA Beer Can Race

June 23

RCYC Beer Can Race

June 30

OWSA Beer Can Race

July 7

RCYC Beer Can Race

July 14

SYSCO Summer Twilight Series

(Tuesdays and Thursdays)

July 17 – Aug 30

SYSCO Delta Cruise

July 28 – Aug 5

SYSCO Short Handed Soaker

July 31



The Ranger 20 fleet enjoyed a lovely double rainbow at the dock after the last race of the SYSCO Spring Series was abandoned due to lack of wind. Photo courtesy of Derek Wildermuth.



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

Introduction

Michael Morrissey, Commodore

Mike Stainsby began sailing on the Columbia in 1973 on a San Juan 24 in the IOR Quarter Tom Fleet. After moving to Seattle and sailing on a variety of boats he moved back to Oregon in 1998 when he bought the Martin 24, Kermit, with his wife Mary in 1998 and has been racing in SYSCO and area races since. He is a US SAILING judge, and Team Racing Umpire often traveling to Seattle to referee races.

Sailing the Down Wind Leg

Mike Stainsby

This year we have been reading articles about different aspects of racing: preparing the boat, sail trim, starts and the windward leg. This month we turn the upwind corner and start sailing downwind. The downwind leg actually begins before you get to the weather mark; the downwind course is planned, the spinnaker halyard is free (not trapped), the spinnaker is hooked up and ready to go, and on the final approach, the spinnaker pole or sprit is set in preparation for hoisting the spinnaker. As the boat gets close to the mark, the crew assume their new places, round the mark, launch the spinnaker, and the boat heads for the leeward mark.

Once the mark has been rounded and you begin the downwind leg, the crew that has been sitting on the rail now have lots of things to do: trimming the spinnaker, trimming the main, adjusting the spinnaker pole or the tack line, just to name a few. One additional job we have on our boat is the watcher. The watcher is tasked with watching behind the boat for wind puffs and changes, where the competitors behind us are going, and if we are being attacked from behind. This job cannot be done by the driver, as he or she needs to be watching forward. There is a lot of information that should constantly be passed around on the run downwind. The watcher should be describing what is happening behind the boat. The trimmer should be talking to the driver about the pressure in the spinnaker. The driver should be letting the crew know where he or she wants to head so the sails can be trimmed properly.



Photo courtesy of Sara Morrissey.

What makes the boat go faster downwind? Mostly it is a matter of paying attention to lots of inputs: the wind, sail shape, and crew position.

The wind: How strong is the breeze? You should know whether you can soak down (run more directly downwind) or stay heated up (more of a reach) for the best boat speed and best course to the next mark. Keep an eye on your competitors to compare your speed, especially if sailing in a one design fleet or with other similar boats.

Sail shape: Keep the spinnaker properly trimmed as much as possible. I like to keep the pole back as far as possible to project the spinnaker away from the boat in cleaner air. I also like to keep the vertical centerline of the spinnaker heading the way I want to go so I don't have to oversteer the boat, which slows us down. Keeping the spinnaker tack at the correct height is important, either with the spinnaker pole or with the tack line. Don't forget the main on the downwind run. It can be shaped for the downwind leg by easing the cunningham and/or the outhaul, adjusting the boom vang and not just easing the main as you approach the weather mark.

Crew position: Keeping the boat in the right trim angle can keep you fast. Too much weight at the back of the boat in anything less than heavy air drags the stern through the water, not over it. In lighter air it may be best to have the crew way forward to lift the stern out of the water and reduce wetted surface.

Keep paying attention to the information your crew is giving you so that you can get a better picture of what is happening around you without having to look around (which can distract you from driving your best course).

As you approach the leeward mark, plans need to be made for the best way to approach the mark, what kind of spinnaker takedown you want to do, and who is going to do each job. Talking this through on the downwind leg is very important, especially if you have crew who are new to sailing with each other on your boat. The exit from the mark needs to be planned as well, whether you want to do a quick tack or wait a little while to give the crew a chance to clean up the boat (putting the pole away or retracting the sprit, making sure the jib sheets are clear to tack, etc.).

All this activity shows how busy the boat can be on the downwind leg, but the better the crew handles boat and the more information they provide helps optimize boat speed and performance on this leg.

I almost forgot the most important part of sailing the downwind leg: the spinnaker trimmer's eyes. It is his or her eyes on the spinnaker that keeps it full and flying. Think I'm wrong? What happens when your trimmer stops looking at the spinnaker? It collapses. The trimmer may have only glanced away for a few seconds, but the spinnaker is no longer trimmed correctly. Make sure that your trimmer does not take his or her eyes off the spinnaker so it stays as powerful as possible at all times.

See you on the course.



Racing Report

Jeff Eastes, Race Captain

The Magic of Racing

The 2018 Spring Series is in the books and I can take moment and breathe... well not really because Summer Series is off and running. As Race Captain, I made it through Spring Series successfully and still haven't a clue as to how SYSCO consistently puts on races with 30 - 40 sailboats every Tuesday and Thursday evening. It's like magic. How does it all happen? I am not completely sure yet, but among ALL the SYSCO volunteers who make racing happen, there are 3 volunteers who need to be recognized: Gary Whitney, Randy Poff, and Dennis Damore. Not listed in order of importance, these 3 wizards of racing make everything work every Tuesday and Thursday evening to the delight of the SYSCO racers.

Wizard #1: How does the scoring magically appear on SailPDX.org every week? You can thank Gary Whitney who sifts through finish sheets and makes order out of chaos. He then posts the scores so we can brag and walk around all big-headed, or make us feel that we need to get out on the river and practice more. Gary, THANKS for ALL you do.

Wizard # 2 and 3: Randy Poff and Dennis Damore are equally talented wizards. They are the Race Coordinators. Behind the scenes, they coordinate with Race Captains to magically make a Race Committee Boat appear on the river every Tuesday and Thursday evening. This RC Boat casts its powers over the river and makes all of the sailboats do wonderfully choreographed dances on the river every week.

Thanks to these 3 wizards and their magical powers SYSCO sailors have come to depend on!



Photo courtesy of Anika Olsen.

A Word About Rules:

It is unlikely that I will become an expert on the "Rules of Sailing" in my lifetime. When studying the rules, I quickly get overwhelmed and disinterested. It is so easy to get lost in "The Racing Rules of Sailing for 2017-2020" or Dave Perry's "100 Best Racing Rules Quizzes". It is no wonder new sailors get a fearful look on their faces when you ask if they would be interested sailboat racing. New sailboat racers need a few basic guidelines/rules that will keep them safe and not damage their boat or that of someone else. I ran across the "Handy Guide to the Racing Rules" put out by the US Sailing. These Principles of Sailing caught my eye:

Sportsmanship, fair sailing and misconduct:

“A fundamental principle of sportsmanship is that when you break a rule you will promptly take a penalty, which may be to retire. You must play fairly. If you do not, or if you bring the sport into disrepute, you may be penalized severely.”

I find I understand the rules better if I can apply them into a real life situation. Consider this situation, which I have found myself in fairly frequently:

You are in a boat named *Stardust*, sailing dead-downwind toward the leeward mark. *Sally Mae*, is on the same course. Your boom is over the port side and you are clear astern of *Sally Mae*. *Sally Mae* has her boom out over the starboard side. Your boat, *Stardust*, is blanketing *Sally Mae*'s wind and is quickly gaining on her. Neither of you has changed course in the five or so boat lengths prior to this incident. You finally catch up with *Sally Mae* and your bow strikes her transom. You wonder if you were in the wrong and will be protested or if you had right of way.

According to *Dave Perry's Best Racing Rules Quizzes*: *Sally Mae* can be penalized under Rule 10 “on opposite tacks” and Rule 14 “avoiding contact”. *Stardust* is on starboard tack (boom over the port side) and *Sally Mae* is on port tack (boom over the starboard side). The right-of-way rule for two boats on opposite tacks is Rule 10, “a port-tack boat will keep clear of a boat on starboard tack.” *Sally Mae* failed to keep clear, so she breaks rule 10.

Additionally, Rule 14, “Avoiding contact” comes into play here. Rule 14 requires that boats avoid contact whenever reasonably possible. *Sally Mae* could have avoided the contact by moving out of *Stardust*'s course. Also, since *Stardust* struck *Sally Mae*, she too violated Rule 14. *Stardust*, however, is exonerated because she had right of way and also because the contact did not cause damage or injury. (Reference: Dave Perry's 100 Best Racing Rules Quizzes, page 20.)

Though the above situation was a practical example, I can summarize the rules as this:

- “Helping those in danger: You must give all possible help to any person or vessel in danger.”
- “Decision to race: Deciding whether it is safe for you to start or continue racing is for you alone, not for the people running the race.”

I remember these rules as play fair, help out, and be responsible. Ok, I can do that! Even when racing? Now all the rules, HELP!

Happy Racing!



Yeah Baby wrestling her spinnaker back under control. Photo courtesy of Anika Olsen.

February 2018 SYSCO Board Minutes

Jan Burkhart

The meeting held at Elmer's, Delta Park was called to order at 7 PM by Commodore Michael Morrissey. Members present were: Bruce Newton, Scott Stevenson, Jeff Eastes, Denny Damore, Mike Daly, Thomas MacMenemy, Bill Sanborn, Jacqueline Pitter, Naomi Reichmann, and Jan Burkhart.

Membership Report

Chair Jan Burkhart reported that SYSCO membership remains at 119 members, of which 108 are regular and 11 are associate. No re-order of burgees is needed. SYSCO has 11 new members thus far in 2018.

Financial Report

Scott Stevenson reported \$8,079 in the checking account and \$3,691 in the Pancho/emergency reserve. Total assets are \$11,770. Income of \$317 was received from Regatta Network from race registration fees.

Racing

Race Captain Jeff Eastes reported the Spring Series is complete. A big thank you and great appreciation goes to SYSCO Volunteers Gary Whitney for scoring, Denny Damore and Randy Poff overseeing Race Committees (RC) and Pancho issues, plus Bruce Newton and Michael Morrissey for Regatta Network support. SYSCO Racing is a team effort. The "Dog House" system to correct registration or certificate problems was successful.

Registration for SYSCO Summer Series shows 42 for Tuesday night – up 4 boats from the 2017 Summer Series. Thursday night currently has 52 boats registered (compared to 58 last year). Thursday registration is still open as of this date. Fleet Race Committees are making plans for fleets requesting two races on Tuesday or Thursday race nights.

Barge traffic interaction with racing was discussed. Barges signal all river traffic, not just SYSCO racing yachts. Each individual Race Committee should announce on channel 72 the presence of commercial traffic when first seen. In addition it was requested Jeff Eastes, SYSCO Race Captain, send an email to all Fleet Captains directing RCs to announce Commercial traffic.

There was a discussion on whether Race Committees should announce "over early" boats on the radio. Our current guidance states that this is not required and is optional. The official method of providing notice is one

horn and a flag signal. Although announcing sail numbers on the radio is a nice courtesy, there was concern that it could become an expectation and failure to do so could become grounds for protest or complaints. The decision was to leave our current policy in place. Each boat is responsible for knowing if they are over early.

Two protests are pending. Hearings have been delayed. Volunteers Craig Daniels, Randy Poff, Nat Powning and Mike Stainsby are the OCSA Protest Representatives. There was some confusion about where information about protests is being posted and if it is up to date.

Social

Naomi Reichmann, social chair, confirmed the SYSCO summer BBQs are July 10 and 12. Volunteers set up and grill burgers at the Columbia Crossings lawn for the series-ending barbeques. Scott Stevenson will access a contact list of volunteers from the SYSCO Directory. Bruce Newton will email volunteer requests. Volunteers are to respond to Naomi. Jeff will help set up on Tuesday so Naomi can race that night.

Michael Morrissey reported that Frank Bocarde, the PYC Commodore, is supportive of a joint SYSCO/PYC event in September or early October. Michael will pick a set of dates so that we can start lining up a speaker. Michael will contact VESTAS, wind energy with U.S. headquarters in Portland, who sponsored a Volvo team. Bruce Newton will talk to West Coast Sailing who sponsors several world class youth sailors. Denny Damore will contact Andrew Kerr of Olympia, Coach of U.S. Sailing, who has worked with the Cal 20 fleet in the past.

Newsletter/Social Media

Jacqueline Pitter, newsletter editor, requested photos from anyone's recent moments on the river for the Starting Line newsletter. She tries to keep the photos in the newsletter from the past month, and always can use more images. Photos of "Buoy 2" are particularly needed for the Racer's Corner Banner. Please submit photos including cell phone shots to editor@syscosailing.org. Please include the name of the photographer to attribute photo to. Bill Sanborn is forwarding a photo and Denny Damore hopes to arrange for a photographer from the Washington shoreline. Naomi Reichmann requested a news article on the upcoming SYSCO Barbeques to include a request for volunteers. The Cal 20 Fleet offered

to periodically share news items from their Fleet newsletter.

Regarding SYSCO Social Media, Jacqueline reported that the old SYSCO Facebook page (circa 2014) has finally been removed. There are currently 144 followers of the new page with the reach going well beyond those followers (e.g. the post in October reminding people to get awards banquet tickets reached over 530 people). If you use Facebook and aren't following the SYSCO page, you should! A clever video created by the J/24 Tuesday night RC is available for viewing there at the moment. An article on the SYSCO Facebook site will appear in the next edition of the newsletter.

SYSCO St. Helens Race and Cruise

Aug 25-26. A discussion ensued over the evening meal – the traditional BBQ-potluck in the park vs. a group dinner at the Klondike Restaurant. It tends to be difficult to get grills to the park for a BBQ-potluck. Michael Morrissey will

Speak to the owner at the Klondike as to feasibility. It is estimated 20 boats will create 100 hungry sailors.

Fleet Reports

The Cruising Fleet enjoyed a Spring Series Social gathering with 40+ people. Bill acknowledged Stephanie Walker, Fleet Captain, as doing a great job. SYSCO is reimbursing \$50 of the expenses for the social event. The Ranger 20 Fleet now has Fleet burgees. They are planning to keep sailing into September on Thursdays informally after the Twilight Series completes. The Cal 20 Fleet has plans to combine Beer Can Races with Chalk Talks and mentoring for new skippers in their fleet. They are also planning to run their own additional short course practice races. Other fleets wishing to participate should contact Denny Damore. It was suggested this may occur in September.

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 PM.

Submitted by Jan Burkhart for Secretary Don Woodhouse



Definitely a good breeze during the J/24 fleet RC duty. Photo courtesy of Anika Olsen.