

SEPTEMBER 2021

FROM THE FRONT

LIFE IN THE
SLOW LANE

FROM THE REAR

GETTING TO KNOW ...
GARY WHITNEY

RACE REPORT

FOOT, OR
FLIGHT (TO
THE RIGHT)



SMALL YACHT SAILING CLUB OF OREGON

STARTING LINE



Thank you, Bill! - Photo by Dena Kent

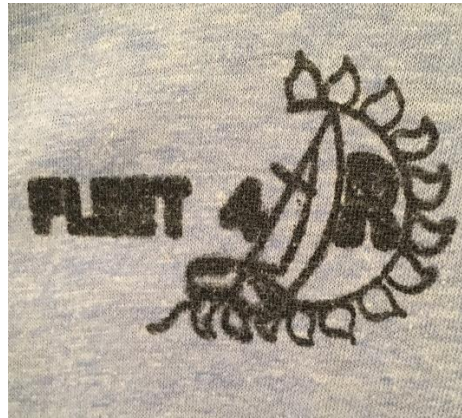
FROM THE FRONT

GREGG BRYDEN – COMMODORE

Life in the Slow Lane

I never cease to be awe struck by the incredible speed of the Melges 24s as they race upriver on a screaming plane. Such grace, adept crew coordination, so much adrenaline pumping speed! It looks like fun as I putter along in my Ranger 20 hoping to get 4 knots-- maybe 7 surfing a wave. So why haven't I succumbed to bigger (faster) boat-itis? Why have I raced the same little Ranger 20 for so many years?

True enough, the boats are inexpensive to own and maintain appealing to my frugal (cheapskate sailor) side. Yes, there is the Ranger's near 50 years of tradition and history and well-developed class rules and technical bulletins. The local lofts and rigging shops know our boats well. Our PDX R20 Google group has become the de facto means of information sharing for boats throughout the country. Of course, there's the legendary safety of Ray Richard's design that has seen me through a dismasting and swamping proving "Molly Brown" is still unsinkable. Then there's that groovy 1970s era Fleet 4 Logo:



But above all that is the ***great group of fleet members*** -- PDX Ranger 20 Fleet 4-- that keeps me happily in my old boat. It was the Fleet that found me a mentor to get me over racing phobia. It was the Fleet that came together to help me build a new mast. It is the friendly competition that rarely protests and talks out issues at the docks, trades tips on equipment and tactics, and help each other patch up the dents and dings. It is the Fleet that hosts the MOTO Award (Named for David Paligo, Master of the Obvious) and impromptu post-race dock parties. I'm impressed how the common interest in these old boats has brought together a diverse group of people of all ages together and how much fun we have together.

FROM THE FRONT

GREGG BRYDEN – COMMODORE

I suppose the other fleets have the same camaraderie. The Cal 20 Fleet sure has its act together. The Catalina 22's play nice together. What's the secret sauce for fleet coherence? I think it is a handful of things:

- Regular communications through the Google Group
- Being together on the docks for post-race discussions (partying)
- Meeting in person (pre-COVID) a couple of times a year
- A friendly competitive “hey this is just about having fun” attitude
- Having a large pool of boats in the area to recruit new racers.

So how is your fleet doing? Do you have a means for regular communication within your membership? Do you ever meet socially outside of the docks? Maybe now is a good time to talk to your fleet members and start lining up your 2022 Fleet Captains and Fleet Race Captains. The whole Fleet is greater than the sum of its boats.

Now I wonder what the R20 Class rules have to say about putting a foil on my swing keel?



Can't this thing go any faster? – Photo by Dena Kent

Your Faithful Commodore

Gregg Bryden

FROM THE REAR

ANNA CAMPAGNA — VICE COMMODORE

Getting to know... Gary Whitney

Anna: The only thing I truly know about you is that you've been the official SYSCO Scorer for the decade plus that I've been racing in Portland. Tell me about yourself.

Gary: I've been doing scoring since I took over the Sailpdx Web site from Bill Barton, way back in the late 80s or early 90s. Now Ailona and I take care of it as a team.



Anna: What drew you to do this tedious, math-centered work? What was your occupation?

I worked for 34 years for Dictaphone. A Dictaphone is a device that, for example, a doctor would talk into, and their voice is transcribed and converted into a text document on their computer. I started out as a field service technician way back when they had the plastic belts. By the end, when they downsized and I retired, I was taking care of speech recognition. That job paid the mortgage. Sailpdx was the fun part.

Anna: How did you get into sailing?

Gary: When I first started racing I was boat partners with a guy and we co-owned a Catalina 27. He wanted to get a Harley Davidson Motorcycle, so we sold it and I bought a Catalina 28.

Anna: It's only a foot longer than a 27! What's the deal?

Gary: Well, the 27 was a little cramped. It's a foot taller and a couple of feet wider. Now I can stretch out my arms and not hit the sides. She's called KA-SL. Kathy Ann and Sally LeeAnn are the names of my daughters. It's pronounced "castle." Just makes it easier if you need to get a hold of the Coast Guard because you're sinking.

Anna: Who made up your crew?

FROM THE REAR

ANNA CAMPAGNA — VICE COMMODORE

Gary: Jim Breck was on the boat for quite a while. I picked up a lot of crew at Rose City Yacht Club. I don't race anymore, but Linda and I take her out for cruising up and down the Columbia.

Anna: How long have you been a member of RCYC? Tell me about your history with RCYC.

Gary: Since '99. Got my twenty years in. I am currently and have been for several years the Member Insurance Records Tracker. It lets me get my hours in, sending and receiving lots of emails and updating spreadsheets. I initially joined because I wanted a more secure place to moor than Tomahawk Island. I also was looking for a community of sailors. Naturally I got drafted to be on the board, and went through the Chairs, up to Commodore. Boat ownership is one of the requirements. Members have to do a certain number of work hours per year - eighteen hours. We take care of our own docks, and dredge it. We've got a new dredge so we keep the moorage to seven feet. In normal years we have scheduled work parties, where you can meet the other members and have a little fun with it. There are scheduled social events on holidays, like Christmas Ships. Some days it's damp and some days it's a little nippy, but it's always lots of fun.

Anna: What are the fees to belong to RCYC?

Gary: Depends on the length of your boat; for me it's about \$440/quarter. The initiation fee is a bond, which means you get it back. It ensures that people stay current on their moorage. The social side of membership is very important to us. The email forum is useful, so that boaters with questions can connect with other boaters, and we are soon to take it off Google Docs and tie it into the RCYC Web site.

I do the scoring for SYSCO and then I change hats and put on my Webmaster hat and post the results on Sailpdx. I do scoring for most of the clubs. Early on we did most of the scoring basically by hand. Then I came across a program called Sailwave. If I put in the right numbers, it gives me the right answers. I can change a fleet from one-design to PHRF time-on-time and it does all the calculations for me. I tried using Regatta Network, but it's somewhat cumbersome.

Anna: What motivates you to stay on as a volunteer? Are you grooming a successor?

Gary: It gives me something to do. I enjoy being involved. Keeps a toe in the pool, so to speak.

FROM THE REAR

ANNA CAMPAGNA – VICE COMMODORE

Anna: What do you do when the results aren't what some of the racers remember? I have been on RC when there were multiple racers finishing on top of one another, in both directions, and it seemed simply impossible to get them all down correctly. That's why assigning someone on RC to take down redundant finishes is so important.

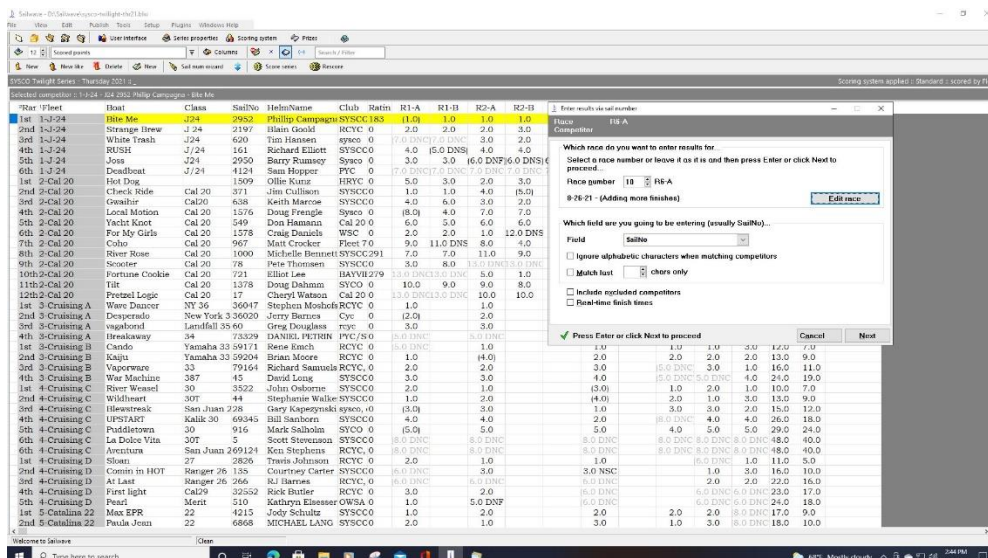
Gary: Well, It's also important for people to write clearly and legibly! The Race Committee feeds me the numbers. If they get complaints, they ask me to straighten it out. RC is the interface between me and the racers. Denny and Gregg contact the fleets to see if they can help us sort it out and recall the finish order. Then I re-crunch the numbers, and say "Well, that looks sorta right..." And if it's not, then the editors will tell us about it. That is, all the racers. One time in the Ranger fleet we changed the results four times.

Anna: What advice would you give to Race Committee volunteers?

Gary: Pens do not work in the rain. Record accurately times and sail numbers. Each fleet's start times. Times are everything. Redundant finish sheets are extremely helpful.

Anna: Are you grooming a successor?

Gary: I wish I had someone who wants to take over and learn the process, but so far I haven't had any volunteers. It's not too difficult. It's a little bit time consuming. You used to have to have a mathematical mind, but now if you can click on the squares and fill in the sail number and the start and finish times, the program takes care of the rest of it.



Star #	Fleet	Boat	Class	SailNo	HelixName	Club	Rating	R1-A	R1-B	R2-A	R2-B
1st	1-3-24	Blue Me	J/24	2952	Phillip Campagna	SYSCC 163	11.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
2nd	1-3-24	Strange Brew	J/24	2197	Ilain Good	RCYC 0	2.0	2.0	2.0	3.0	3.0
3rd	1-3-24	White Trash	J/24	620	Tim Hansen	spcc 0	6.0	DNF	DNF	3.0	2.0
4th	1-3-24	RUSH	J/24	161	Richard Elliott	SYSCC 0	4.0	5.0	DNF	4.0	4.0
5th	1-3-24	Joia	J/24	2950	Barry Runney	Spcc 0	3.0	3.0	6.0	DNF	6.0
6th	1-3-24	Deathbeat	J/24	1121	Sam Hopper	RYC 0	7.0	DNF	DNF	DNF	DNF
1st	2-Cal 20	Hot Dog	Cal 20	1509	Ollie Kuntz	HRVC 0	5.0	3.0	2.0	3.0	3.0
2nd	2-Cal 20	Check Ride	Cal 20	371	Jim Cullison	SYSCC 0	1.0	1.0	4.0	5.0	5.0
3rd	2-Cal 20	Gowish	Cal 20	638	Keith Marcoe	SYSCC 0	4.0	6.0	3.0	2.0	2.0
4th	2-Cal 20	Local Motion	Cal 20	1576	Doug Frengle	Spcc 0	8.0	4.0	7.0	7.0	7.0
5th	2-Cal 20	Yacht Knot	Cal 20	249	Don Hamann	Cal 20	6.0	5.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
6th	2-Cal 20	For My Girls	Cal 20	1578	Craig Doucals	WSC 0	2.0	2.0	1.0	12.0	DNF
7th	2-Cal 20	Coho	Cal 20	967	Matt Crocker	Fleet 70	9.0	11.0	DNF	8.0	4.0
8th	2-Cal 20	River Rose	Cal 20	1000	Michelle Bennett	SYSCC 291	7.0	7.0	11.0	9.0	9.0
9th	2-Cal 20	Sevener	Cal 20	78	Pete Thomsen	SYSCC 0	3.0	8.0	13.0	DNF	DNF
10th	2-Cal 20	Fortune Cookie	Cal 20	721	Elliot Lee	BAYVIE 279	13.0	DNF	DNF	5.0	1.0
11th	2-Cal 20	Tilt	Cal 20	1378	Doug Dehann	SYC 0	10.0	9.0	9.0	8.0	8.0
12th	2-Cal 20	Pretzel Logic	Cal 20	17	Cheryl Watson	Cal 20	13.0	DNF	DNF	10.0	10.0
1st	3-Cruising A	Wave Dancer	NY 36	36047	Stephen Moshels	RCYC 0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
2nd	3-Cruising A	Deepenelo	New York 3	36020	Jerry Barnes	Cyc 0	12.0	12.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
3rd	3-Cruising A	vagabond	Landsail	35 60	Greg Douglas	ryc 0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
4th	3-Cruising A	breakaway	34	73329	DANIEL PETER	PYC 750	8.0	DNF	8.0	DNF	8.0
1st	3-Cruising B	Yamaha	33	39171	Brian Moore	RCYC 0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
2nd	3-Cruising B	Kajia	Yamaha	33	59204	Brian Moore	RCYC 0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
3rd	3-Cruising B	Vaporemur	33	79164	Richard Samuels	RCYC 0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
4th	3-Cruising B	Way Machine	387	45	David Long	SYSCC 0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
1st	4-Cruising C	River Wessel	30	3552	John Osborne	SYSCC 0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
2nd	4-Cruising C	Wildheart	30T	44	Stephanie Waller	SYSCC 0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
3rd	4-Cruising C	Ilseweest	San Juan 2	285	Gary Kaspernski	spcc 0	15.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
4th	4-Cruising C	UPSTART	Kalix	30	69345	Bill Saubren	SYSCC 0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
5th	4-Cruising C	Puddletown	30	916	Mark Scholin	SYC 0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
6th	4-Cruising C	La Dolce Vita	30T	5	Scott Stevenson	SYSCC 0	8.0	DNF	8.0	DNF	8.0
6th	4-Cruising C	Avventura	San Juan 2	269124	Ken Stephens	RCYC 0	8.0	DNF	8.0	DNF	8.0
1st	4-Cruising D	Shoni	27	2828	Doris Johnson	RCYC 0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
2nd	4-Cruising D	Comet in HOT	Ranger 26	135	Courtney Carter	SYSCC 0	8.0	DNF	8.0	DNF	8.0
3rd	4-Cruising D	At Last	Ranger 26	266	RJ Barnes	RCYC 0	8.0	DNF	8.0	DNF	8.0
4th	4-Cruising D	First Light	Cal 29	22562	Rob Butler	RCYC 0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
5th	4-Cruising D	Pearl	Ment	510	Kathryn Elieser	OWSA 0	1.0	5.0	DNF	5.0	DNF
1st	5-Catalina 22	Max EPR	22	4215	Jody Schulte	SYSCC 0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
2nd	5-Catalina 22	Paula Jean	22	6868	MICHAEL LANG	SYSCC 0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0

Sailwave

Anna: Does your wife have your Sailwave username and password?

Linda Shaw (Gary's wife): On your deathbed you'll be writing these down!

Anna: How long have you been married?

Gary: Quite a few years. Since 2006. Let's see...

FROM THE REAR

ANNA CAMPAGNA — VICE COMMODORE

Anna: You're supposed to be a math whiz!

Gary: OK, 15 years. It's just Linda and I and two Scotty dogs and a Maine Coon cat.

Anna: Have you done any ocean racing? And how did you get into sailing in the first place?

Gary: Three offshores and the accompanying Swiftsures. I don't go over the bar in anything under 30. I grew up in St. Helens as a teenager. Dad had a 23-foot Owens power boat and we harassed the folks in the Sound. Dad got a 17-foot runabout for me to play on, and I had this Skagit. When I was invited to wear a green uniform for a few years I got out of boating. Dictaphone transferred me all around the country. In Connecticut my oldest daughter joined the Sea Scouts. They had a 36-foot sloop. She volunteered me to go along as an advisor. So I proceeded to sign up for sailing lessons. So I could know what the kids were doing and try to keep them from hurting themselves. Then I got transferred back to Oregon and I got involved in Island Sailing Club and SYSCO for the social events and racing. I became an ASA certified instructor and taught for ISC in Portland and Olympia.

Anna: What about your involvement in OCSA?

Gary: SailPDX was originally hard coded, straight HTML. I had to learn enough not to do any damage. Then we made the move to Wordpress. The board wanted more functionality and prettier pages. Alone Dundore brought in a developer and we moved it over to Wordpress.

Anna: Closing thoughts on sailing and scoring?

Gary: It's something that keeps me out of mischief... I am what I am. I like doing things the old fashioned way - in the old days we were scoring by hand, taping the results to the window at West Marine. We've come



Gary racing KA-SL in 2011 - Photo by Dena Kent

FROM THE REAR

ANNA CAMPAGNA — VICE COMMODORE

a long way. Sailpdx started as Leftblank.com. That was Bill Barton's page. If you click on each one of the letters, the pull-down, one of the letters went to what is now Sailpdx. It was interesting in the early days! Leftblank is still active— Bill Barton is down in Mexico.

Anna: What kinds of other hobbies do you have that might get you into mischief - are you on TikToc? Are you a tinkerer?

Gary: Linda just convinced me that we need a travel trailer. One of the places on our list is to visit Utah. We're in a time share, and we can go all kinds of places, but we need to go to places where we can take the critters. Building computers is one of my other hobbies. Tinkering? YES!

Anna Campagna

Rear Commodore



Sailing on Sunday, September 19, 2021 - Photo by Rick Samuels

RACING REPORT

DENNY DAMORE— RACE CAPTAIN

Foot, or Flight (to the Right)

One of the benefits of being on Race Committee is that you get a ringside seat for starts, mid-race, and finishes. On the last Thursday night of the Twilight Series, I watched as boats in the first three starts made the same tactical move after the gun, and saw that they all suffered the same tactical fate, namely, a quick trip using a variation on Mr. Peabody's Way Back Machine to, well, the wayback. (For you youngsters, see The Rocky and Bullwinkle Show on Wikipedia for the reference.)



Sailing on Sunday, September 21, 2021 - Photo by Rick Samuels

What did they do wrong? In the abstract, nothing. In fact, they made textbook tactical moves. They were slightly late and, unfortunately, started second row immediately behind another boat in the first row (see wind shadow last month), and then, following the tactical rule of “can’t live here,” they each then tacked to get to weather and clear air (they went right). The problem in varying degrees for all three fleets was that the puffs and puffettes (a word I coined, I must say) were consistently downriver from where the start line was positioned. More importantly, to the north of the start line (the right) there was a persistent hole in the breeze or the breeze was at least much lower in pressure than mid-river/down-current.

And so, one after another, first the J-24s, then the Cal 20s, and then two boats in the Cruising Fleet A, all tacked their boats into that right side vacuum, stalled out, got little to no boatspeed to initiate a tack back to starboard to clear their air, and then entered a mode of a slow drift until they could get turned onto the new board. Meanwhile, the lead boats had clear air, puffs and puffettes, and current

RACING REPORT

DENNY DAMORE— RACE CAPTAIN

pushing them toward the weather mark. The net result of their flight to the right, as I said, was racing from the wayback.

My question then for you and me to consider is: If you are in their position after the start, when is it more advantageous during this critical weather leg to foot off, hard, than to take flight to the right to clear your air? As always, it depends. Tacking and going right, most of the time, will pay off. However, in the conditions described above, maybe not. One supporting decision criteria, for me, relates to advice I got from Bill Huseby during the few times he skippered on our Cal 20, Three Stooges, when Fred was out of town. As I remember it, he stated that one of his key tactical goals on the river (we have current you know) was to sail on the board that was more directly down-river/down-current to the mark than some angle to it unless there was a significant reason, such as very puffy, shifty breeze or a huge lift off the Washington shore, to tack to the beach or multiple times. He liked to sail long first legs as much as possible rather than play the shifts given how long it took for the Cal 20 to come up to speed after a tack.

His approach, then, would support the notion that if you are right behind a boat at the start (second row) and are either unsure about the pressure to your right or sure it is dead to the right, then a good option could be to foot off hard with speed to gain some gauge so you're not blanketed by the first row boats and wait for the opportunity to go right when the puffs come. You would then be using the current to your advantage, waiting for the right breeze/puff to tack, and, most likely, if there are any boats to weather, duck to get to the right. The idea is to stay close in the hunt with the first row folks by staying in the same breeze as the first row until you can get enough pressure to make the tack pay off when you tack back to starboard after you've cleared your air.

Some would say this is a fools errand and that you'll never break through the lee of the first row boats, and will then end up on the outside of the wheel with little upside from giving away that precious height to weather. But, I've seen Craig Daniels take this foot-off approach and make it pay off handsomely. The key is to use it when you're reasonably sure that the breeze is going to be significantly better down course, say the first third of the leg, than it is to the right/weather immediately after the start. If the breeze is even across the course and down course you are not seeing any significant puff sequences, then taking flight to the right to clear your air is probably the the right move. It's also the right move if there are a bunch of boats to leeward of you so that you would have to go significantly left to break free of the first row line. [BTW, none of these exceptions were occurring on Thursday for any of those fleets.]

RACING REPORT

DENNY DAMORE— RACE CAPTAIN

Moreover, if this tactic is to work, you must not be afraid of footing off to get boatspeed. You must establish either enough of a bow forward position or gauge to be out of the blanket, and then tack as soon as the breeze gives you the opportunity, i.e., the breeze to weather is healthy enough to make your double tack work (first to port, then back to starboard after you clear your air). If you do it sort of half way, well, you make your life even worse than just doing the port tack in the first place. You'll end up on the outside of the wheel, as noted above, going slow, being blanketed, and still having to tack, most likely, down-speed into the crappy air you didn't want to be in when you made your first decision not to tack immediately – ask me how I know.

How do you avoid all this decision-making in the heat of the start? Clearly, don't put yourself in that position in the first place. It is better to be a bit farther down the line with clear air than to fight for the pin and end up in the second row, pushed over the line to be OCS, or closed out at the pin so you have to restart. The other prevention to making a bad decision is to pay close attention to the breeze down the course before the start. Don't just look once or do a single "head to wind" to get the right end of the start line sussed out and then forget about it. Rather, check every couple of minutes before your sequence to see what's happening ahead. Then, when you are in your sequence, check a couple more times to know what to do if you are a bit late and stuck behind someone. On that final run to the line remember that taking flight to the right if you're late might be wrong and, if it is, no amount of pleading by Sherman to Mr. Peabody to use his wayback machine to change the past will bail you out.



Photo by Dena Kent


RACING REPORT

DENNY DAMORE— RACE CAPTAIN

2021 PYC Robert A Smith Regatta
Date: October 2 - 3, 2021

Plan to stop by Portland Yacht Club after racing each afternoon to have a drink with friends and share stories about your adventures on the race course. Results will be available at the club after each day of racing, and trophies will be announced following Sunday's races.

Register at www.sailpdx.org
Boats registering before 6:00 PM on September 16th will receive a \$5.00 gift certificate for food or drink at PYC, so be sure to get your registration in early!



See you on the river.

Denny Damore
Race Captain



Photo by Dena Kent

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR REPORT

CARISA BOHUS – MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

No report this month!

Carisa Bohus

Membership Chair



August 26 Race Committee - Photo by Anna Campagna

SYSKO BOARD MEETING MINUTES

SEPTEMBER, 2021

No board meeting this month.

Respectfully submitted –

Sloan Kimball

SYSKO Secretary



Photo by Dena Kent