
ChaNNels

The Newsletter of the Sailing Club of Washington

July 2001

Special Announcement:

Due to the difficulties of publishing over the fourth of July Holiday and Staff availabilities (Kelly is computerless, Kim is MIA, and I'm sailing), the paper edition of ChaNNels may not arrive in your mailbox before the monthly meeting. Please pass the word to fellow members who may depend on the paper edition to remind them of the meeting and other SCOW events. Thanks! -Larry G.

July Speaker

Have you heard talk about the Parks Department closing down the Belle Haven Marina? Are you wondering what it could mean to sailors in the Washington, DC area? Find out at our monthly membership meeting, Monday, July 9th, when Captain Fred Wilson, the president of Friends of Belle Haven, will talk about the issue and how it could effect boaters' access along the Potomac River.

The program will begin at 7:30 PM, and, as always, food and fun conversation will start at 6:30 PM at the American Legion Hall, 400 Cameron Street, (around the corner from Gadsby's Tavern), in Old Town Alexandria.

Thank you to Womanship founder Suzanne Pogell who addressed our June meeting, and offered to make discounts available to any club members who signed up for classes in Annapolis. If you have any ideas for speakers, please email me at vice@scow.org.

Commodore's Log

This month's log will talk about two parts of our club program -- Bay activities and the racing program.

First, the Bay. Because our club's boats are kept at the Washington Sailing Marina, you may think that we only sail the Potomac River. However, Bay activities have been an important part of the club's program for a very long time. While the size of the "Bay fleet" has varied over time, our members currently keep about 20 boats on the Bay, and we have a full schedule of activities for the Bay skippers and their boats. However, it is difficult to involve general members who do not own Bay boats in that program.

Since many of you have expressed an interest in Bay activities, River and Bay Director Jon Allen has targeted the August 11 - 12th Bay raft-up on the Wye River as an event when the club will

encourage members to charter at least one boat. The club will not pay for the boat -- the members chartering will do that -- but Jon has been researching charter opportunities and will help make the arrangements. We are hoping that this will expand our club's Bay program and let more members join in the Bay fun. Please contact Jon directly if you are interested. This will be a wonderful opportunity to experience Bay sailing, which is entirely different from the sailing you are used to in our smaller boats on the river. It is great fun to sail for an extended distance without constantly tacking, for example. You've seen those sailboats on the Bay, now you can join them!

Next, racing. Now in its second year, our racing program has been a great success. Our two cruising boats, Rebecca and Psycho, skippered and crewed by teams of club members, have been very competitive in the Daingerfield Island Cruising Fleet Tuesday night race series. And, our Tuesday evening Flying Scot races have been equally successful, drawing between one dozen and two dozen members every week to the Marina for informal races in our three Flying Scots. Some evenings, other members have put in their own boats to join us.

If you have never been aboard a sailboat in a race, I encourage you to come out on a Tuesday night and hop aboard a Flying Scot. Our races are informal and fun. However, once you've raced, you will not look at sailing the same way again. Concepts that you may only have read about will suddenly become extremely important. Even if you just come along for the ride as "rail meat" you will gain a greater appreciation of the skills that make a good sailor.

Take something as simple as the rules of the road. It is one thing to remember "starboard over port" when another sailboat is approaching at a leisurely speed from a long distance away. It is quite another to be making split-second right-of-way decisions in the moments before a race starts, with several boats tacking and jibing at the same time in a limited space. Everybody on the boat has to keep watch and tell the skipper of boats that must be avoided or that do not seem to be avoiding you. In this pre-start mayhem, everyone's favorite word seems to be "Starboard," generally bellowed as loudly as possible.

While safely maneuvering your boat through the mayhem, the skipper also is checking the wind and the course. The skipper is trying to decide the best end of the starting line to be on when the "start" signal is given -- the side that will give the best chance of reaching the first mark with as few tacks as possible. In addition, someone on board has to be watching the time, so that the boat is at the starting line just at the start, but does not get there too early or late.

Once the race starts, you will gain appreciation for the importance of sail trim. When you are out for a pleasant afternoon sail, a bit of luffing is perfectly acceptable. In the middle of a race, though, it usually means that you are not getting the maximum power out of your sail. If you are handling the jib sheets, your eyes will be fixed on the jib tell-tales, as you make constant adjustments to account for changes in wind or course. After a few races, you will understand better how the boom vang, outhaul and mainsheet are used to adjust the mainsail in different situations and how the jib and the mainsail work together to power the boat.

OK, racing Scots in the lagoon is not the America's Cup finals, but you are learning and using the same skills as Dennis Connors uses. The informal sailing that we do on Tuesday evenings is a

good way for novice sailors to get more time on the water, or for more skilled sailors to practice sail trim or other skills. No sailing skills? Well, it is impossible to overestimate the importance of skilled ballast. You don't need to know the racing rules to be a skipper -- we race for fun. All you have to do to join in is to come down on Tuesday evenings.

So, here are some ways to round out your sailing summer -- charter a boat with a few SCOW friends and join the August 11-12th Bay raft-up and try your hand at the Tuesday night Scot races.

Fair winds and following seas!

SCOW Telephone HotLine Help Needed

Robert J. Bruening

The SCOW has a telephone "Hotline" that has recorded summaries of upcoming activities for the club. It allows people to leave messages to contact the club or its officers for more information. Assistance is needed to update the outgoing messages, and to respond to messages left in the voice mail boxes. Here's a chance to help the club from the comfort of your home. You can check the hotline at any time of day or night, about once a week.

To volunteer, call the hotline at 202.628.7245 and press 4 before the end of the message to go to the audition line. There is no prompt for 4 in the message that answers the call, but it will work. Since the quality of telephones varies a lot, please call from the telephone that you would use to update the messages.

River Activities

Jon Allen

We have had a great series of river cruises so far this summer. I still want to encourage other boat owners in SCOW to participate. Please, contact me at river@scow.org or 703-921-3171 if you want to crew or skipper.

The next river cruises:

July 6th
August 3rd
Sept 7th

Bay Activities

Jon Allen

Here is a first hand account of the Memorial Day raft-up from Jack Schwartz, which went well despite the bad weather:

"Odyssey went out for a short shake-down Saturday in the rain, and returned to the dock to re-fasten a loose bow pulpit (another legacy of shoddy work done by First Mate). We (Beth Bacheldor, Donna Cohen, and myself) shared our dinner with George (the livaboard from the next slip).

Sunday we had a great sail over to St. Mikes, and we met Jack Goodman and Nikki on shore. They had anchored Cat Morgan in San Domingo Creek. After a short visit, they returned to check the boat (since a storm was coming across the Bay). We visited the shoppes had some crabs and beer, and returned to Odyssey for dinner. There were a couple of serious showers during the night, and we swung at anchor, but awoke in pretty much the same place. Monday we returned to Mayo, with a nice close reach in Eastern Bay, followed by drifting and motoring the rest of the way home."

The next major raft-up is August 11-12th. This is the only time in the raft-up schedule where Pat Derry's boat is available. I hope to get quite a few boats to participate.

North Fleet: Shaw Bay, Wye River, Eastern Bay

South Fleet: Honga River

Happy Cruising!

Skipper Coordinator

Joan O'Kane

On Sunday, June 24th we had a Checkout Day that was as close to perfect as it can get! We had ideal weather conditions, great food, and a 100% success rate for new skippers. Congratulations to the 14 skippers who qualified on the Flying Scots!

New paid up skippers for the Flying Scots for this month (including Checkout Day) are: Seth Allen, Bill Alley, Rosemarie Alley, Natalie Beckman, Alex Bromen, Chris Chubb, Donna Cohen, Aileen Cooney, Fritz Fischer, Steve Linke, Mark Litherland, Frank Ostrander, Ben Porter, Pat Seaton and Sara Slocum.

Many thanks to our Checkout Skippers Liz Bruening, Dick Dyer, Larry Gemoets and Jim Metcalf. Checkout Day would not have been possible without them.

Special kudos to Chef I Gloria Spilker and her Chef IIs Bill Clark (by choice) and Jeremy Spilker (by default). Thanks to them, the Checkout Day picnic was a taco bar that received rave reviews - especially the rum cake for dessert!

And in other news...

The two questions I am asked most often are and "How do I get boating privileges for SCOW's boats?" and "Do I have to take SCOW's training class to become a skipper?".

SCOW's qualification process includes both a written test and an on-the-water checkout. The written test is open book and you can use any reference you need to answer the questions. The test packet includes all of the SCOW-specific policies and procedures that you need to complete the test. It also includes a checklist of skills that you will be expected to demonstrate during the

on-the-water checkout.

You don't need to take SCOW's training classes to qualify as a skipper. If you've taken a class somewhere else or have prior sailing experience, you can quickly learn "The SCOW Way" of rigging, launching and storing club boats by having a tutoring session with one of our volunteer tutors. A tutoring session is a great way to familiarize yourself with the SCOW boats as you practice the skills on the checkout checklist. You don't have to do everything perfectly, you just have to be able to do it safely!

If you'd like a copy of the Skipper Packet, send me an email at skipper@scow.org indicating whether you want to qualify for the Flying Scots or the cruising boats (or both). Please include your mailing address.

I'm always happy to talk to potential skippers, so if you have any questions, please let me know.

Social Activities

Matt Gaston
Your swingin' social chair,

Waterfront Dining Night

Twenty-four SCOW members made the trek to Stoney's Crab House in Broomes' Island on June 9 to eat crab cakes, enjoy the beverage of their choice and luxuriate in a beautiful night on the Patuxet River in this picturesque outdoor setting. Admittedly, I'm biased, but it seemed like everyone had a good time, especially those drinking Stoney-ritas, their own blue variation on the famous drink, with a crab claw garnish. The crabcakes were great as expected and the only thing to mar the event was the fact that they were out of steamed crabs that night. But nobody went hungry. We may have more waterfront dining out nights if folks are interested, so let me know what you think. And of course, stay tuned, and keep your eye on the e-mail.

Crab Feast, August 4, Washington Sailing Marina

One place that WON'T be out of steamed crabs this year will be SCOW's annual crab feast! But we need your help to pull this off! I'd like to pull together a committee of dedicated crustacean lovers (and maybe a few who don't) to make the event the success it can be.

SCOW Secretary Gloria Spilker has already graciously agreed to let us utilize her truck to pick up the crabs, and what we need are some other folks to handle the remaining logistics of the event, including the following jobs: - collecting money for advance ticket sales (remember, this event requires folks to pay in advance, so we can make sure to have enough crabs for everyone) - non-crab food coordination -- for corn, chicken and other stuff we can prepare at the marina to go WITH the crabs (or substitute for the crabs if you're so inclined); and finally - beer and beverage duty -- to make sure that our attendees don't go thirsty

Please e-mail me asap to help with this. Remember, many hands make light work and we can always use more volunteers!

Stay tuned for details on our Smith Island trip, along with other fun stuff!

Racing News

Bill Bernhards

Judging from the turnout on Tuesday nights, our small boat racing is successful. We've had full boats for every race. The crew coming down have been eager to learn how to sail and race. Everyone has helped ready the boats to sail and then put them away afterward.

The skippers have been great in giving everyone a chance to take the helm, many of them for the first time. Even people who are not club members have shown up and then asked me how to join the club.

I encourage other club members who own boats to join us. I guarantee there will be crew waiting for you. As the season progresses, we are getting more and more members who want to join in. Soon there may not be enough boats, so please join us!

I want to thank a few people who have been there to lead these races; Jay Weitzel, Dave Carstens, Alex Broman and Dale Eager have really done a good job to make this weekly event work for everyone. I'm sure by the time you read this, others will have led some of the races and I will be thanking them in the next newsletter. I hope all of you had fun racing and, in most cases, teaching others the joy of sailing.

SCOW To Be Leukemia Cup Sponsor

SCOW has joined several other clubs, and GSI, the operator of the Marina, as a sponsor of this year's Volvo Leukemia Cup Regatta, which will be held on the weekend of September 8th at the Marina. Dale Eager has volunteered to serve as SCOW's liaison to the Leukemia Cup Regatta committee. As the event gets closer, we will be looking for volunteers to help with this event.

SCOW Says Thanks!

SCOW says Thanks to: Dick Dyer, for coming to the Marina on short notice on a Friday afternoon to make an emergency repair on Danschweida; to Thom Unger for organizing SCOW's exhibit at the Alexandria Waterfront Festival and to everyone who helped staff the exhibit; to Kevin Teitel for towing Susie Q to and from the Festival; to Dale Eager, for volunteering to serve as SCOW's liaison to the Leukemia Cup Regatta committee; to Monica Maynard, for replacing the trailer wheels on two Flying Scot trailers; and to Captain Clayton Embry, for surveying our cruising boats earlier this season.

Special Olympics

Thanks to SCOW Members for their Enthusiastic Support Thanks to the enthusiastic support of SCOW members, no Special Olympics athletes were left on shore during the training sessions at the Washington Sailing Marina on Monday evenings in June. A total of seventeen volunteers turned out to help train these athletes in the Flying Scots, some members volunteering their time all three sessions. The Special Olympians were invited to sail in the boats, to learn to trim the jib sheets, and a few had an opportunity to steer the boat.

We, the Special Olympics athletes, coaches and their families wish to thank all the volunteers who made this possible. When we thanked you in person, it seems each of you said "But I only did a little bit". But when many people do a little, it adds up to a lot of support. Again, our thanks to the volunteers listed below, to those whose names we may have missed, and to those who worked behind the scenes to make this all possible:

Karen Plett
Tom Flesher
David Schueremann
Len Zuza
Chuck Hollister
David Pichter
Ed Venere
Ben Lesser
Dale Eager
Paul Hess
Donna Cohen
Susan Troccolo
Marc Currie
Frances Wu
Sara Slocum
Donna Knapton
Seth Allen

Sailor's Bookshelf

Joan O'Kane

When I was 18 and my father didn't like the way I was living, he said "My house, my rules." When Tania Aebi was 18 and her father didn't like the way she was living, he offered her a 26-foot sailboat on the condition that she sail it around the world solo. Clearly I was born into the wrong family.

"Maiden Voyage" is Tania Aebi's first person account of her two and a half year quest to become the first American woman and the youngest person ever to circumnavigate the globe alone. Along the way, she faced hazards and hardships, got knocked down repeatedly, almost collided with a freighter in the Mediterranean, fell in love (twice), and found out exactly what a person

can do when she puts her mind to it. She may not always have had a great time doing it, but I had a great time reading it.

The book is an expanded version of a series of articles Aebi wrote for *Cruising World* to help finance her trip. Gary Jobson, an editor of *Cruising World*, included Aebi's journey as one of the Top 25 Sailing Events of the last 25 years.

There's a lot more to this story than just the sailing (which is fascinating enough on its own). While it may take you a while to get past the fact that someone with minimal sailing experience would set off on a trip like this, it's definitely worth sticking with it. And it's not just a "women's book". If you don't believe me, ask Stuart Ullman because he read it, too.

Editor's Note: If you enjoy reading Tania, she currently writes a monthly column for *Latitudes and Attitudes Magazine* titled *There is a Difference*. She is a great fit for the "attitude" that this magazine demonstrates. If you hadn't guessed it already, *Lats & Atts* is a good fit for my sailing style too! -Ed.

15 Commandments

There are a couple dozen weeknight sailing series on the Chesapeake and about 1000 boats regularly participate.

In the interest of keeping the right attitude, SpinSheet Magazine is pleased to present...

Weeknight Racing's 15 Commandments

1. Thou shalt not take anything other than safety too seriously. If you can only remember one commandment, this is the one. Relax, have fun, and keep it light. Late to the start?-So What! Over Early?-Big Deal; just go back. Too Windy-Quit. Not enough wind?-Break out the cold beer. The point is to have fun and stay safe. As the ad says, "Safe boating is no accident."
2. Thou shalt honor the racing rules if thou knowest them.
3. Thou shalt not mess up thy boat.
4. Thou shalt not covet thy competitor's boat, sails, equipment, crew, or PHRF rating.
5. Thou shalt not amp out.
6. Thou shalt not protest thy neighbor.
7. Thou shalt not run out of beer.
8. Thou shalt always go out for a crew dinner or drink afterwards.
9. Thou shalt bring thy spouse, kids, co-workers, friends, and whomever wants to go.
10. Thou shalt not serve alcohol to underage sailors-especially if thou art in the employ of a yacht club.
11. Thou shalt always try to use the old sails.
12. Thou shalt never, ever schedule anything at work after noon on a race day.

13. Thou shalt always thank the race committee and the skipper after the finish.
14. Thou shalt not refer to weeknight racing results when discussing PHRF ratings.
15. Thou shalt not worry; thou shalt be happy.

Feel free to lift, re-publish, print out, post, and pass around these commandments, but please give credit to SpinSheet Magazine.

Did You Know?

Did you know that the winch handles for Flying Scots are designed to break before the halyard assembly or the halyard itself is damaged by excessive force?

So, if your handle breaks, it is not because it was defective, it is because it was being forced too hard. This is also the reason that you should only use a winch handle, and not a socket wrench, to raise or lower the sails.

Membership Meetings

On the second Monday of each month (except December) at the American Legion Hall, 400 Cameron Street (around the corner from Gadsby's Tavern), Old Town Alexandria, Virginia.
Socializing starts at 6:30 p.m. downstairs, and our meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. upstairs

For information about club activities
Write us: info@scow.org
Call: 202.628.7245 (That's 628.SAIL)

Submissions to Channels:

Just type or paste your article into the body of an email message.

Don't send your articles as (or with) attachments.

Put a **title** on the first line,
your name only (not "by") on the second line,
and launch right into the article.

I know this is hard for you to resist doing, but-

IF you include words in all caps, multiple tabs, indents, attachments, or extraneous notes,
your article will look kinda silly, or even totally unreadable.

We will format (but not remove formatting, see above) your article, adding emphasis, aligning tabs, and doing all manner of things to present your article in it's assigned place.

Submit articles to

channels@scow.org

within one week after the monthly meeting.

Kelly E. Griffin, Layout Editor (the hard part)
Declan Conroy, Web Publisher
Kim Webb, Mailing lists
Larry Gemoets, Chief Go'fer
(I dress up the electronic edition too)
That's all, folks.....

