

ChaNNels

The Newsletter of the Sailing Club of Washington

May 2002

Commodore's Log

Three words: Let's go racing.

That's my thinking right about now. As I'm writing this, I just got home from Tucker Thompson's Racing Seminar for the club (which, by the way, had 50 attendees!). Yesterday, I took a big boat crewing seminar over in Annapolis. I also went to Stu Robinson's tactics seminar back in March. And I read no less than three racing-oriented sailing books over the winter.

But I've barely been on a boat. And I'm ready to go racing. Mind you, I'm not one of those hardcore racing guys. Anyone who's raced with me knows that. When people ask me what position I usually fill on the boat, I still answer "bartender." I figure that way, I'm not over-promising by saying that I can be the bowman, or that I'm an expert sail trimmer. I know I can mix a mean rum runner (some other SCOW members do, as well, but that's a tale for another time). And you'd be surprised how many boats that's gotten me on.

But regardless, racing is fun! And it's one of the best ways I can think of to learn sailing. You have to figure out the best, fastest, most efficient way to sail your boat to a pre-determined point. And you have an instant yardstick - your competition - by which to measure your skill and progress, or lack thereof. It's also social (a huge selling point with Yours Truly) - you're out there with other sailors, not just on your boat but on other boats, as well. The post-race kibitzing can be fun, too.

And starting next Tuesday, May 7, you can race with SCOW every Tuesday night. We meet at the cranes around 6:00 and drop our three Flying Scots in the lagoon, along with some buoys and have at it for several races, until we lose wind or light, whichever comes first.

If you're new to sailing, or you're just intimidated by the idea of racing with us because you think it's a bunch of chest-thumping hardcores, think again. SCOW Flying Scot racing is extremely informal. There are no set crews and we try to get everyone on a boat for at least one race, regardless of experience level. Nobody yells (or at least we frown upon that) and everyone has a good time. Plus, like I said, it's a great way to learn about sailing. A lot of very knowledgeable sailors come out on Tuesday nights and are more than willing to share their expertise. And when you're on a boat that crosses the finish line first, you'll know what a thrill it is.

For those of you who want to get on the big boats, there is the Tuesday night DCF races, which meet at the small boat cranes around 6:00, as well. Most of the crews are set for SCOW's entries, Psycho and Rebecca. But it never hurts to drop a line to SCOW Race Captain Bill Bernhards to

see if there are any openings. Bill can be reached at racing@scow.org). And it always seems like one of the other skippers is looking for crew. Heck, when I first moved here I even talked my way onto some boats with no sailing background whatsoever. Now I even get invited sometimes (although it could still be for my aforementioned bartending skills).

The point is, there's a lot of weeknight racing going on with SCOW, and if you're looking for time in a boat, you can't do much better than coming out on Tuesday nights.

Of course, there are other aspects of sailing, as well, and I hope to explore another one when I help sail Len Zuza's boat, *Dulcinea*, on a leg of his and Mike Geissinger's passage to Cape Cod. I've never been on a true long-distance run like that. If the sea (and technology) gods are with us, I might be writing my next Commodore's Log from there.

Until then, see you 'round the docks.

May Membership Meeting

Monday, May 13

As Channels goes to press, we don't have a speaker confirmed for the May meeting yet. But if this year's previous speakers are any indication, it will be a good one.

The monthly meeting will be held - as usual - at the American Legion Hall in Old Town Alexandria, 400 Cameron Street (check out www.scow.org for directions). Socializing starts at 6:30, with the meeting at 7:30 and the presentation at 8:00.

Thanks to Vice Commodore Susan Batchelder for all her hard work on lining up our speakers. If you have any suggestions for speakers or topics, please email Susan at vice@scow.org.

Social Activities

Shonika Proctor

Good Day, Good People!

It's finally here...Thursday Night Social Sails. For those of you who are new to SCOW, Social Sails are the bread and butter of the SCOW social activities! Social Sails occur weekly (late April to early October) at 6ish at the Washington Sailing Marina. We have 2 volunteer Chefs and a volunteer Dockmaster every week. The 2 Chefs work together to host Part 1 - the 'land' social with food (of their choice) and it is followed by (where the dockmaster is involved) Part II - the 'water' social where we hop in the boats, sit back, relax and enjoy the ride.

This year we have 4 fabulous coordinators. Amy Plett, is the official Social Sail Recruiting Queen. She is the one who was signing folks up at the April membership meeting and she also sends out the 'all scow' reminders. Applause to her for doing a wonderful job thus far. Her royal family includes Kate Teitel, Pete Hirshman and Belford Lawson. They will serve as your support

persons (and I'll also be there if you need me). One of us will be there weekly for those of you who might be hosting a Social Sail for the first time and have questions, to help you out if you are running late, or cover for you if for some reason you are not able to make it. Please show your Social Sail Coordinators some "SCOW Love" by signing up to volunteer at ONE of this season's Social Sails. This is one of the more 'long term' social volunteer projects and we appreciate all their hard work! I want EVERYBODY to be able to enjoy the Social Sails!

For you new members or shy members, we have a "Social Sail for Dummies" handbook that walks you through the Social Sail Program. And Yes! I do have it in electronic form.

For more information on how to get involved with Social Sail, please email me at social@scow.org.

See You Thursdays!!!!

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Rhode River Raft-up Coming Together

Jeff Teitel

The June 1st raft-up in the Rhode River is already shaping up to be one of the highlights of the season. As I write this, we already have six boats coming! By the time you read this, there should be even more signed up. So far the following boats plan to be there:

Sea Frog - Capt. Jeff Teitel
Tilly - Capt. Denise Malueg
Odyssey - Capt. Jack Schwartz
Annabel Lee - Capt. Larry Gemoets
Lady Lizzie - Capt. Carlos Rodriguez
Seanchai - Capt. Pat Derry

The raft-up will be at approximately 76° 32.0' W x 38° 53.2' N. I will be anchored by 2:00pm. This is in the middle of the triangle formed by High Island, Big Island and one other. I've been told that the way to get into the anchorage is to come into the Rhode River, pass south of High Island, and come around it into the protected area between the three islands.

Please let me know if you plan to be there. You can reach me at 202-271-1238 or jeff@teitel.net. While I'd like to have an idea of who will be there, you don't have to be "signed up" to come. Anybody who shows up is welcome to join our raft (safety permitting).

SCOW Charters S/V Seanchai for Rhode River Raft-up

Jeff Teitel

Have you ever wanted to go to a SCOW Bay raft-up but don't have your own boat and don't know any of the members who do? Ever wanted to spend a weekend sailing the Chesapeake but can't afford the full charter cost? Well, SCOW's got a deal for you!

SCOW has chartered the sailing vessel Seanchai (Shawn'-a-key) with Captain Pat Derry (a long-time member of SCOW) for the June 1-2 raft-up in the Rhode River. Pat has given the club a 50% discount on the charter so SCOW can offer individual berths for \$150 per person for the weekend (+10% tax). This includes two full days of sailing and overnight accommodations on-board at the raft-up. It does not include food and drinks.

To sign up, send a check, payable to SCOW, (and a note telling him what it's for) to our Bay Activities Director:

Jonathan Allen
6020 Stoddard Ct. #102
Alexandria, VA 22315

Seanchai can carry six people plus her captain. The berths will be given out on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority given to SCOW members and their guests. Your space is not reserved until we receive your check. We have until the May 13th membership meeting to get people signed up, and if we do not have at least 5 slots paid for, SCOW will cancel the charter.

If you are interested or would like more information about this event, please contact me, Jeff Teitel, at 202-271-1238 or jeff@teitel.net.

More information about Seanchai and Captain Pat can be found on-line at www.SailSeanchai.com or by e-mail at info@SailSeanchai.com.

Racing News

Bill Bernhards

At the April 8th members meeting we held our big boat series skipper selection. The skippers for this year are Henry Yung, Thom Unger, Declan Conroy, Stu Robinson, Jeff Teitel and Bill Bernhards. These skippers are choosing their crews from the list of SCOW members who signed up on the crew list.

If you signed up and were not chosen, there's still plenty of opportunity to sail and race. Series One of the big boat races began Tuesday, April 23rd. Series Two will continue the Tuesday night races until early October. So, if you really want to crew on a big boat, come down to the marina any Tuesday and attend the skippers' meeting at 6:00 pm at the white cranes. Many of the other boat owners who race in this series need crew; just let them know you're available at the

meeting. Almost everyone gets on a boat every race night, giving you the opportunity to sail with different skippers and learn from them.

Also starting Tuesday, May 7th are the Flying Scot races. This is open to all SCOW members. No experience required, only a desire to learn, and all you have to do is show up because everyone gets to sail. Meet at the white cranes at 6pm, and one of our Scot skippers will be there to assign people to boats and make sure everyone gets on board. This is a great way to learn to sail. When I started with the club, the Beginning Sailing classes were full, so I went out on these Tuesday night races, and learned by doing and asking questions. By the middle of that summer, I was ready to check out as a Scot skipper. The Flying Scot races are held every Tuesday until early September.

See you at the docks!

River Activities

Jon Allen

River Cruises

We have 2 river cruises coming up and there are still slots available, so sign up now! The dates are:

Friday, May 31st - 7:00 p.m. until approximately 11:00 p.m.

Saturday, June 8th - 7:00 p.m. until approximately 11:00 p.m.

We need volunteer skippers for Psycho and Rebecca for both cruises. If you're a SCOW big boat skipper and would like to help out the club, please email me at river@scow.org. If you're a boat owner and would like to participate, we'd love to have you come along!

If you haven't been on one of SCOW's big boats before or you've never been on a river cruise, now's your chance! The only things you need to bring are yourself and a small amount of snacks and drinks to share with the others on the boat.

We'll set a destination for the May 31st cruise that night, but Old Town or Smoots Cove are the usual suspects. For the June 8th cruise, we'll be sailing down to Old Town to watch the fireworks at the Alexandria Red Cross Waterfront Festival. The view from the river is awesome! We expect this river cruise to fill up fast, so sign up soon!

If you'd like to be either a skipper (on a SCOW boat or on your own boat) or crew for one or both of these river cruises, send me an email at river@scow.org.

River Fleet Night

Every now and then, we like to give boat owners a chance to show off their boats to other SCOW Members. Social Sail on Thursday, June 13 is River Fleet Night. Tie your boat up at the small

boat docks and let your fellow club members have a look! If you're in a really good mood, you might even want to take some people out on an impromptu river cruise.

If you have any questions about the River Cruises or River Fleet Night, please email me at river@scow.org.

SCOW Volunteers Needed
Alexandria Red Cross Waterfront Festival
Thom Unger

Ask not what your club can do for you, but what you can do for your club (and get free admission to a great festival to boot!).

As in years past, SCOW will once again have a booth at the Alexandria Red Cross Waterfront Festival (<http://www.waterfrontfestival.org/>) to educate people about sailing and to recruit new members. As always, we're looking for a few good volunteers to staff the booth. The Festival this year is June 7th thru June 9th. We'll be looking to get at least 3, and preferably 4, SCOW volunteers for each of the following shifts:

Friday, June 7th

3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Help transport & set up a Flying Scot at the Festival)
6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Saturday, June 8th

10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, June 9th

10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Benefits include:

You'll get a free pass to the Festival for the day you volunteer, you get to have fun talking with lots of folks about the joys of sailing, and you help out your club! Such a deal!

If you're interested in volunteering, please drop me a note at ThomUnger@yahoo.com or call me at 703-683-8466.

Skipper Coordinator News

Barry Dunsmoor

New Combinations

The combinations on the locks to the Flying Scot sail locker, F Dock and the cruising boats have been changed for the new sailing season. If you are a paid-up skipper and haven't received the new combinations, please email me at skipper@scow.org as soon as possible.

Want to Be a Skipper?

SCOW's training courses are already full for this year, but that doesn't mean you can't become a skipper!

As mentioned elsewhere in this issue, Tuesday night racing is a great way to learn to sail and to get sailing experience. If you already know how to sail, but aren't familiar with "The SCOW Way" of handling the club boats, Thursday night Social Sail is a great opportunity. Come down to the docks early and learn about launching boats from the cranes and rigging the sails. Stay until the end and find out how we like the boats to be put away. If you're ready to take the on-the-water checkout, but just want to brush up on your skills, we have volunteer tutors who can help.

SCOW's qualification process includes both a written test and an on-the-water checkout. You must pass the written test before scheduling the 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 have to do everything perfectly, you just have to be able to do it safely!

There is a \$5 materials fee for the test packet. If you're interested in receiving a packet, please email me at skipper@scow.org and I'll let you know where to send the check. You can also email me with any questions you have about becoming a skipper.

Training News

Donna Cohen

SCOW's training classes are always popular and this year is no exception! As reported last month, every single slot in every single training class was filled at the Re-Up Brunch.

But fear not! There are still plenty of opportunities for you to learn to sail and one of them is in "our own backyard".

Guest Services, Inc., the National Park Service concessionaire at the Washington Sailing Marina, offers sailing training to the general public. They offer both adult sailing classes and youth

sailing camps. Information about GSI's sailing classes is available online at <http://www.guestservices.com/wsm/lessons.html> or you can call the marina at 703-548-9027.

A little farther south on the Parkway, the Mariner Sailing School at Belle Haven Marina is the largest full time sailing school in the Washington, D.C. area. Information on their sailing classes is available at <http://saildc.com/> or by calling 703-768-0018.

For those who want to venture to Annapolis, there's Annapolis Sailing School, "the first and largest sailing school in the nation". Their web site is at <http://annapolissailing.com/> or you can call them at 1-800-638-9192.

In Annapolis, there's also Womanship, "the first and leading sailing school designed by women, for women". Their motto is "Nobody Yells...Everybody Learns". If you're interested, visit their web site at <http://www.womanship.com/> or call them at 1-800-342-9295.

SCOW does not endorse any of these programs. We just want to make you aware of just a few of the many training opportunities that are out there.

Recap: Tucker Thompson Racing Clinic

Bill Bernhards

Tucker Thompson presented a fun and informative clinic to about 50 sailors at the marina on April 15th. His topic of sail trim was very informative as he spoke for over two hours getting into the details of sail shape, mast bend, tuning the rigging and many other points that I'm sure everyone there will be ready to put to work for them this season.

I would like to give special thanks to our commodore Matt Gaston for his help in making this possible.

Volvo Ocean Race Continues

The Volvo Ocean Race may have left Annapolis, but it still has a few more weeks to go. Many of us have kept up with the progress of the race at the official web site <http://www.volvoceanrace.org> (.com works, too.). But did you know that National Geographic has a companion site? The web site, which covers the science and strategy of the VOR is located at <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/volvoceanrace/>. It includes an interactive sailing simulator, an anatomy lesson on ocean racers, and a virtual ER. Be sure to check out this fun and informative web site!

Thanks to SCOW member Allan Lewis for bringing this site to our attention!

If you know of any good sailing web sites you'd like to share with the club, send them to channels@scow.org.

National Geographic Exhibit **"Icons of the Sea: The Artistry of Ship Models"** Through September 2, 2002

If you're looking for a rainy-day sailing-related activity, SCOW member Allan Lewis recommends visiting Explorers Hall at the National Geographic Society.

This exhibit includes models of some of history's most famous ships, including the R.M.S. Titanic, Ernest Shackleton's Endurance, and the U.S.S. Arizona. The largest model on display will be the 18-foot-long Titanic, a 1:48 scale model that took five years to build — three years longer than the actual ship. The model was completed at the end of last year and this is its first time on public display.

Explorer's Hall is located at 17th and M Streets N.W. in Washington, D.C. Admission is free. Directions and hours are available at <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/explorer/map.html>

The Sailor's Bookshelf **The Best Books for Sailors**

When it comes to reading, "best" is a matter of taste. Although the titles don't appear to be in any order, the list below was compiled by the staff of SAIL magazine as the best examples of classics of the sea, essentials for acquiring skills, and just plain entertainment.

Billy Budd by Herman Melville
Winning in One-Designs by Dave Perry
The Mauritius Command by Patrick O'Brien
Expert Dinghy and Keelboat Racing by Paul Elvström
The Sea Wolf by Jack London
Boatowner's Mechanical and Electrical Manual by Nigel Calder
My Old Man and the Sea by David and Daniel Hayes
The Shipping News by E. Annie Proulx
The Riddle of the Sands by Erskine Childers
From a Bare Hull by Ferenc Maté
After 50,000 Miles by Hal Roth
Far Tortuga by Peter Matthiessen
Nostramo by Joseph Conrad
Gypsy Moth Circles the World by Sir Francis Chichester
The Offshore Cruising Encyclopedia by Steve and Linda Dashew
The Rigger's Apprentice by Brian Toss
Ashley's Book of Knots by Clifford Ashley
The Boat Who Wouldn't Float by Farley Mowat
Swallows and Amazons by Arthur Ransome

Read any good sailing books lately? Why not write a review and share it with your fellow SCOW members? Send book reviews and other articles to channels@scow.org.

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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.

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 its assigned place.

Submit articles to
channels@scow.org
within one week after the monthly membership meeting.

ChaNNels

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That's all folks...