

Anchorline

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Commodore's Words - July 2011

2011 is shaping up to be another banner year for STYC. Your board has been quite busy these past 6 months and has accomplished much, not only with regard to organizing and conducting some really great events, but also in the creation and development of some new ideas intended to strengthen our brand, and keep our club on track as we continue to be a preferred Yacht club, in terms of access, affordability, and good clean FUN.

Of course, these accomplishments could not be possible without the support of all of you, our members, and especially the wonderful Board we have assembled this year. Our eight elected members and officers, backed by an impressive group of around ten additional committee leaders and boosters together make up an organization of generous, dedicated and effective individuals, of which it has been my great pleasure to lead.

Commodore's Words continued

Included on our long list of accomplishments so far this year are:

- A membership dues party at the Sloop Tavern supporting the acquisition of 22 new members, bringing the count to a new total of 171.
- Another successful Iceberg Regatta with 30 boats braving the winter chill.
- An early Spring cruise by five member boats (and others) to Poulsbo.
- Another fun general membership meeting
- The nearly on-time release of the first two quarters of our on-line newsletter "Anchorline"
- A very fun and challenging Blakely Rock Benefit race which attracted a total of 91 entries, many of whom were non-members, from whom was raised over \$9000 for the Ballard Food Bank.
- An increased level of favorable exposure, as STYC and our events are featured by many local media outlets.
- The introduction of a new series (Triple Sound) honoring short handed racers, and combining existing venues through a clever new scoring system.
- The 10th annual Race to the Straits, involving 98 boats featuring near perfect racing conditions, assuring boats a finish within the time limits.
- STYC's good will exposure and PR campaigning with the larger area yacht club communities, by way of the Commodore's formal attendance at the SYC opening day ceremonies. (Ed's note: See the "formal" pic below)
- The creation, planning, and execution of an exciting new race format (Three Buoy Fiasco), involving a fun, friendly new competition and perpetual trophy between East, and West Puget Sound boats, coupled with a new partnership with the Port Madison Yacht Club. (40 boats turned out for this inaugural event!!!)
- The development and release of a set of course guidelines for use when establishing the nightly courses for Ballard Cup Monday night racing.
- A second successful cruise over the Memorial Day weekend in partnership with Three Sheets NW, in which thirteen boats full of smiling members (and others) enjoyed the festivities in Bremerton and Port Orchard..
- An improved version of Take your Time Fridays, complete with a greater level of collaboration with CYC, along with the weekly use of the clubhouse, and free dinner fare.
- Significant support to the Charley Files memorial event and fund.

Wow, all that in just the first half of the year! No wonder your board has been so busy these past months. With a large portion of our efforts behind us, we look forward to a second half with additional activities to manage. A partial list includes:

- Another month of Take Your Time Friday's now running like a well oiled machine
- The second annual Down the Sound, incorporating improvements noted from our experience last year with the inaugural running of this soon-to-be classic and jewel in our newly minted "Triple Sound" series.
- The third and final Ballard Cup series, also now pretty well established, as the primary responsibilities for race administration transfer from SBYC to STYC.
- More overnight cruising, including most notably, the annual 4th of July weekend in Poulsbo, along with a rumored trip to Blake Island and more! (See details below in a separate article)
- A thoughtful introspection and planning exercise described in a separate piece in this news letter, and designed to keep STYC on track for the future.
- The annual Jack and Jill and Single handed races.
- The resurrection of a new (old) race exclusively targeting live-aboards, and celebrating our roots as a yacht club for the common man. This one will be known as "Race Your House" and will be run in conjunction with the Fall Regatta.
- Another of our now famous Christmas parties / election night meeting.

I think it cannot be said enough that ours is an all-volunteer club. Not unrelated are two other interesting facts: by any measure, STYC is in a very healthy and positive situation these days, and remains accessible to all with its low-cost, low-overhead structure, and friendly, low key, and fun character.



After listing all the fine work undertaken by this board on behalf of our club, I would personally like to thank each and every board member, along with a collection of other anonymous volunteers and supporters, who together, make this club work so well for all of us!

Finally, I would encourage others of you who have not yet had an opportunity to actively support the club, and perhaps feel the tug to volunteer your time and talents, to consider answering the call, (and give us a call). Let us know how you would like to increase your level of involvement in the best darn yacht club on Puget Sound.

Tim Morgenroth

(as seen at the Seattle YC Opening Day Parade!)

Take Your Time Fridays - Casual Racing

STYC & CYC Seattle - "Take Your Time Fridays"

TAKE YOUR TIME FRIDAY'S -IT'S HAPPENING !

Friday night sailing at Shilshole is well under way and will continue every Friday in July. This casual race series employs a Golf Handicap rating system designed to even the playing field for less experienced sailors and seasoned veterans alike. Corinthian Yacht Club is open every Friday after sailing with a no host bar, free burgers and hot dogs. Come join the fun on Fridays starting at 7:00pm.

Go to styc.org for more info and get signed up!

Race Your House - It's BACK!!

October 15th 2011 - MARK THE DATE!

ATTENTION ALL LIVEBOARDS!

Yes, that's right ..."Race Your House" has been revived after more than 20 years of dormancy. To encourage participation, STYC presents this race at NO COST to all participants. Once a popular event in the early 90's this race has but one qualifying rule ...you must liveboard your boat as your primary residence. That's it! Non-live-boards read on! There could be a role in all this for you too. We contacted the original founder, Fred Roswald who is currently living in South Africa and got his approval to proceed as well as the race details. The race will be promoted in collaboration with our new friends at the Washington Live-aboard Association. (WLA), who will help get the word out, and are planning a pre-race party on Friday night to help pry loose some of the more passive among this community, many of whom are known to use old chains as mooring lines. We will also attempt to involve members of the local broadcast and print community to help expand the view of this soon to be STYC classic.

The race this year will be held concurrent with (but scored separate from) the Fall Regatta, (Oct. 15). You will need to get your boat rated for the event however it isn't as difficult as it may seem. Our handicappers will bend over backwards to help you get your handicap figured out. You do not have to have your boat visually inspected or anything like that ...it's just a phone call. You will be given a special "cruising" rating (or handicap) which will also allow you to participate in other STYC races with specified "cruising" classes. STYC is committed to making this 'cruising' course fun ...and we understand that there are large full keeled vessels out there that have a hard time keeping up with the fleet when sailing close hauled to weather. So take note that the race course will not be very traditional. The details are still being worked out but look for a mostly beam reach course starting in front of Shilshole and heading to the Port Madison area with just a small amount of beating to wind. If you are a live-aboard ...you really have to agree that if there was ever a better time to race your house ...this is definitely it!

Now here's the part where you non-live-boards come in; we are extending the offer to all race boats to provide an experienced "coach" and/or crew to assist the owner in both preparing and racing the boat! If you're not planning to race the fall regatta, you may be drafted to serve in this capacity. It is hoped that this cross culture exchange will help to expand our mutual understanding while at the same time create yet another winner to the ever-expanding portfolio of diverse and fun-fueled STYC events.

Stay tuned, we'll keep you informed as the details are worked out. Get your friends involved, get your boat rated, it's never too late and never a better time than now. Start by Emailing or calling Mikey at mikey@fulcrum.net (206) 714-6041. Awards will be provided for the cruising classes at the Sloop Tavern after the race.

More information can be found at www.styc.org

Mike Beste

Sloop Tavern YC Introspective -2011

As was mentioned above, STYC is taking a little time to look inward at who we are, and what we are not. Obviously, there are some unique qualities to our character, which set us apart from other clubs in the area, and in my estimation, give us a certain advantage in attracting and retaining members, as well as in the caliber and level of fun we offer to all who participate in our events.

Given this current happy situation, it is probably safe to say generally that this club “ain’t broke” and so doesn’t need fixin”. Yet there is always some room for improvement, and even if we elect not to change a thing, we should at least document somewhere who we are and what we value most.

Some of you may know that your Commodore was recently interviewed by Margaret Larsen for her daytime talk show on KING 5. One of the things that struck me about this experience was my inability to clearly articulate to an audience of non-sailors, just exactly what the Sloop Tavern Yacht Club was all about. And when I was put in front of a microphone at the SYC opening day ceremonies in May, I had some of the same problems. Not being one typically at a loss for words, I felt we should invest a little energy in this. As ambassadors of our club, we probably could all do with a few words, maybe a byline or slogan that we can use when recruiting new members, or just explaining to our mothers why we belong to an organization that includes the word “tavern” in its title.

Also important, if we can clearly define what our values are, and embed them in our psyches and club by-laws, the club and its future officers and board, will have a compass with which to navigate through the many administrative, technical, and even strategic issues and choices faced in the day-to-day operations of our Club. This can also provide us with a set of goal posts towards which we direct our policies and strategies, helping us with direction and priority, as we set our objectives, plans, focus, and even board structure for the coming months, and years.

Again, not so much to change us, but perhaps insure that we don’t. Clearly, there is something about this club that is working well. It could be argued that we are in a sweet spot, and we want to make sure we understand why and how, so that neither we nor our successors accidentally jibe us to a bad place.

As we ponder this subject many questions come to mind:

- What do we feel is important to us, both as individual members, and as a club
- What do we like about STYC?
- What would we like to see changed, increased, or decreased in terms of the events we sponsor.
- What attracted us to this club in the first place and why have we decided to stick with it?
- What makes STYC unique, or at least different from other yacht clubs you have been a part of?

We will be sending out a simple survey to all the members soon, soliciting your thoughts on this. We’ll collect up and assimilate your responses, and incorporate them into our Board deliberations late this summer, as we attempt to set a course for the future. It would be nice to have something to share at our fall membership meeting, so we’ll need to stay focused and trim for speed.

Thanks in advance for your support in this exercise, and thanks for staying with the “best darn yacht club on Puget Sound”!!

Tim Morgenroth

These are the businesses, people and saints that contributed to the BRBR this year raising over \$9000.00 for the Ballard Food Bank!! Give them your patronage and thanks when you can.

Organization

48 North Magazine
 Anthony's Homeport
 Anthony's at Shilshole
 Armchair Sailor
 Ballard Food Bank
 Ballard Inflatable Boats
 Ballard Sails
 Ballard Outboard
 Bike Sport
 Breezy Canvas
 Brion Toss Yacht Riggers
 Builders Hardware & Supply Co
 Captain's Nautical Supplies
 Chocolate Box
 CSR Marine, Inc.
 Doyle/Puget Sound Sail
 Dunatos Marine
 Elliott Bay Marina
 Fisheries Supply
 SDOT Fremont Bridge
 SDOT Spokane St Bridge
 Fresh Fish Company -
 Gallery Marine
 Jennifer Patterson (People's Bank of Ballard)
 Kristen Juan-Snyder (People's Bank Ballard)
 King's Hardware
 Kitchen 'N' Things
 Krusteaz(Continental Mills Inc)
 LFS Marine
 Let's Go Sailing
 Limback Lumber
 Lunde Marine Electronics
 Majestic Bay Theater
 MAMO Jewelers
 Marine Sanitation
 Maritime Pacific Brewing Co.
 Miller and Miller boat yard
 Northwest Outdoor Center
 Northwest Rigging
 NW Yachting Magazine
 Owl 'n Thistle Irish Pub
 Peter Carr/Dynamic Chiropractic Clinic
 Pressure-Drop.com
 Puget Sound Dive
 Quantum Sails
 Ray's Boathouse,
 Ray's Boathouse Cafe and catering
 Scott's Trophy
 Seaview Boatyard
 Secret Garden Bookshop
 Shilshole Bay Marina
 Sloop Tavern
 Smart Plug Systems LLC
 Smokin' Pete's BBQ
 Starbucks / Ballard
 Starbucks / Sandra Stark
 Systems Three Resins
 The Center for Wooden Boats
 UK Halsey Northwest
 West Marine Shilshole
 Wind works Sailing and Powerboating
 Yacht Keepers



Convergence Zone off Shilshole

Slooping Cruising Re-cap and Upcoming Events.

Memorial Weekend Re-cap

A large group of cruisers attended The 2nd Annual Neptune's Memorial Weekend Bash in Bremerton. The fleet consisted of 13 or more STYC and Three Sheets boats (it seemed more just kept showing up throughout the weekend!) creating quite a festive presence on the dock. While some chose to make it on Friday and had wind to sail over, those of us departing Saturday motored. We all met for potluck and plenty of libations on the dock and the party moved around to various boats. It was a great opportunity to meet new cruisers and see visit different types of sailboats. The Harbor Festival was in full swing on promenade along the marina providing live music including a naval band that could seriously ROCK! Sunday many of us took the ferry over to the Pirate Festival in Port Orchard where the salty sailors put on quite a show of swords, cannons, and general pirate debauchery. Many of us left early on Sunday to ride the tide out and were met with great wind for a reach across the sound while others continued the Memorial Day party.

Poulsbo July 3rd Fireworks Extravaganza

Don't miss out on fireworks before the 4th! Join a great group of cruisers for a raft up in Poulsbo's Liberty Bay on the 3rd. This is always a great party so keep an eye out for the STYC flags and join the raft. Stay tuned to the cruising page as I will list some boats to keep an eye out for. The regulars usually get a really good spot I've been told!

Blake Island Three Day Tour July 29th-31st

Get there early for this one! We will raft up on the buoys on the southwest side of the island. Or if you prefer, do the marina and hike or paddle over for the fun. Whidbey will be over but you still may want some more racing with your cruise package. Bring your kayak, rowing, or sailing dinghy for races to the island. Yes we can break it up into classes and there will be prizes! A hike is planned for some time off the water and of course a BBQ potluck and fire has to happen when you're on the island. Stay tuned to the cruising page for the full itinerary.

August cruise

TBD Please send feedback or ideas. I may need someone to help plan-lead this one due to other commitments that month. fishchick_17@yahoo.com

STYC on FACEBOOK!! (oh boy!)

STYC on Facebook!

Love it or hate it, the age of social media is here and the Sloop is in the mix with our own group page. If you already have a Facebook account, enter "Sloop Tavern Yacht Club" in the FB search engine, and you've arrived. To post on the page, you will be asked to join the group. This is a quick spam avoidance maneuver and the group moderators will open the gate within a day or two if not sooner. Once in, you're free to post on the group wall, add pictures or videos, and the like. If you don't have a Facebook account, you'll need to open one at www.facebook.com. Yes, Facebook is not without its flaws, but with a bit of due diligence on the user's part, you can limit access to your FB page to those who you've 'friended'. Take a moment or two to carefully look through and choose your 'account' and 'security' settings. For those with jobs in the public realm who might want a bit more privacy, be aware that you don't need to use your actual name on the account as long as you have a valid e-mail address.

Mark

When I look back on Race to the Straits 2011, my overall impression is that it contained just the right amount of every element that makes it what it is – one of the premier events of the Puget Sound. One of my goals for this year's edition was to make it more of an event than just another boat race. With that in mind I set out to emphasize the social aspect. The skipper's meeting has always been a very popular event - this year was no exception. As usual, there was excited conversation amongst the competitors about the forecast, the tides, the class breaks, the tactics for handling Double Bluff – all major elements of the race. Judging by the pre-race excitement, everything looked good for an excellent weekend.

For an excellent recount of the race on the water, I direct you to Ben Braden's article of last month on www.pressure-drop.us and other sources. From the perspective of the race chair and a competitor, I was quite pleased that Saturday came with quite a bit of wind at times and only a little rain. Around Point No Point, we saw puffs into the low 20s, which was enough to get our boat moving along pretty well. From that location, we could see that there was a restart at Double Bluff and that it was better (at that time) to hug the shore.

We arrived at Double Bluff just after Andy Schwenk went for his now-infamous swim to push his boat off the ground. We managed to position ourselves on the inside of most of the fleet just as the convergence shifted from southerly to northerly. Everything looked great – we were in a favorable wind strength and still had lots of favorable current. As such, we then made our way with confidence to the Marrowstone side of Admiralty Inlet and set ourselves up for Point Marrowstone. As with most things about sailboat racing, we went from hero to zero rather quickly. When we arrived at Point Marrowstone, there was very little wind anywhere to be seen, but we could lay the finish with our spinnaker, so we pointed at the finish. Well, the northerly filled in and the boats behind us went to it. The upside of the situation was that most of the fleet managed to finish before 2:30!

As in previous years, the party was at the most reliable American Legion Hall. And, this year the Hall had undergone a facelift – new floors, wall paint, and other items! Due to the early arrival of the fleet, the shore crew acted quickly to set up the table, chairs, and snacks. Port Townsend Brewery delivered their usual delicious brews with little time to spare. As such, the long-awaited party got underway slightly earlier than usual.

Dinner was provided by the ever-popular In-Season Catering. And, this year, most of us enjoyed the music of the Seattle-based band, Goldbar. The band was augmented by none other than Andy Schwenk who was living out his long-concealed desire to be a rock star. Fortunately, clearer minds prevailed and Mr. Schwenk was separated from the microphone as soon as his performance had been concluded. The party, as predicted, wore on into the night.

Sunday morning broke with clear skies and, yes, a sparkling northerly. The only speed bump was an outbound tide, which can make Point Marrowstone a serious restart only a couple miles after the real start. This year, there was just enough wind to propel boats around the point and, in many cases, across Admiralty Inlet to the Whidbey side. My skipper and I decided to work the Marrowstone side, which seemed to work pretty well – at least no worse than those boats on the Whidbey side.

We crossed to Whidbey Island and made the beach about one mile north of Bush Point and then followed the shore line to Double Bluff. We then went straight across to Point No Point while many other boats worked the Whidbey side for quite a while longer. (As the race chair, I tend to look around the fleet to make sure that boats are still moving and everything is going well. There is, of course, nothing I can do about it one way or another, but I tend to carry some concern while the fleet is out. At that time, all was well!). At Point No Point, the wind went light. The smart/lucky boat hit the beach pretty hard - the few un-smart/un-lucky boats (mine included) did not. So it goes . . .

A couple of hours later, the northerly refilled and tended to favor the boats on the west side of the Sound. The majority of the fleet finished within one hour of each other, which caused the race committee not a few headaches. But, to their credit, all the scoring was accurate. And, like on Saturday, all, or nearly all, boats finished the long course.

Once the scoring was settled and the trophies ordered, the awards party was set for Ballard Sails' location. In past years, the party had not been well attended. This year, we attempted to attract a few more. As it turned out, we had far, far more than expected – perhaps 75 racers at Ballard Sails. In fact, we had to order extra beer to accommodate the masses. And, as usual, the RTTS camaraderie was high with stories of the race and talk of the remaining Triple Sound races.

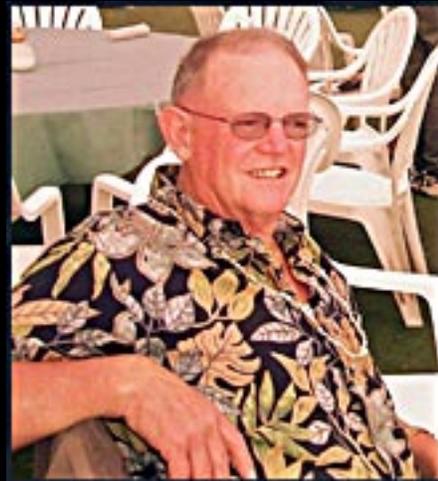
As to the Triple Sound, this year is pivotal in that RTTS is now the first race in the new Triple Sound Series, the remaining two races being Down the Sound (same format but to Gig Harbor), and the penultimate race, the Triple Sound Sailing Championship (aka TS#3, Jack and Jill, or J&J). The winner of the Triple Sound Series can rightly claim to be the Double-/Single-Hand ruler of the Puget Sound. So far, series division leaders are the J/29 Here & Now based on their overall win of the Double Handed Flying Sails division and the Soverel 33 Pegasus for their overall win of the Double Handed Non-Flying Sails division.

Lastly, a shout out of huge thanks to our sponsors, especially Ballard Sails (Title Sponsor and awards party venue) who extended themselves and accommodated the awards party despite a pressing schedule. Other sponsors for the Triple Sound are, Smart Plug (Gold Level), Quantum Sails (Silver Level and skipper's meeting venue), Northwest Rigging (Beer Sponsor), CSR Marine, and the Seattle Sailing Club.

Christopher Butler

Questions or comments: c65butler@gmail.com

Charley Files - 1938 - 2011



Sloop Tavern owner and STYC patron dies

Charles Wilbur Files died of pneumonia while on vacation in Maui, Hawaii. Well known in the Seattle restaurant and bar business, Charley was a friend and supporter of STYC for many years. (how many other bar owners would allow such a questionable crowd maintaining a “yacht club” within their establishment??)

Charley was a regular guy, big sports fan, basketball referee and home town sports fan. He supported many levels of local sports from schools to pro teams. He also supported the strange sport of sailboat racing by providing a “home” for the STYC, by allowing fading boat pics to line the tavern walls, by opening up early for 9:00 “skippers meetings,” and by allowing a wall of ancient and near forgotten “trophies” to collect in the tavern corner (now upgraded and looking good!)

The club was lucky to have such a “patron.” We will miss him greatly.

CREW CIRCLE

For those who've been in the sailing community, if you don't have your own boat, it's still not too difficult to find a ride for your favorite events, but to those new to town, it's only the brave, bold, or foolish who walk the docks hoping someone's short of crew. For the rest of us, the shy, the humble, and the mildly reticent, there has to be a better way. Following the lead of the system used for Wednesday night beer can races at the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club, the STYC and other local clubs will be asking the Port of Seattle to paint a large circle at the end of 'X' dock at Shilshole marina. Those looking for rides can wait at the circle for boats passing who might be looking for crew. This works on a first come first served basis. Boats can't cherry pick for ringers and other talent, and crew might not get a ride on the newest latest, but if we can make this a weekday event habit here in Seattle, some of the 'I can't find any crew' or 'How do I get a ride?' questions begin to resolve themselves. Crew to be, bring appropriate clothing for the day. Some beverages for your potential ride is a great way to attract a boat passing by! Skips, the point is to get people out on the water. Weekday events are for fun. If you've got room, fill it up. It's good for the sport. You might find a great regular addition to your boat if you're building a program, or just pick up a spare set of hands if your regular crew is caught in an ugly commute. We've all been on both sides of this equation. Remember, the Circle's a formality. Until the paint is down and dry, just find your way to the end of "X" dock. There are no guarantees here, but hopefully, it will make finding and filling boats a little easier and open the doors for a lot more fun! Mark Music

A JUNIOR PROGRAM FOR THE SLOOP???

It's come up in conversation that the Sloop is one of the local clubs fortunate enough to have a broad age demographic. There are a lot of young'ins on STYC boats out there of late. Without a doubt, this is great for both the club and sailing! The next question to be asked then, would we like to see a junior program at the club? If so, what should be the goals, and how could a program best be implemented? Please feel free to contact any board member with your thoughts. Mark Music

Down The Sound - coming up!

The second race in the Triple Sound Series, Down The Sound is August 6 & 7. Similar to the popular Race To Straits, DTS stops in Gig Harbor at Arabella's Landing for an evening of food and festivities. Double handed, single handed and Jack and Jill classes will be offered with a pursuit start, the slowest boats start first. Competitors are encouraged to make moorage reservations with Arabella's Landing (253) 851-1793.

Go to styc.org for more details and registration! Nate Creitz



A typical Class 3 start - Sloop Tav Monday nights !!!

Three Buoy Fiasco! - It Happened!!

(previously the Spring Regatta)

STYC Three Buoy Fiasco!

The first annual Three Buoy Fiasco was sailed on May 14 under sunny skies and a northerly that filled just in the nick of time. This race is a new format to Puget Sound and took the calendar spot of the Spring Race. For a first annual race with short notice, the turn out was great. 40 Boats registered prior to the start from 8 different clubs, and Ballard Sails held the post race party immediately following the days racing. Many are already declaring this as the up and coming race event for the Sound and it's sure to be on their calendar next year. The course included a start/finish line in front of Shilshole (N-can) and three marks with a distance of approximately 15 miles. The start/finish could be crossed in either direction and the marks could be rounded in any order or direction as well. Prior to the start the docks were abuzz with discussion on which direction and order would be best. Some boats were headed to the start line with crewmembers still debating which mark to take first.

There was some concern with the lack of wind during the skippers meeting, but a brisk northerly filled in just in time for the first start and held for the race. The majority of the boats opted for a counter-clockwise route and headed for Jefferson Head first. Some boats chose to round Halverson Buoy first (technically the middle mark on the course) before proceeding up to Jefferson and then down to West Point. This year the big money was made by those few that chose to round the course clock-wise. The boats that rounded West Point first before crossing the sound were able to do so before the strongest of the flood tide and were able to take advantage of the tidal push returning from Jefferson Head.

Following the race there was a party at Ballard Sails where the fun and stories continued into the night. We thank Ballard Sails for hosting the party, and for all the boats and sailors that joined us on the first annual Three Buoy Fiasco.

With this race a new friendly West vs East Puget Sound competition has been born. PMYC recruited boats from the West side to compete against the fleet predominantly from the East side of the Sound, and based on the overall corrected time averages for each side, the West Sound took the prize (a jar of pickled beans and some bragging rights). A big congrats to the 9 boats sailing for the West side that pulled off a big win over what appeared to be a strong East side fleet.

Results: In class 1, non-flying sails division, 1st place went to Grayling sailed by Duke Phan, 2nd to Whistling Swan, and 3rd to Jabez. In class 2, flying sails, 1st went to Blue Jeans sailed by Corky Brown, 2nd to Euphoric, and 3rd to True Blue. In class 3, flying sails, 1st went to Wild Rumpus sailed by Andy and Stephanie Swank, 2nd to Three Ring Circus, and 3rd to More Uff Da. In Class 4, flying sails, 1st place went to Carmanah sailed by John and Donna Demeyer, 2nd to Nefarious, and 3rd to Here & Now. Top overall finishers were Carmanah the C&C43 from PMYC coming in first overall, Grayling the beautiful Q class boat sailing for STYC coming in 2nd overall, and the Mumm 30 Nefarious also with STYC taking 3rd overall.

Kirk Fraser

Full results can be found at www.STYC.org

For 31 years PNW Sailors have been coming together in support of various local charities through the Sloop Tavern Yacht Club's Blakely Rock Benefit. This year's beneficiary, as in the past few years, is the Ballard Food Bank. Over 70 businesses and individuals have donated items, expertise or time to the cause - creating an incredible raffle pool of swag and a long list of silent auction items that bidders have been able to ponder online for over a week before the event. All these items add up to a good time that attracts top sailboat racers, one design fleets, and cruisers for the flying and non-flying sails classes.

With a forecast 10 to 15 out of the Southwest switching to 10 to 15 out of the North, the racers gathered at the Sloop Tavern for the now famous blintz breakfast followed by the skippers meeting in the tavern. Once completed, it was off to the marina to rig and get the over 88 boats out to the starting area and begin the long starting sequence to get the 12 classes off the line and headed for the first mark in the course.

The Slowest rated boats start first in this version of the Blakely Rock race so it was up to the No Flying Sails boats to pick a way out of the starting area in the dying finicky Southerly. Some came off the line and headed straight west in the hopes of getting the first push of the incoming tide. A few stuck to the traditional wisdom of tacking up the breakwater and working towards the West Point shore. The trick was to not choose the tactic that showed the other 10 classes where not to go once it's their turn to start.

Staying in the bay and working up to West point ended up being the right choice for the early starters, with more than a few over earlies. They finessed everything they could out of the small puffs and current lanes to get up close to the beach and then push across the sand bar at West Point. Once around they came to find that an Easterly had developed, it was time to pull the jib leads outboard and tight reach down the sound towards the rock. Many of the later starters were able to hoist their spinnakers, run west to the now incoming tide, and take advantage of that push to get around West Point into the Easterly breeze.

As the current reached the lead boats they began reaching down, pinching up, and chasing the current fingers as best they could to try and stay in front of the boats catching them in the building flood current. Painfully, slowly the lead boats began rounding the rock in a light dying Easterly as a cameraman was setting up his stand on the beach. And wouldn't you know it, here comes a strong Southerly to wisk the boats behind up to the front where the leaders had been patiently waiting for the fleet to catch up and bring in the new breeze to the middle of the sound. Leap frog after leap frog - boats pushed their way back North to West Point - riding the edge of the Southerly breeze, puff to puff. Painful.

Playing the beach at Magnolia, boats continued leap frogging each other while staying as close as they could to shore to escape the adverse flood current - some staying a bit too close to the beach, finding the bottom but getting quickly free . . . Pleasantly - for everyone... - a Northerly built in and they shifted gears once again. With the faster rated boats working through the fleet, clear lanes disappeared as boats worked their way up to the final mark at Meadow Point with dreams of setting their spinnakers and easily running into the finish. It was not to be, winds died, puffs came straight down at the water scattering in any direction and boats struggled once again to round the mark and get through the finish line on the most crooked Blakely Rock Benefit Race to date. In the end the Flying Sails Overall trophy went to the well sailed Olson 40 'String Theory' starting in one of the latest starts and completing the 13.5 NM course in just over three and a quarter hours.

Now that's the first story of the Blakely Rock Benefit, and as many of you know, there are other stories to be told. There is the story of the myriad of volunteers that have worked diligently to decide upon this years beneficiary, to solicit donations for the raffle and the silent auction. These tireless people worked in groups and individually to both bring back the previous year's donors and encourage new donors into the fold. And then the work really starts - once the donations are made, the items must be kept track of, organized, and publicized in a way that both creates individual interest for the raffles and silent auctions while at the same time giving recognition to the various donor companies and individuals. A task that is not as easy as it sounds.

This same group then shifts gears into creating momentum in the sailing community to enter the race. Publicity, T-shirts, Posters, Online promotion - the club raters are kept busy developing ratings for anyone that needs them.

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They're doing their best to make sure everyone is welcome and able to get out there on the course to enjoy the race. Then it's time to shift gears again to race day - blintz breakfast at The Sloop, the Skippers meeting, organizing the volunteer race committee and RC boat, getting the racers off the starting line and keeping track of the finishes. Then shifting gears one last time to push us stodgy sailors into opening our wallets to support their cause at the after party, raffle and silent auction. Wondering how many gears they really have, this group of volunteers is what makes the event a success year after year.

There is also the story of the Beneficiary for this year's race - The Ballard Food Bank. One of many Seattle area resources utilized by our neighbors, co-workers, friends and families to help make ends meet in these tough economic times. The Ballard Food Bank isn't just helping out the homeless or those stuck on welfare. The Ballard Food Bank delivers food to the elderly and handicapped that are not mobile enough to supply for themselves. The Ballard Food Bank supplements families that just can't make ends meet in our changing economic times. They help your neighbors and friends, even I'm sure, your fellow sailors. Look around you next time you're out on the race course, in this group of ours there are people needing assistance, and there are people giving assistance.

Written by Ben Braden





Pete Belchy - former STYC member who one day said "to hell with it!"



Anchorline

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