

Ship-to-Shore

The South Sound Sailing Society's Newsletter

Volume 55 Issue 8 April 2026

www.ssssclub.com/about ssss/news/newsletter

April Meeting: Summer Cruising / Racing

Let's go for a Summer cruise or race around a few buoys! The days are getting longer, the sun warmer, and it will soon be time to get your boat out of the slip and into the waters of the Salish Sea, Georgia Strait, Southeast Alaska, and beyond. Or, get your boat prepared for summer evening races!

Our April Meeting will be designed to share cruising information based on where you want to go or prepare you for summer evening dinghy, Stars, and PHRF buoy races. We will have round-table discussions with our Members who have years of experience heading north to Alaska; who understand the best ways to get to, and wander through, the San Juan Islands; have circumnavigated Vancouver Island; and visited the Broughtons.

In addition, we will have table discussions for skippers and crew who are interested in racing their small sailboats, Stars, and sailboats with PHRF ratings this summer.

Pre-Meeting Sessions: Also, we plan to have pre-Meeting sessions on selling your sailboat or buying a new one, discussing the proposed hotel at the Swantown Marina, whether there is interest in providing women sailors an opportunity to meet and learn from each other, and other topics.

Doors of the Olympia Yacht Club at 201 Simmons St NW will open at 17:45, the Pre-sessions will start promptly at 18:00, and the Meeting at 19:00. Free Parking is available in the lot south of the OYC main parking lot.

Have your significant-other, friends, families, and crew members join you. Plus, we love to have guests.

Join us!

Bob Butts, Emma Lee

Commodore's Corner: April Showers Bring ...

You thought I was going to say "May flowers" didn't you? No, it was something like "raindrops to dodge as you work on those boat projects you need to finish before heading out for some glorious late Spring and early Summer sailing!" If you are anything like me, you still have a long list to work off! But then again, if you are anything like me, you find those boat projects to be cathartic and just part of the fun of boating! Any takers on that notion?

Besides raindrops, there is a lot to look forward to in the coming months. But before we get to that, let's take a much longer look forward to what might be in the works for one of Puget Sound's premier boating locations, Blake Island State Park, and how you might have a say in the direction the Parks Commission goes on several possible alternatives in their Master Plan for the park. If you have not done so already, take the survey they have posted to their web site, where each alternative is outlined, with pros and cons, and you can weigh-in with an opinion

S.I. Changes : San Juans : Elections : Dues : Twist : Great Circles : LifeSling



Toliva Shoal Race

Hammersley Inlet Cruise
April 18-19

General Meeting
April 21

Visitors Welcome

Doors open at 17:45 meeting starts 19:00

Spring Series Race 1
April 25

SEA Day/Swap Meet OYC
April 25

Spring Series Race 2
May 2

Star Racing Starts
May 4

Board Meeting
May 5

Dinghy Racing Starts
May 7

Spring Series Race 3
May 9

OYC Opening Day
May 9

Star Racing
May 11

Dinghy Racing
May 14

Spring Series Race 4
May 16

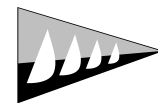
Stretch Cruise Starts
May 16

Star Racing
May 18

General Meeting
May 19

Visitors Welcome

Doors open at 17:45 meeting starts 19:00



on each one, and then at the end of the survey, you can rank order the alternatives. The survey will only be open until April 30, so if you care to participate, act now! You will find the survey at:

<https://parks.wa.gov/about/strategic-planning-projects-public-input/projects/blake-island-marine-state-park-master-planning-0>

April highlights both SSSS cruising, and racing, with the Cruise up Hammersley Inlet on April 18-19, and the start of the Spring Series Races on Saturday, April 25.

Our next Meeting will be sandwiched in between the Cruise and the Race on Tuesday, April 21, when we ask that you have thrown your hat in the ring for our upcoming officer elections for next year's Board at the June Meeting. Candidates will be announced at our May Meeting. Don't be shy; serving on the Board does not hurt! In fact, you and the Club will both benefit from you stepping into a leadership role in *your* Club!

May is going to be a busy sailing month, as well! Dinghy racing starts up on Thursday, May 7 and goes through every Thursday night until August 27, with first starts at 1830; and, no pesky race fees! Star racing also gets underway in May, on Monday evenings. You probably know that sitting low to the water in a fast-moving dinghy can feel like you are about to take flight; but recently I saw an interesting comment in an email by Dinghy Fleet Chair Jim Findley, where he said "[s]ailing a Star compared to the average racing dinghy is like the difference between the average sports car and a formula 1 race car." If *you* feel 'the need for speed' then check in with Star Fleet Chair Dave Branch about hitching a ride, or better yet, becoming a Star Commander yourself. "May the Force be with you!"

But wait ... there's more! The Spring Series Races continue on Saturdays, May 9 and 16, and the Wednesday night Commodore Series gets underway on May 27. The May Meeting on Tuesday, May 19, will focus on cruising options throughout the Salish Sea. And, if Cruise Chair Randy and his Committee decide on the May start option for their much anticipated Stretch Cruise many

of you will be heading north by mid-month. Stay tuned for details!

For the adventurous racers, there is the Royal Victoria Yacht Club's International Swiftsure Race over Memorial Day weekend. We often have had several of our sailors participating in the race, and over the years we have even had some class winners!

And if all that weren't enough, there is the grand *non-sequitur* of OYC's



Skookum Inlet Race photo by DeWayne Enyeart

Olympia Opening Day (when was it ever closed?) on Saturday, May 9 for those of you not racing in the Spring Series! Details are bit sparse just yet, but never fear, we will fill you in as they become available!. In years past the event has been replete with a blessing of the fleet and other pomp and circumstance, sometimes a band, a boat parade, and a BBQ on the deck; in other words, a party! And there is nothing wrong with that, even if it does not open anything except a smile on your face!

Better turn-to and get those boat projects done! You do not want to be left sitting at the dock with a wrench, a pair of pliers, or can of paste wax in your hand, and a forlorn look on your face!

Bob Hargreaves, *Bright Angel*

PHRF Sailing Instructions Changed

Changes were made to the 2026 PHRF Sailing Instructions, Appendix A Buoy Races.

Wednesday Evening Races have new Finish Time Limits.

The Triangular course option for buoy races has changed.

Races need to read the new instructions, found on the PHRF section of our web site.

SSSS Officers Sought

It's time to ask for volunteers/nominations for next year's SSSS leadership. We have a number of opportunities available. Descriptions of the responsibilities can be found on our web site in the About South Sound Sailing Society section under Board Handbook.

Board positions include:

Vice Commodore: From the Bylaws: The Vice Commodore shall assist the Commodore in carrying out his/her duties and preside in his/her absence. Generally responsible for Membership boosting, publicity of Club events, media relations, provision of burgees and embroidered clothing.

Secretary: From the

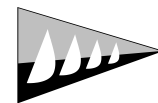
Bylaws: The Secretary shall keep minutes of all Membership, Board and special meetings and shall maintain and preserve all records, reports and documents of the organization.

Key Leadership opportunity, House Chair: Provide refreshments at Meetings. Obtain banquet permit before Meetings where alcohol is served. Coordinate house setup and cleanup after Meetings. Count donations and conveys to the Treasurer. Submit receipts to the treasurer after each meeting.

Please let me know if you are interested or know someone who might be. We hope to have volunteers identified by the end of our April meeting for the Board positions and for our House Chair.

Nina Goodrich

Star Racing Starts May 5



Portsmouth Racing Starts

Start of the Dinghy Racing Season. May 7th

Harstine GT 6.0 June 6th and 7th

Salish 100 start July 16th

Fall Dinghy Regatta September 13th

These are the important dates for the upcoming Summer. Everything else, of course, pales in comparison. If you would like to participate in any of these, except the Salish 100, and have questions, email me at dinghy@ssssclub.com. If you are interested in an occasional race in Budd Inlet in your favorite small boat, under 20 feet and no fixed keel, come on out and join us on a Thursday evening.

The Harstine GT6.0 is a two day cruise around Harstine Island with an overnight stop at Jarrell's Cove State Park. We are short of chase boats. If you have a runabout/power boat and are interested in helping by following the fleet around the island, *please* contact me at dinghy@ssssclub.com.

Jim Findley,
Dinghy Fleet co-chair

Are Your Dues Due?

If your Membership is due for renewal in May, if you have not paid since September, it is time to re-up! (Some were due in September; so if you are not sure when you come up for renewal, check on our web site or with our Secretary).

For all you get with Membership in this great Club: fantastic programs during our Meetings, a super and well-stocked drink bar by our ever-popular House Chair to liven up the social hour and get you through the business part of our Meetings, great Cruises throughout the year to some of your favorite local and other Puget Sound destinations, reciprocal privileges in numerous locations throughout the Salish Sea, vibrant year-round racing opportunities in numerous genres, i.e., PHRF, Star and Dinghy fleets, and on numerous race courses, around the buoys, around local islands, and into and out of local inlets, the privilege of flying a really cool burgee and wearing some great swag, to say nothing of the camaraderie of some of the greatest people in the South Sound, *your fellow Sailors!* The mere pittance of \$70 in annual dues, plus race fees, if you race your boat, is by far the best deal around, *on or off the water!*

But remember, even though we do not tug very hard on your wallet, without the contribution of your dues, none of what SSSS has to offer would continue to be on the menu. So, *ante up*, and let's keep this show on the road, and on the water!

Bob Hargreaves, Commodore,
Bright Angel

OYC Opening Day, May 9th

As we go to print it's still being planned. There will be opening ceremonies, a parade, and more. SSSS is invited. The theme is Portal to the World. Watch the OYC web site.

LifeSling Clinic June 6

Our annual LifeSling Clinic will be on June 6 at the Olympia Yacht Club. We will begin with classroom instruction at 0900. After the classroom instruction we will do dockside drills on the boats at Percival Landing. We will make sure the hoisting tackle used to get an overboard victim back onto the boat is set up properly for each boat participating in the clinic. The drills also provide an opportunity to go through the steps involved in a LifeSling rescue and answer your questions.

Once the dockside drills are finished, we will go out on the water in Budd Inlet to do actual rescues with volunteer victims in survival suits. Each participant will complete a rescue while in sole control of the boat, although under the watchful eye of an instructor. Basic sailing skills are required.

This is an opportunity to build confidence in your ability to rescue an overboard victim. You will be able to observe what other participants do correctly and how to overcome common

mistakes. If you have taken the class before, please consider taking it again to refresh your skills.

The cost is just \$15 per person. It is especially helpful to learn how to use the LifeSling and hoisting tackle on the boat you sail. If you have a boat, please bring it and your crew. The fee will be waived for skippers who bring two or more crew members.

You will need to bring your life jacket, lunch, and all your questions. Depending on wind conditions, we usually finish in mid-afternoon.

Registration is first come, first served. Space is limited so advance registration is encouraged. Please sign up by calling or texting me at (253) 732-2129 or by email at hsaller214@aol.com. I will be happy to answer any questions you have about the class.

Please also contact me if you would like to volunteer to be a victim for the on-the-water rescues. We will provide a, mostly, dry survival suit, along with much praise and gratitude for your contribution to this worthwhile effort.

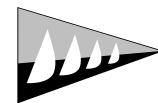
Andy Saller, Liberty

OCS Sailing Camp

Olympia Community Sailing offers sailing camps for kids: Harbor Mice, for six and seven year olds; Learn to Sail, Keelboat Experience, and Ocean Explorers for those eight to twelve; and a Learn to Sail program for those twelve to eighteen. Details on their web site.



Skookum Inlet Race photo: DeWayne Enyeart



Cruise News

Hammersley Inlet April 18-19

Paddle races; Potluck dinner and socializing; Games and prizes.
Hosted by Will and Maggie Clay.

Commodore's Stretch Cruise May 16-31

Two-week Cruise through the Puget Sound as far North as Poulsbo and including Gig Harbor, Blake Island, Shilshole Bay, Seattle and Tacoma. Feel free to be a part of the entire Cruise or join in at any point along the route.

Dates and details may change. Please confirm on the Club calendar and watch for Cruise announcements with RSVP instructions and final plans.

Cruise Communications

RSVP is not required for most Cruises however for the *Commodore's Stretch Cruise*, *RSVPs are suggested* because in the central part of the Puget Sound, typical springtime demand for slips is high and the marinas need to know how many boats can be expected. RSVP the Cruise Committee at cruises@ssssclub.com.

On-the-water coordination: The Cruise Committee will be monitoring VHF Channel 72.

Future emails and S-to-S Newsletters: What to watch for the docking/anchoring plan, raft-up guidance, potluck time/location, and any marina fees.

Jarrells Cove Cruise

Jarrells Cove was the ideal location to Kick off the years Cruising season. Friday and Saturday furnished us with a preview of Spring bringing sunny and sixties weather, which even made the motoring part all good.

Club boats took over nearly all the State Dock space, with nobody having to anchor out or take up mooring balls.

Our Washing State Park Ranger was a hit. We were fortunate to not only to get a local Ranger to guide us, but a ranger that had been born and raised on Harstine Island. We learned as much about the history of the Island as well as the Flora and Fauna of the park while walking the trails.

Jim Findley and Dave Oppencarne provided some entertainment Saturday afternoon, while they pulled a power boat out of the mud. This reinforces my theory that our boats have personalities, and they all share a common narcissistic personality with attention-seeking behavior that they choose to manifest at the specific time that they can garner the largest audience to ensure maximum humiliation of their owner.

The Saturday Social Hour and Potluck dinner was well received, and I am pretty sure that there were some significant solutions to Olympia waterfront troubles accomplished during our meal.

This cruise got our cruising juices amped up and we are looking forward to our next Cruise on April 18 Trip to Hammersley Inlet!

Randy Richter



OYC SEA Day and Swap Meet!

Safety / Environmental Awareness

Summer's right around the corner! Are you and your vessel ready for a safe, clean, and fun cruising season?

Check off essential items on your to-do list by attending the 2026 OYC Safety and Environmental Awareness (SEA) Day and Swap Meet. This event is open to all South Sound recreational boaters.

On **Saturday, April 25 at the OYC**

Clubhouse 0900-1300 you can:

Schedule a voluntary Vessel Safety Inspection: ensure you're ready for any emergency! USPS and the USCG Auxiliary will be on hand to assist.

Drop off expired Visual Distress Signals (VSD, aka "flares") for environmentally responsible disposal by the Thurston County Sheriff's Office. Check out the latest safety equipment and "clean" cleaning products from West Marine.

Support our OYC Clean Marina certification. Be familiar with OYC waste disposal facilities and get free materials to help practice clean boating: pump-outs: everything you wanted to know but were afraid to ask!

fuel & oil spill avoidance: bilge pads and fuel bibs.

wildlife protection

water quality and environmental remediation programs

Be aware of current regulations for Orca stand-off distances.

How do you know when you're at least 1000 yards away?

What should you do when you're not?!

Going to Canada? Be sure to know Canadian "no-go" zones and Orca protection regulations: violations can be embarrassing and costly.

Critter Features. *Everything*, from zooplankton to forage fish, from seabirds to salmon, from seals to whales to humans (that's US!), *depends upon boaters to keep our water clean.*

Check out the critter exhibits that make boating so special!

Check your fire extinguishers: on your vessel and in your boathouse. Do they need hydro testing? Replacement? Due to staffing issues, *AmeriSafe* will *not* have an exhibit at this year's SEA Day. However, if your extinguisher needs service, or if you have questions or concerns, take it to the *AmeriSafe* shop in the Mottman Industrial Park.

The OYC Swap Meet

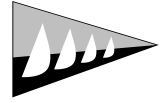
will be held in the OYC parking lot and run concurrently with SEA Day. Many marine items, big and small, will be for sale. Marine electronics, plumbing, rigging, signal flags, what knots, and of course those wonderful treasures you can't cruise without.

Set up is 0800. To pre-register and reserve your space, please contact Fran Williams, franwil@comcast.net, (360) 584-2952.

See you on April 25th!

John Sherman, Grendel

Chair, OYC Environmental Awareness Committee



Great Circles

Tuesday night of Race Week, back when it was held out of Oak Harbor, I was excited. I was sure we would win the next day's regatta, despite placing third the first two days. We had not come expecting to win the event. We did not bring a practiced crew, no new sails. But now we had an edge.

My confidence of winning the next day came not from being the fastest, but from geometry, knowing the shortest way to the weather mark. Normally I figure out how a race should have been sailed after the event. But this time I knew the fastest way to sail the course when I could still sail it.

I knew I had it right, as that is how we had sailed the last race of the day. We rounded the last leeward mark ahead of our competition, just a short beat to the finish. But the main could not come in; major tangle and we got passed. Disappointing, but it was proof of concept. And our competition was not doing it.

So Tuesday night I was expecting to win the next day. I allowed myself to think we just might pull off a first for the Week, if no one caught on.

Three boats in our division rated faster. The scratch boat was a Martin 24-1, another SSSS boat. If they got it together she could be a factor. Also a pair of Olson 25s. Five boats could correct on us, including a San Juan 24 with a reputation as well sailed. However after two days of racing the Olsons were clearly the boats to beat; taking the top two places both days.

The weather mark was set near the head of the Penn Cove. It was common knowledge that the current runs counter clockwise around the Cove. We were sailing on the sea breeze: a colder stable wind that came down the Strait and over Whidbey Island before coming to us. Crossing the Island it picked up some unstable patches and geographic influences. On the right, the northern, side of the course there was a large port tack lift, caused by the geography.

The fleet heavily favored the right side, tacking right after the start. Maybe they were going for the current? Maybe they got seduced by the lift? It lifted and kept lifting. That seemed good, but the shifting wind kept the mark the same distance up wind even as they made progress west. They were sailing around the mark, sometimes called a *Great Circle*.

However far you went you could never lay the mark as the more you are lifted, the more starboard tack is headed. One has to tack eventually. Once on the headed tack you got headed. And headed again. All the way back. Starboard tack was as headed as port was lifted. Sailing off into the corner was the long way to the mark. It was less distance tacking up the middle. On top of that there was more pressure in the middle. The last race had shown that the difference was significant.

However all eggs do not become chickens. Wednesday was not to be our day. We woke to a cloudy sky. No sea breeze. A weak disturbance was passing north of us. We raced in Saratoga Passage on a weather system southerly, channeled a bit by the Passage. The legs were longer than in Penn Cove. We came in a solid third. There was no longer a chance at first for the week, but second was still in reach.

Thursday the sun was back, bringing the sea breeze. We were back in Penn Cove. As we approached the line for the first start, the Olsons were messing with each other. One took the other up, forcing her to tack away. Just because it was easy, we joined the game. We came up next to the winning Olson, forcing her to tack away too. Not that any of that matter to us. They were fighting for a boat end start to be the first to tack. We wanted the pin end to go left and it was uncontested.

That got the day off to a good start. The whole day went that way. We sailed our race every race, with the expected results. Last race of the day we rounded the last leeward mark leading our start. Wanting to be first to finish and not just correct out, I got conservative. We went right to cover the leading Olson, to stay between them and the finish.

Until the Martin rounded. She was moving, going up the middle like we should have been. We tacked. The wind picked up noticeably as we neared the center of the Cove. The boat came alive. When we met the Martin we tacked on her lee bow. We did not get going quite fast enough to gas her. She overlapped us, at the most ten feet to weather. She was slowly gaining as we charged to the line. We crossed the line almost bow to bow. A good way to finish the day.

And the week. We will never know if

we could have done equally well for a second day. Friday came windless. After floating around for a while the races were canceled. We motored back and the party commenced. Race Week is known for the parties. Time later to think about all that was learned from a week of racing and the different kinds of shifts.

Steve Worcester



Take Off Islands Race photo: Jimmy Grant

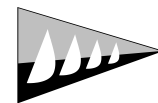
SSSS Boats at the Islands Race, CYCT

- 1 PHRF 5 Take Off!
- 1 PHRF 7 Aurora
- 1 ORC Mako
- 2 PHRF 3 Ravens Haven
- 3 PHRF 3 Athena

SSSS Boats in the Southern Sound Series

- 1 PHRF 5 Take Off
- 1 PHRF 7 Aurora
- 1 ORC Makko
- 2 PHRF 2 Ziva
- 3 PHRF 3 Ravens Haven
- 4 PHRF 3 Athena
- 4 PHRF 7 Spitting Kisses
- 4 PHRF 5 Anarchy
- 4 PHRF 3 Flying Circus
- 7T PHRF 6 Strider
- 8 PHRF 3 007
- 8T PHRF 7 Moon Shodow
- 9 PHRF 3 String Theory
- 9 PHRF 5 Shaka
- 10 PHRF 3 Angel Eyes
- 10 PHRF 9 Emma Lee
- 11 PHRF 5 Magic Dragon
- 1 Unrated FS Echo
- 1 Unrated NFS Jolly Rumbalow

If I missed someone please let me know



First Cruise to the San Juans

Continued from last month

Friday Harbor thoroughly charmed us, reminding us of Gig Harbor with its endearing waterfront community. We effortlessly arranged a second night at the marina and visited the whale museum, the adorable Serendipity used bookstore, managed to procure local beef from the farmers market and fish from the fishmonger, and of course refilled our water tanks and recharged our batteries. As the sun went down, out came the nets and flashlights as our kids joined the other children's nightly hunt for ghost shrimp among the pylons.

After Friday Harbor we set our sights on Sucia Island. We wanted to take the scenic route instead of cutting past the Northwest shore of Orcas Island, and were tempted to go through Wasp passage between Orcas and Shaw Islands. However, I didn't feel comfortable attempting it without a depth sounder; all the guide books go on about uncharted rocks and I felt good making the decision to stay in deep water.

We had just slipped between Blakely and Orcas Islands through Peavine Pass, avoiding the ominously named Obstruction Pass, when something was said to the effect of "Hey, why are we motoring for so long? Why don't we find a nice place to tie up, and catch some more crabs?" Hard to argue. A quick scan of the charts showed that Doe Island was the closest candidate.

Doe Island was the kind of charming little island you expect to see fairies on. A picture of my boat docked there is now the desktop background on my computer at work, and I spend more time now staring at my desktop than I would admit to my coworkers. Meandering trails circumnavigate the island, transitioning from soft mossy woods to exposed rocky bluffs. The dock is seasonal and small, and we took up one side with no room to spare. My trusty lead on a string showed that at the low tide our 6 foot draft would have

inches of clearance, but the bottom was muddy sand so I didn't worry. We caught more crabs than we could cook, so we kept the extras in the cockpit of the Sunfish with the drain plug open, hanging some kelp off the daggerboard to shade them.

The next day carried us on a broad reach toward Sucia Island, with the special treat of a schooner *Adventuress* sighting in the wild, I think, at least, we saw an absolutely gorgeous schooner on a screaming reach going the other way, passing port to port. Seeing a classic schooner while out for a



sail really makes you feel like you are in the right place doing the right thing at the right time.

Nearing Sucia Island we were tempted by the reputation of Fossil Bay, but prudence and the lack of a depth sounder advised Echo Bay instead. Ghosting through Echo Bay we found all the moorage to be occupied, so we decided to attempt entry to Ewing Cove. This entry is also marred by rumors of uncharted rocks, but the tide was high and still rising for a bit, so with Vanessa standing on the bow and me motoring at 0.5 knots we accepted the risk and glided onto the last unoccupied mooring ball without incident.

Ewing Cove was a positively magical place to spend the next four days. Little islands and big rocks poke their tops out of the water during high tide, and then expose connecting land at low tide. We poked the Sunfish all around these rocks, and into Echo Bay, but didn't feel comfortable taking the dingy all the way to Fossil Bay,

knowing that if the wind died we would be stranded with the Sunfish until it came back. One morning we woke up to rain, and watched a movie on our laptop while we baked bread and cookies. Another day, my daughter decided to make a raft out of driftwood on the beach lashed with twine, she made a raft named *Riff*, that floated her around the cove, as she propelled herself with a stick. My son was inspired and built his own to float from one end of the beach to the other.

Finally, it was time to head home. We wanted to take our time returning down the Puget Sound, not send it in one straight shot like we did on the way up. However, it was also my daughter's birthday! So, we predictably pushed our departure day back, giving my daughter the choice of islands to spend her birthday on. She chose Matia Island, so we made the short sail to the National Wildlife Refuge. While she hiked around the island I prepared a birthday cake, and then we spent the afternoon swimming, reading, and gathering berries. I made

her favorite spaghetti dinner, and we had cake and presents. She had an unforgettable birthday, and it was a perfect way to conclude our time in the Islands.

The next day we had to start getting home in earnest. Motoring down from Matia Island

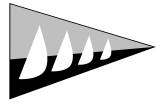
through Rosario Strait, a low cloud became visible in the distance. As we got nearer my son turned on the running lights, and we entered some of the thickest fog I have ever been in. The shoreline quickly became invisible, and I was forced to steer by the compass alone. We have a bugle for just this purpose: an air horn is abrasive and aesthetically incorrect. I marveled at how a two dimensional map unfolded in my minds eye, hearing the other boats' horns and subconsciously calculating our distance and bearing relative to them.

to be continued

Clifford Williams

More photos:
photos.app.goo.gl/oqKaJAwBFXXuetx69





Basic Sail Trim: Twist

To start at the beginning, What is twist? With the main hoisted, stand in the cockpit and push the end of the boom up. You will see that the top of the sail falls off to leeward. That is twist. It happens when the clew and the masthead are brought closer to each other; when the boom is allowed to rise and/or the mast bends, loosening the luff.

Set right, the luff should make a smooth curve clew to head. Twisting off the luff spills wind and loses power; that is usually slow. However there are times you want twist. In light air wind direction varies with height. Twisting the sail can align it with the wind at all heights. Getting the top of the sail right is the most important thing in light stable air.

When over powered twisting off the top of the sail, where the wind has the most leverage, can keep you on your feet.

When you want to turn the boat away from the wind, spilling a little wind in the main can change the boat's balance and help the boat turn.

You control twist in a main by controlling boom height. The main sheet and the boom vang, if your boat has one, pull the boom down. You let it rise to induce twist. The sheet also controls the angle of attack, and they do not always want to move in tandem. Which is where the vang comes in. One can set boom height with the vang and the angle of attack with the sheet. Alternatively you can control luff tension with the main and adjust the angle of attack with the traveler, assuming your boat has one.

Back up to where you are standing in the cockpit boom in hand. If it's a light air day and you let go the boom hangs from the luff. No smooth curve clew to head. The luff is pulled tight, maybe even hooked to weather. This too is slow. Some boats have a solid vang to hold the boom up in light air and allow the sail to twist.

Luff tension is important. In performance boats, a small change in luff tension can make a big difference in boat speed. I remember easing the sheet on my Hobie 16 about an inch and she took off.

The other way to twist the main is by bending the mast. Some masts, like a Laser's, are designed to bend with the gusts to depower automatically. Some masts can be bent with the backstay. This changes more than the luff tension, flattening the sail and depowering further.

A jib behaves much the same, but you have only one control, a sheet. It has to control angle of attack and also luff tension. The only adjustment is the jib lead position, usually moved for and aft (on Stars it's adjustable in and out and on dinghies it is often fixed).

Start with the lead positioned so that there is equal tension on the luff and the foot. Move it forward and you tighten the luff while freeing up the foot, giving you a deeper sail. Move the lead aft and you tighten the foot, flattening the sail, while freeing up the luff to twist off. I watched J move the lead car back one hole and *Bodacious* went from overpowered to sailing nicely.

Steve Worcester

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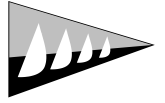
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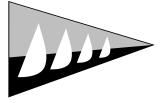
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