



FLEET CAPTAIN'S SIGNAL

Captain Dave's Miscellaneous Ramblings

It's been awhile since our spring meeting, so when I recently looked down under the car seat I was surprised to see a little sailboat—chocolate variety! And I thought of how thoughtful Sharon Mack had been to include such a treasure in our little baskets at everybody's place at dinner. The artfully designed centerpieces were also her work. In fact the whole day was perfectly planned from the tour of the Naval Academy, to socializing time, Captain Jack Herbert, and the dinner. Bob and Sharon Mack did a wonderful job arranging our day. Everyone is very appreciative, especially me, as it makes my job easy!

Our Fleet 12 is very unusual in that there is such sharing of duties. We are discovering that few fleets involve so many people. There is certainly a lot of work involved in setting up a meeting, as the Macks found out, but then their responsibilities are over. They can relax and accept thanks! Already there are volunteers for the next two meetings. Dot and Bill Bock have agreed to host the get-together and election meeting this fall at a surprise location, and Ralph Caruso and his wife Lynn Merritt are going to plan an interesting excursion into history at Harpers Ferry next spring.

At our past meeting there were some new faces that must be mentioned. This was the first meeting for Richard and Maude Williams although they attended a raft-up last summer. They have the newest boat in

our fleet so they are ripe to make improvements! Chuck and Chris Shivery also attended their first meeting and we all met them for the first time. William and Kathleen Nuttall are brand new members having moved up from a C-25. They sail out of Maryland Marina off the Middle River. The other new attendee was Walt and Jan Rupp's granddaughter who drew the names of the door prize winners out of the hat, another fine touch by the Mack's! It was equally fine to see all the old faces! In fact there were 37 of us attending—a fine turnout! De and I number all of you as our special friends, and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our summer raft-ups. I'm sure they are listed somewhere in this newsletter. So remember, I'll be lookin for you!

Captain Dave Ewing
Cherette #245



Did You Know

IMPELLER LONGEVITY. Spraying "Armorall" or Silicone on Oberdorfer rubber impeller seems to keep the blades from cracking and then breaking off. This works best with your spare impeller, especially if it is sprayed and then stored until needed in a Ziplock bag.

A LARGER STOPPER KNOT. Make a "Figure Eight" knot, but go around the "standing part" another half turn.

LORAN ACCURACY. For the best Loran repeatability, always ensure that your receiver is using the same numbered secondary stations.

IMPROVE VHF RADIO RECEPTION/TRANSMISSION. Check your VHF radio antenna and make sure the installer didn't take any short cuts. Probably the coax cable running down the mast from the antenna is RG8X used for long runs under 60 feet. Further check to see if this cable is the same or whether a lesser grade RG58U cable was used from the base of the mast to the radio itself. If you see a TV type coax connector, it's the wrong impedance and should be replaced with a PL-259 connector. If PL-259's were used, check to see if both the center tip and the braided shield on the sides were soldered. Every little bit helps!

DEPTH FINDER BACKUP. One of the frequent causes of an inoperable depth finder is failure of its transducer. In response to customer demand, many of the companies have gone to replaceable transducers like the pop out type used in a knot log meter. I have Data Marine instruments. Data Marine now has the pop out depth finder transducer which (size-wise) is interchangeable with the knot log transducer. I have the permanent through the hull type, but the "scotch" in me can't see replacing a perfectly good transducer. I bought a pop in type depth finder transducer which matched the frequency (very important) of my present depth finder instrument and carry it on board as a spare. If the fixed depth finder transducer fails, and I don't want to or can't pull the boat to repair it, I'll remove the knot log transducer and pop the new depth finder transducer into that hole. Better to lose speed info and know the depth. You can always get speed from the Loran or GPS. A permanent fix can be made the next time the boat is hauled.

RON HILL
APACHE #788

RON, WHISKERS weighs 13500 LBS. This is a stripped boat but includes a full fuel tank, extra batteries, anchors and tools. I estimate that the actual weight at 13000 lbs, 450 lbs over design weight. That is a lot of barnacles. In talking to the travel lift operators it is apparently tricky to accurately weigh a boat. They indicated the best time to weigh a boat on a travel lift is when the keel just clears the water and the boat is parallel to the water. It seems it is difficult to weigh a boat in the lift when the lift is on land because the land is not level and the four corners of the boat are not even in the sling. Or something to that effect.

Duane Maher
Whiskers #1076

IN THE PURSUIT OF THE ELECTRICAL GRAIL PART II

Whiskers now has refrigeration and the juice to support it. I spent the whole winter on this project and I have been asked to update my last article in the *Dockline* with my experiences.

The major changes to my plan were installing Ample Power's Next Step Regular (#NEXT-12P) with the Parallel Solenoid (#SOL-12) and Cruising Equipment Amp-Hour + Meter from West Marine (487876). The Amp-Hour meter is not absolutely necessary but it gives you a fuel gauge type measurement of your batteries by indicating number of amp hours you are removing from or replacing into your batteries. It also has a very accurate voltmeter. I also purchased from Ample Power their 106 amp high output alternator (#4023) which has a two inch foot that fits the Universal diesel. Like others who have installed this type of alternator, I had to have my old bracket modified to clear the fan. I had Certified Marine Engines in Annapolis visit my boat to measure and modify my bracket. They came up with a good solution by actually shortening the bracket, thereby making it sturdier. They also wrote me a letter stating they are not liable for any damage that this might cause the bearings in my engine. They strongly suggested not installing this alternator, saying it would cause damage and stall my engine because of the heavy load. They also indicated that Universal would only guarantee an alternator up to 72 amps which, by the way, Universal offers such an alternator. I have had no problems so far.

The preferred system is a single house bank and another bank/battery solely to start the engine. This allows you to bypass the selector switch and wire the alternator and starter directly to their respective banks. This eliminates the possibility of damaging your alternator. The preferred system and other electrical information is documented in Ample Powers's catalog that can be obtained by calling 1-800-541-7789.

The Ample Power equipment, alternator, regular, solenoid can be purchased as a kit from Jack Rabbit Marine in CT. saving \$79. This system has the smarts for temperature compensation and system integration to drive a parallel solenoid to simplify charging a starter battery at the same time a house battery is charged.

One of the most difficult part of this project was running the #2 cable and crimping the lugs on to the cables. I managed to epoxy ends of flexible conduits under the floor to create extra runways for the new cables. The lugs presented a particularly difficult problem. A professional crimper cost over \$300. The crimping tool you can buy from Boat/US or West Marine is cheap but you must use a hammer or, as Ron Hill suggested, a vice pliers. Again I went back to Ample Power for a solution. They have what is called compression lugs, which are heavy duty lugs installed by tightening a compression nut. Although a lot of strength is required to install, it appears to provide a very clean and an exceptionally strong crimp.

Now for the real reason I went through this: refrigeration. I installed an Adler-Barbour Cold Machine. Last month I visited Bill Beck on *Proxit* to see how the "factory" installed the unit. I ended up doing close to the same thing, mounting the compressor unit in the aft locker behind the water tank. When I initially tested the unit, it did not run for very long and it did not feel very cold. So I went out and bought a thermometer and a bottle of champagne to really test it out. I am happy to say that my first mate and I enjoyed our first mechanically cooled (35 degrees) bottle of champagne on *Whiskers*.

Duane Maher
Whiskers 1076

Safe and Sound with a Sentinel

Quiet cove as the great orb is sinking
 Hook is down, and all systems secure
 Steaks are on, iced Martinis are clinking
 For most all human ills, here's the cure.

Dishes done, final fixes completed
 Now to sailors' deep, untroubled rest
 But the zephyr from Dixie's retreated
 Swung 180 and picked up some zest.

Eyes slide open, mind poses the query:
 "How much rode did I think to put out?"
 The boat's motion is now getting scary
 Anchor dragging? No longer a doubt!

To the foredeck as lightning is flashing
 He: "Turn her over! The lee shore draws near."
 She: "Get that rode out! I'm sick of this hashing."
 They: "Oh my God! We've fetched up on a pier!"

Sailor, if you'd eschew such adventure,
 The preventive is easy to tell
 Just include in your pre-sail procedure
 The procural of a sentinel

A sentinel? What's that, you wonder.
 Just some new gimmick from Boat U.S.?
 Well, no matter what name you look under
 They're harder to find than you'd guess.

You, do-it-yourselfers don't worry.
 Get a shackle, a big chunk of lead.
 It will slide down your rode in a hurry,
 Keep it three to five feet off the bed.

If you'd go for a ready-made slider,
 There's a place up in old Ada, Mich.
 That'll send you a brand new "Rode Rider"
 For a hundred and twenty-five fish.

The weight keeps your rode stretched out level,
 It won't wrap itself 'round your keel
 Your anchor will hold like the devil--
 When it blows, think how safe you will feel.

And, sailor, remember Odysseus,
 Whose long trip back home went to hell.
 He could have been there with his missus
 If he'd learned to use a sen-ti-nell

Bill Brown
 Plaisir d'Amour



Small Dramas

I was the first to arrive that morning at the boat yard. The masts devoid of sails echoed the trees on the opposite shore, not yet with buds. I hoped others would come so I wouldn't be alone. My wife didn't come this trip. She's a great sailor but not so gung ho about maintenance.

Had the marina been sold? There had been rumors such, last fall. The grey gravel matched the grey early morning sky and reflected grey on all the hulls. Walking through the maze of boats completely filling the parking lot often at right angles to one another with small boats inserted low down in-between high larger ones, I felt like I was inside a "can-you-get-home-from-here" puzzle on children's place mats at family restaurants.

Every boat but one was gone from the docks. It was a forlorn Catalina 27 with an unpainted fiberglass repair at the bow, and it was in my slip! Looking out the Magothy River which was always full of boats revealed nothing. Not one soul was out yet.

Back at our boat an inspection revealed that it had made it through the winter with only one mishap. The main halyard had come loose and was twisted around the backstay of a boat two spaces away. Placing my ladder on its stern, balancing on its stern rail with one foot, hanging on the backstay with one hand and extending the boat hook with the other, I could barely reach the offending halyard. If I fell now I would fall right through the winter cover into the cockpit and impale myself on the binacle. When would someone arrive at the marina, and if

they did would they even find me?

I stood on tiptoe and barely holding the end of the boat hook with my finger tips I finally managed to free the halyard. Carefully I climbed back down the ladder, moved it over to my boat, and secured the halyard. First job successfully accomplished.

A car pulled in the gate and Rolf the manager, or rather the owners son, came over. Yes the marina had been sold, so the new owners wouldn't take over for another month, they promised not to raise the slip fees, and the toilet rooms had been fixed.

As I started scraping the bottom, the sun burned through the haze and a young woman appeared at my side. "Hello, I'm from Poland and I am raising money for exchange students, would you care to look at these pictures I have for sale?" As the small stack of paintings looked to be of the fluorescent paint on black felt variety I politely declined. As she repeated her pitch to another couple that had just arrived I felt guilty for not helping her. Her jacket was threadbare and she had a bad complexion, maybe she had been abandoned on these shores and she was trying to raise money for passage back to Poland! Then again I don't think exchange students were allowed to work in this country and if I had bought something the I.N.S. would have found out and deported her and jailed me!

Soon my slip neighbor arrived to attend his boat. He issued a hearty "Hi Dave," and of course I couldn't remember his name. Water proceeded to drain from his cockpit scuppers. It seemed to drain for the whole hour I was sanding my bottom. I took a break to check it out

and discovered he had placed a tarp over the bottom of his cockpit thereby closing off the drains and of course the cockpit had been full of water and ice all winter. I wonder what he thought he was protecting with that tarp? He was happy that no water had spilled over the companionway into the cabin below!

Everyone left that night and I was alone in my main cabin under three blankets, with the heater going full blast and the little 5" TV showing Polish ice skaters competing against the Chinese Americans, the Russian Americans, and the French Americans. The Polish lost, I guess because our country has more skating rinks.

Since I went to sleep early I was up at dawn waxing the hull. The sun rose early, people filled the yard happily removing winter covers. I realized that the previous day I had been successful in painting the bottom, replacing the packing in the shaft, and of course retrieving the halyard! The waxing was going very fast with the new liquid wax. I saw some buds in a nearby tree and a bird even alighted on my rigging. I removed my sweatshirt as the temperature inched up. The hull glistened, the bottom never looked so good. I spoke to the manager who assured me my boat was in position to be one of the first to be launched. I looked out into the Magothy and the first boat shimmered in the distance. Mine would be there soon.

Dave Ewing
Cherette

Status of the Fleet Spring 1995

At the beginning of 1995, the Fleet remains in fair financial condition, and the membership is at a continuing healthy level (given that all current members continue to show interest). Since the last newsletter, two new boats and crews have joined us Lee & Nancy Kriebel will keep their boat FIGMENT in Annapolis and Bill & Kathleen Nuttall keep their boat IRISH LADY at Maryland Marina on Frog Mortar (There's got to be a story in there somewhere) Creek. I've written to Jim Leach of Herrington Harbor who seems interested. Please everyone welcome our new members by inviting them to our events. Bill & Kathleen joined us for the Spring meeting in Annapolis.

This newsletter is directed to 37 owners (19 paid as of this writing). Annual dues (a cheap \$15) for 1995 are NOW PAYABLE. Please make it a point to send yours in today. I am using the usual reminder. If your label is highlighted in yellow, you haven't paid for 1995 and this is your last newsletter.

Turnover in the membership is continuous, with the Fleet losing and replacing about 1/3 each year. So, if you run across (not over) new owners of Catalina 34's (new or old), please get me their names and addresses so I can contact them about membership. This past year about half of those I contacted joined us. Better still invite them to the next Raft-up or meeting. Hope to see you all this season.

Bob Bierly
Secretary/Treas
C'Mon Wind
#913

May 20 & 21 Raft-Up

Where: Whitehall Creek (off of Whitehall Bay (maybe Ridout Cr))

Hosted By: Claire & Duane Maher

Weather Forecast: Sunny & Warm

See you there!



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Catalina 34 Fall Meeting, hosted by Dot & Bill Beck
will be held the weekend of November 4th.

1995 NORTHERN BAY CRUISES

If you want more specifics on individual cruises, call the cruise hosts. The hosts and those attending cruises should plan to monitor Channel 78 starting at 1300 on Saturday.

I ask that all hosts publicize their cruise and write an article about their cruise in DOCKLINE.

May 20 & 21	Whitehall Creek	Mahers
Jun 10 & 11	Chester River	Merritt-Carusso
Jul 15 & 16	West/Rhode River	Becks
Aug 5 & 6	Maghothy River	Ewing-Winchell
Sep 16 & 17	Miles River	Reclas
Oct 7 & 8	Inner Harbor*	Daltons

* We'll be blessing the boats and manatees.

Corky Dalton

1st Annual Fleet 12 Cruise Week

The Mahers are planning a Sept. 2-10 cruise. We invite all to come along for part or all of the trip. If you can't make the entire week, drop in at the beginning, middle or end. The more the merrier! If you think this fits your vacation plans, we would love to know. Following is a possible itinerary, but we would welcome suggestions/changes.

Depart Annapolis Sept. 2, Sat. Sail to Solomons - Mill Creek.
Sunday, 9/3: Sail to Great Wicomico River (South of Potomac). Anchor for the night (Maybe Horn Harbor, Horn Harbor Restaurant nearby).
Monday, 9/4: Sail to Fishing Bay, Piankatank River; restaurants nearby.
Tuesday, 9/5: Sail the beautiful Rappahannock; Urbanna for provisioning.
Wednesday, 9/6: Short sail to Tides Lodge/Inn, Carter Creek. Resort style marina with golf, tennis, bicycling, pool and informal/formal dining.
Thursday, 9/7: Sail north to Mill Creek off the Great Wicomico.
Friday, 9/8: Sail to St. Mary's River or Coan River off the Potomac.
Sat, 9/9: Sail back to Solomons/points north.

Let us know what you think and we will publish the final itinerary in the July newsletter. Join Us!