



the Binnacle

Monthly Newsletter of the Lake Champlain Yacht Club, Inc.

Commodore: Fritz Horton Vice Commodore: Steve Walkerman

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Binnacle Editor: Muddy Bilges

<http://www.lcyc-vt.org/>



OTTER DELIGHT

by Michael Barker

Leaving Westport on Saturday morning, July 20th for points north after enjoying a fine meal at Le Bistro du Lac on Friday night and falling asleep at anchor to the strains of rockabilly coming from the Grill at Westport Marina, Sigi and I were ready for new adventure. We had talked about poking up the Otter for many years and always found reasons to pass on by Cassin Point and the entrance to Otter Creek – water too low, overhead power line threat, mosquitoes galore and other excuses. This time the water was at 97 feet, the power line shows a 73 foot clearance at the chart datum of 93 feet and we had the screens for all the hatches.



Were we in for a very pleasant surprise! The eight mile run from Cassin Point up the Otter was a trip up the upper Amazon, a Chesapeake slew and a Louisiana bayou combined with a unique maple syrup flavor. We found 12-23 feet in the center; the narrowest point being about 100 feet wide. Forget the guide book hyperbole of huge trees touching making a tunnel to snare masts. Too wide. On the way up we passed a few small private marinas and actually saw several sailboats tied up to docks. While most of the shoreline is undeveloped, there are some interesting camps and houses. We putted past the Bradford's Otter Creek Yacht Club, nary a boat at the floating dock.



capacity of about 15 boats, free power on the docks, barbeques and picnic tables on both sides and free moorings for overflow. There are several fine eating establishments within walking distance in downtown Vergennes. We anchored in the large breezy pond below Otter Creek Falls with three other sailboats in about 7 feet of water,

It took WINGDAM's 25 year old Atomic Four 1.5 hours to reach the City of Vergennes. We must have been bucking a half-knot current. Vergennes has recognized the importance of encouraging boaters. We found free public docks with the

enjoying the spectacular view of the falls (see LCYC photo gallery) and watching kayakers and small boat fishermen catching perch. With the boaters, campers, hikers, historic setting and fishermen it was quite a scene. We took a refreshing walk on a well graveled trail along the Otter's shore after dinner onboard. A C&C 37 was the largest sailboat at the docks. I visited with an interesting couple on a Westerly 22 who had cruised her to the Bahamas twice from Vermont.

We motored back out to the lake in 1.25 hours after a peaceful night at anchor. I was very pleasantly surprised by this unusual Vermont cruising destination. In 1814 the men of Vergennes built the 734 ton brig of war and two other ships for Captain Macdonough in 40 days at the site of the public docks. It's great to see that Vergennes still considers itself a port of call for sailors.

Ed. Note: Many thanks to Mike for his contribution to The Binnacle. All members now have another port of call on Lake Champlain. Tempting even to an old racer like Muddy B.!

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Regatta Notes

By Dave Powlison — Regatta Chair

Even though the winds (or lack thereof) have presented a challenge so far this summer, we've still managed to attract excellent participation, with over 40 boats racing on one of our more pleasant July Wednesday nights, 37 boats in the Ladies Cup and 15 in the Doublehanded Race. In the weekend PHRF races, the Doublehanded is the first race in which the race did not have to be shortened! In our one-design fleet, the Etchells have sailed shorter courses, one Saturday a month, and have been able to sail between two and three races each day.

Ed Baird's clinic at LCYC was a great success. Ed worked with the juniors during the day and presented two programs for LCYC members and guests in the evening. A big thank-you to the Board of Governors for supporting this educational and entertaining day of activities and to club members who participated.

If you see someone out in our whaler or the inflatable taking pictures on Wednesday nights, be sure to smile! It's probably



Randy Kruger, who is shooting photos for our end of the year trophies. We're looking forward to some great keepers for the top finishers in our various events.

August is almost gone, and, by the time you read this, the 2002 Odziozo Regatta will be history. All is not over, though! LCYC hosts the Commodore Mac-Donough on September 7th. And, of course, Wednesday night racing continues through the end of September. Don't forget that the starting times and classes change on Wednesday, September 4th. Check your race booklets or the club website to find out when your class starts.

See you on the race course!



Rules Corner--6

By Dave Perry

"A large group of boats, sailing closely together, are about to round a leeward mark. Of that group, I'm closest to the mark. Another boat obtains an inside overlap on me. What if I physically can't give that boat room?"

When a boat obtains an inside overlap from clear astern, the boat ahead has a "protective shield" if she needs it. When a boat gets an overlap at the zero moment before you enter the two-length zone, she becomes entitled to room under 18.2(a) as an inside boat. However, you are not required to anticipate her arrival. There are times when you may be physically unable to give her the room she needs to round or pass the mark based on your situation at the moment.

This excerpt is from Dave Perry's Understanding the Racing Rules of Sailing, available from US SAILING by calling 1-800-US-SAIL-1 or ordering on-line from www.ussailing.org



Commodore's Corner

by Fritz Horton

Volunteering at LCYC has been the subject of many late-night board discussions through the years, and this year will be no exception.

Despite repeated calls and requests this year, your Board has been stifled when making calls asking for help by the full range of excuses one might expect from middle school children intent on playing hooky! Most of those refusing to volunteer were not present on one or both of the last workdays, too. We're talking here about pleasant duties: helping on race committees, house repairs, boat maintenance and help with the grounds, to mention a few.

Helping with the operation and maintenance of LCYC is a condition for having the privilege of active membership in the club. Several senior associate members give a great deal of their time to the club, in spite of not having to do so. Shell Rieley and Charlie Lord are two of many who can always be relied upon to be there in a pinch.

In the coming weeks before Fall Workday, LCYC's stewards will be on duty less often, and the club will be in need of willing hands to keep the grass mowed, the floors swept, the kitchen picked up and the bathrooms cleaned. No need for a call for help here. Someone is usually around with a key. Take a few minutes, pick up a broom or a rag and do what needs to be done. Afterwards, let one of the Board members know what you did, and you'll be given credit for the work.

In January, more than one membership check has been returned to a surprised member with a note regretting the need to terminate the membership for lack of workday attendance and assistance with club operations and maintenance...

The Longest Voyage

By Dave Shaefer, *Dream Weaver*

(Ed. Note: Dave and Dream Weaver are back at LCYC after a long trek south. The following is the last straw...)

The world's longest voyage to Vermont continued with a new adventure. After singlehanding from Miami to Annapolis, I was joined by Bob Platt for a delightful week in Spa Creek getting a rebuilt starter and new head gasket installed with temps in the 90s. We escaped after nearly a week and anchored finally in the Sassafras River, poked through the C&D canal, ran happily and uneventfully all day down Delaware Bay to Cape May.

We then went outside and broke the trip in half with a layover in Barnegut Light, which is salty and cute if you survive running the inlet. Motored in calm weather to Atlantic Highlands where Bob left and Thea Platt jumped aboard. Thea and I Motored through New York harbor on a misty 95 degree day on July 3 with quite a bit of security apparent. Anchored off Nyack Yacht Club, then off some island with a Scottish castle, and, on July 5, headed for Rondout Creek at Kingston, NY.

Here, north of Poughkeepsie, the high bluffs of the shore carry down to 50 and 60 foot depths just yards from shore. Shortly after noon a big barge and tug passed us southbound, and after we bounced over its relatively small wake we lost forward and reverse. Just like Georgia a year earlier, when *Dream Weaver* nearly sank. This time, however, no water was coming in. The breeze was 12 to 15 on the nose, building and funneling down the river. We ran out the jib and began tacking toward some boats we saw moored along the shore with Thea at the helm.

We found ourselves at the Poughkeepsie Yacht club, and they cleared us by radio to pick up a mooring, which we did with some difficulty and bruised ribs. Thea was incredibly cool and competent, and she knew how to tack fast, suggesting that even cruisers can benefit from some racing. I could not have done it single handing.

When I went over the side with a snorkle I found the prop and shaft in place, but about two inches of bright metal showed behind the cutlass bearing...the shaft had backed out. We clamped a vice grip onto the shaft so it could not back out further and arranged a tow to the Certified Marine Yard in Rondout Creek. We are now there on the hard, awaiting replacement parts. The prop did not back out completely because it jammed the buildup of barnacles on the shaft against the cutlass bearing. Barnacles serve a useful purpose after all!

We will head north again soon and do our best to avoid more character-building experiences.

Sailing Instruction Programs

By Bob Goodwin — Sailing Instruction

Junior Sailing: With a potluck dinner and awards ceremony on Friday, August 9th, attended by over 50 youngsters and their parents, one of the most successful Junior Sailing Programs at LCYC came to a close. Parents brought in a great spread of food, especially the desserts, and it didn't take long to see it disappear.

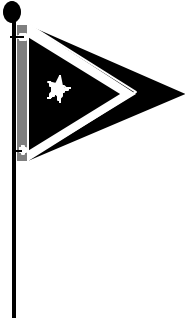
Each child received a Certificate of Participation, and several Goofy Awards commemorated some of the unusual "accomplishments" by the more inventive students. The Harris family had a doubleheader, as both Lauren and Brad received Best Crew awards, along with their neighbor, Meredith Powlison. 'Must be something in the water over on that side of the Bay... Top Skipper accolades went to Kate Weaver (Intermediate) and to Lindsay Selin and Peter Kling (Advanced).

How do you measure success? Enrollment rose from 32 last year to 56 this year, with 26 member children and 30 non-member kids. Several did very well in regattas we attended, which is another measure of the success of the program. Many gained more confidence in themselves along with developing new skills, and that surely is a great gauge of success for the program! New acquaintances were made, and old friendships solidified. Probably the most important result of the season was that a group of young people had a great time working together in a challenging learning experience. And that's what this program is all about.

All of this success did not occur automatically, of course. Our cadre of instructors was just outstanding this year. Head instructor Matt Guilbert ran a tight ship in a friendly way such that the kids were happy to hear what he had to say and tried their best to follow his instructions. Kate Brush was able to see the problems kids had and led them to solutions in a way they understood immediately. Our two instructor trainees, Peter Kling and James Unsworth, both veterans of the program, did a tremendous job, and the kids really appreciated their work. These four young people were excellent role models, and we thank them all for a job very well done!

Adult Sailing: The third time's a charm! After two years trying to start a program teaching adults to sail without much in the way of interest, 17 people attended our Tuesday evening classes at one time or another this year, with 11 being our "high water mark". Only four of them were club members. We hope our 13 guests enjoyed this experience and that they continue to participate in this great sport — maybe even as members of LCYC at some point soon!

Despite Tuesday evening conditions that said, "Don't go sailing!" (no wind, too much wind and thunderstorms), our intrepid adult sailors stuck with it. I hope they continue next year with their instruction. We've certainly had our allotment of unsuitable weather on Tuesdays to deserve fair weather next year!



the Binnacle

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THE 2002 LADIES CUP DINNER

By Steve Adams

This year's Ladies Cup Dinner was held on Friday night preceding the race instead of Saturday evening following the race with the hope and expectation that Friday night would be more attractive to the general membership. The ninety odd LCYC members and their guests who attended were treated to exceptionally fine weather, light classical music during the cocktail hour, a dinner of either a New York strip steak or a Maine lobster and an evening of fellowship with other members and their guests.



For those unable to attend this year's dinner, be sure to mark your calendar for next year's event!

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