



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/>



MacDonough Magic

by Michael Barker

Fallacious snobbery almost cost me a grand night on our great lake; fallacious in the sense that I believed I wouldn't enjoy an overnight race being "long in the tooth", and snobbery in the sense that I believed my long-distance racing in the great oceans simply outclassed our local waters by a nautical mile.

On September 7-8 during the 35th running of the MacDonough I was disabused of these narrow minded deficiencies. So it is with humble contrition that I offer these penitential thoughts.

It was serendipitous that we raced at all. My friend and crew Michael Powers who usually sails the MacDonough on Charlie Van Winkle's sadly dismasted Bagheera, and his enthusiasm for the race, convinced me to enter Wingdam this year as an experiment. Charlie was invited to join us, but business pressures prevented him from doing so. We did have Charlie's neighbor and budding yachtsman onboard, Peter Czaja. The three of us enjoyed the race together, making our individual experience all the more vivid in the sharing.

Contrary to the fallacy, the race was a real joy. We all stayed up the whole night taking turns steering, sail trimming, and navigating. While winds were generally light, the challenge of keeping the boat moving kept us busy. I thought I would be done-in by fatigue and maybe boredom during the early morning hours, but this didn't happen. My conclusion is that virtually any boat and any compatible group of sailors in the LCYC could compete in this historic event and have a lot of fun. Now to sailing snobbery - the refuge for mind-stifling, self-deceiving, ignoramus wimps. That was me before the MacDonough. I thought oceans, and perhaps the Great Lakes were the only acceptable venues for long distance overnight racing; all other bodies of water were second rate, unworthy, deserving only condescending dismissal. Not so! Lake Champlain treated the crew of Wingdam to a wonderland where our speck of a boat was the center of a brilliant universe.

Two things worried me before the race: the potential lack of wind and visibility problems due to no moon. Both of these proved to be advantages. In the wind department, after we rounded Valcour Island we came to a complete stop off Schuyler Island about 7:00 pm. As we sat there I served the gourmet dinner Sigi had prepared, including a fine French red wine selected especially to compliment the main course. As we dined the night came on, going from sunset to darkness. For 2 hours we ate, talked, and watched our world shrink, first to the cockpit of *Wingdam* and then expand, to a blazing canopy of brilliant stars (no moon light to dim them) and an amazing display of aurora borealis that lasted till morning in the northern sky.

We had the VHF tuned to channel 12 and were surprised to hear quite a few boats dropping out, probably due to the lack of good food and wine to amuse the crew until the wind returned. About 8:00 pm a south wind began filling again, and we continued our gentle beat to Diamond Island. The starlight was bright enough to visually navigate, using the GPS to double check from time to time. We were amazed by the "northern lights". Vertical bands of light dropped out of the sky like thick slow moving lightning from 40 degrees to the horizon. Horizontal bands of light flashed from high to low, sometimes creating an illuminated grid that plunged into the earth while its reflected image soared from our wake to the horizon. If I were not out racing overnight I never would have seen this astronomical extravaganza. Who had time to sleep!

As for the racing, we finished 3 hours after the first in our fleet at 6:00 am, taking second place in a starting JAM A fleet of just 4 boats. We enjoyed the dawn as we beat down Shelburne Bay to the waiting race committee boat. It was nice to have morning light as we sailed to the mooring, folded the sails, enjoyed a mock victory libation, and flopped into bunks for a contented nap. What a great body of water for a senior sailor to spend a sleepless night!

Mea culpa! You should try it!

2002 Awards Banquet Friday, October 18!

The Annual Awards Burger Banquet will be held on Friday, October 18th, from 6:00 - 9:30 pm, at the LCYC Clubhouse. Skippers are asked to invite their crews. For reservations, please call Mary or Don Rathbone at (802) 985-3237 no later

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Regatta Notes

By Dave Powlison—Regatta Chair

Last month, you read in this column about the lack of winds our racers dealt with. This month, we saw extremes. It started with the Macdonough, where the fleet easily got out of the bay and well north. Those who got around Point Au Roche early and tucked back into the Vermont shore had wind for most of the race and finished in early hours Sunday. Others ended up wishing they were water skiing. Those who stuck it out through the night were treated to a magnificent display of the aurora borealis. The last boats crossed the finish line early Sunday morning. Check our website for complete results.

If light air was the case for the first PHRF weekend race of September, the Wednesday night series will probably be remembered for the one night in which racing was cancelled. A large front came through producing north winds gusting into the low 40s in the bay. Chuck Bowen and a band of intrepid thrill-seekers pretended they were participating in the “X Games,” boarded *Pass Auf!* and ventured out anyway. Sailing only with a fully reefed main, they reportedly saw gusts into the 50s outside the bay. Crew and boat made it back to their mooring unscathed, and they were declared the unofficial winners of all fleets for that Wednesday night.

The Etchells fleet wrapped up their Saturday series on September 14 with a magnificent day. Eight boats sailed three races in the bay. Skies were sunny, and winds began at around 10 knots and slowly built to around 20. Results are posted on the website.

Wednesday night races continue through the end of September. Remaining weekend races include the Lake Champlain One-Design Championship (September 21-22) for J-24s and Etchells, and the final race of the year, the Hot Ruddered Bum (September 28). Note that the Hot Ruddered Bum starts at 1300, providing a more appropriate time for the post-race hot buttered rum party. Let’s keep our fingers crossed for favorable winds!

LCYC’s Website Surpasses 20,000 Hits

In the second week of September, LCYC’s website, now hosted by Power Shift Online, reached 20,000 hits, up from approximately 3,000 hits in March, under Ernie Reuter’s very capable guidance. With assistance from Mark Gardner of Results, Inc., Ernie added several new features, links to related sites, including the new Etchells fleet site, which he created as well.

A large part of the success of the site is due to Bette Reuter’s effort to see that the racing results are plugged into scoring software that works with very little difficulty. As anyone who visited the results pages knows this year, the scores were posted promptly and accurately for all to see. Bette is responsible for much of that success.

We all owe the Reuters a round of applause for their work!

Rules Corner--7

By Dave Perry*

“What should I do in the situation where I’m entitled to room at a mark but when I’m about a boat-length away from the mark, it becomes obvious that the outside boat isn’t leaving me enough space to fit between her and the mark?”

At the moment it becomes clear that the outside boat is not going to give you room, rule 14 (Avoiding Contact) requires you to avoid hitting her if reasonably possible. This may result in you not being able to round or pass the mark on that approach. Though the outside boat’s rule breach caused you to sail on the wrong side of the mark on that approach, it hasn’t prevented you from ultimately rounding the mark correctly as required by rule 28.1 (Sailing the Course), i.e. she didn’t compel you to break rule 28.1; therefore you are not entitled to exoneration under rule 64.1 (Penalties and Exoneration). You must circle and try again. You should certainly win your protest against the outside boat, but there is nothing the protest committee can do to compensate you for the distance/places lost while making a second try to round or pass the mark . . . Of course, if you do choose to hit the outside boat and force your way in between the outside boat and the mark, you can be penalized under rule 14 (Avoiding Contact) only if the contact causes damage. Remember, that if you hit the mark, you have broken rule 31.1 (Touching a Mark). But you can be exonerated under rule 64.1 (b) if the protest committee finds that the outside boat compelled you to touch the mark by failing to give you enough room.

** 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

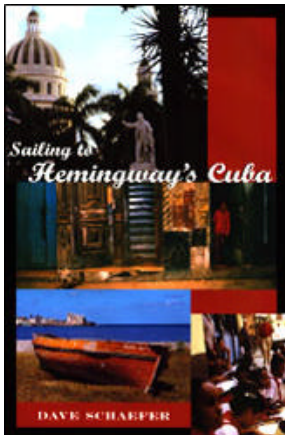
by Fritz Horton

Changed Dates for Awards Banquet and Workday

The Board of Governors has changed the dates for the Award Banquet and Fall Workday from the Friday and Saturday of Columbus Day weekend to one week later as follows:

- Annual Awards Banquet:** moved to **Friday, October 18, 6 to 9:30 pm.** Call Mary Rathbone 802-985-3237 before October 16.
- Fall Workday and Annual Meeting:** moved to **Saturday, October 19**

Dave Schaefer to Speak of Trip to Cuba



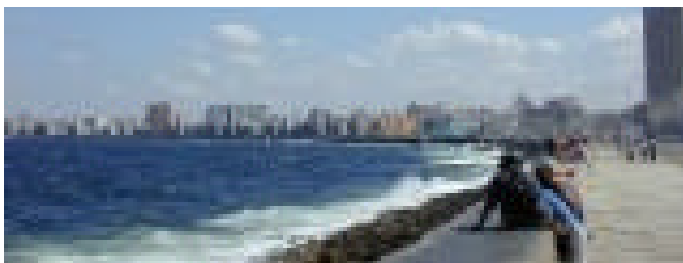
For those who missed Dave's slide-show on his trip to Cuba will have another chance to see it on **Wednesday, September 25 in-Burlington's Fletcher Free Library at 7 p.m.** He is the author of "Sailing to Hemingway's Cuba".

Dave left Lake Champlain Yacht Club in September, 1998 on "Dream Weaver". He made his way 1600 miles down the East Coast to Key West and then to Havana. There he spent a month exploring the city and tracking down Ernest Hemingway's crumbling haunts. His talk will track his journey and provide insight on Hemingway's life and legacy in Cuba and South Florida.

A reviewer in the January 2002 issue of **Sailing** wrote the following:

"... Schaefer shines in telling about chasing Hemingway and experiencing Havana." "His passion for discovering the 'real' Hemingway, for separating the 'Papa' myth from reality—makes this part of his book a treat." "As he visits the bars Hemingway frequented, like El Floridita and Bodeguita del Medio, he searches for authenticity, for an aura of the man who so fascinates him. He goes to Cojimar, where Hemingway based *The Old Man and The Sea*, and finds it to be a fishing village no longer. He takes the elevator to Room 511 in the Ambos Mundo Hotel where Hemingway stayed on occasion and finds himself correcting the local guide on details of the famous writer's life. He spends a day at the Finca Vigia, where Hemingway lived on and off from 1939 to 1950, the scene of numerous parties and debaucheries with famous people, the site of much of his writing, and where he fought and loved some of the many women in his life. As the bibliography attests, Schaefer has done his homework on his subject... It is easy to understand why Hemingway, a complex man with a zeal for life and a dark interior, loved Cuba and its people."

Copies of his book will be available at the show. Dave also writes for "Cruising World" magazine and the Sailnet internet site. He has completed a new novel on Cuba and South Florida that should be available soon.



Stock Photo of Havana's famed Malecon

Workday Volunteer Credit is Easy to Get



Have you ever walked from your parking place into the Clubhouse wondering to yourself, as you look at unmowed grass, weedy flowerbeds, and pass by dirty countertops, appliances, furniture, windows to use soiled fixtures in the bathroom, "What a mess! Where are the stewards? Who takes care of this place, anyway?"

The answer, of course, is, "The stewards are back in school, so that leaves you and me!"

In May, September and October of each year, the dinghies are not pumped out, the grounds not mowed and the house is not cleaned unless we, LCYC's members, do it ourselves.

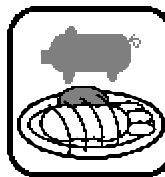
Even though we have asked members to tell us when they pick up a shovel, wrench or broom to let us know what they did, we do have the occasional Phantom Yardman/Mechanic/Housecleaner, who quietly does our work for us and never lets anyone know who he or she is, what was done or when.

Now, we have a simple way for you "Phantoms" out there to take the credit for what you do. Just write it down in the new notebook kept on the Kitchen countertop, and we'll note the credit against your obligation to volunteer for the club.

Some would say the best part of helping the club in this way is that it is something you can do on a beautiful Fall day in peace and quiet. Few people are around, the phone rarely rings, no television or radio blares away to distract you, and the work goes very quickly. You'd be surprised at how much you can accomplish in a short time.

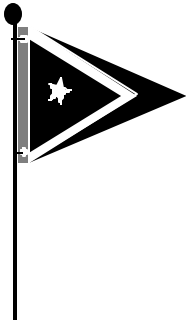
Remember, unless you let us know who you are and what you did, by some means—e-mail, the notebook or a phone call—we can only assume it was the Phantom!

2nd Annual Pig Roast a Big Success



Last year, Linda Livingstone, our Board Member who has quite enough to do being in charge of hiring and managing our stewards, decided LCYC needed a no-cost event just for LCYC members in September, when very little happens at the club. True to her "can-do" spirit, she didn't pass it to Steve Adams, our social committee chairman, but volunteered to create it, staff it and manage it herself from start to finish. She did it, with great success in 2001.

This year, she insisted on doing it again and enlisted a cadre of helpers: Randee Bloomberg & Lou Chiriatti, Beth Thorpe & Wes Daum, Amy & Ben Durant, Charlotte Adams, Nancy Boldt, Joanne Lattrell and Arlene Glynn. Several others chipped in to help with the details. 113 people attended the event. So give a special thanks to all that lent a hand!



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Lake Champlain Yacht Club, Inc.

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LCYC Sailor on Podium with AC Skippers

In mid-September, LCYC's Andy Horton served as tactician on Frank Savage's "Lolitta", a Swan 57, in the 2002 Rolex Swan Cup held in Puerto Cervo, Sardinia. The crew of 25 managed to place the boat second for the regatta, beaten only by the new Swan 70, *Fast.net* owned by Thierry de Passemar (FRA), on which Paul Cayard was tactician. Ed Baird, that likable AC skipper from Florida who spent a day helping our junior sailors this summer, was the tactician aboard "Rush", which placed third in the regatta.

More details and great sailing photos like the one below can be seen and downloaded at www.swancup.com.



Porto Cervo 14 09 2002 - Swan Cup 2002
Accenture Day Race
Photo: Guido CantiniSea&See

2002 Board of Governors

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Stewards: David Leopold, Ryan Heaslip