



Catalina Association of Puget Sound Newsletter

January 2012

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2012 Membership Dues are Due!!

Please bring a check for your dues to the banquet, or send your dues for 2012 to our treasurer Nancy McKenzie at 11945 80th Pl NE, Kirkland, WA 98034. Remember that membership dues have increased for 2012, and now are \$48 for the year including the Catalina Mainsheet subscription, \$38 for the year without a subscription.

Commodore's Corner

By Jack Henderson

High Tides and Low Tides of 2011 And Forecast for 2012

As this is my last Commodore's corner, I thought it time to reflect on the Highs and Lows of the past year and have a glimpse about events in the coming season. Although I should start on the highs, the LOW that impacted on us all was the dreadful, 'orrible, frightful weather that weakened the resolve of even the most ardent sailor. You might ask, "How bad was it?" According to the Seattle Times, the period from March 21 to June 21 was the second coldest on record – five degrees below normal. Not only that, there was ONE (1) totally sunny day from March through the end of June. On the positive side, we had no devastating weather events in the Pacific Northwest, as compared with other areas of the country.

Highs

- July, August and September were warm and dry months.

- The 4th of July raft-up in Poulsbo harbor; great turnout. Of course, there were those Chinese fire drill moments when our raft headed for Keyport.
- Margaret and I sailed to Desolation Sound (actually we pointed for *ALO* as it disappeared over the edge of the earth). But we made it and it was well worth the time and effort.
- Catalina Regatta: great winds and weather, good number of participants; successful raffles (and the partly sunny day in May)
- Interesting speakers included: Around the Americas; all you need to know about insurance; all you should know about the head and more; and several others.
- Harbor Marine in Everett prospers – opens new facility (See below)
- Christmas party success – attendance high, food great, and our spirits undaunted!

LOWs

- Losing Bob Armstrong.
- *Wind Runner* meets deadhead.
- *Wind Runner* meets Tow Boat.
- Combination of deadhead and tow boat keeps *Wind Runner* on the hard for a good part of sailing season.
- *Castlewellan's* engine enfeebled.
- *Wind Runner* helps Harbor Marine prosper.
- *Castlewellan* helps Harbor Marine prosper.
- Admiralty Yachts declares bankruptcy (still in business with new, [original] owner), but Seattle Yachts has taken over the Catalina franchise.
- Queasy seas encountered by frosty cruisers returning to their homeports from Kingston in March

Looking Ahead

Let's have better weather: we can organize protests against KING, KOMO, and KIRO in an effort to give us better weather forecasts. (Some might remember "good news" TV stations in the early 70's that aimed to meet the demand for uplifting stories rather than all the bad news about Vietnam and protests. Nobody watched).

With the weather issue solved, 2012 looks to be a great year for CAPS. Incoming Commodore Rod Sparks will propose several new cruise destinations. Also new on the horizon is a Facebook page and an enhanced website to make the club better known and attract new members. Ideas and suggestions are always welcomed.

CAPS Award Banquet, January 21, 2012 at 6:30

Deadline for reservations – January 11

The annual CAPS Awards Banquet will be held at Matts Rotisserie and Oyster Lounge in the Redmond Town Center (16551 NE 74th St). The buffet-style dinner is priced at \$45 per person. The buffet includes: Mixed Green Salad; Grilled Seasonal Vegetables; Roasted Red Potatoes with Olive Oil; Grilled Wild Alaska Salmon; Rotisserie Pork Loin; and Gorgonzola and Walnut Ravioli (vegetarian); and a desert. Checks should be made out to CAPS and sent to Nancy MacKenzie or given to her the evening of the banquet.

Please e-mail Jack Henderson (jrh.mbh@gmail.com) if you plan to attend no later than January 11th.

Snowbird #2 and other musings

By Tom Madden

December 10, 2011

By now you must all be used to my usual ramblings about the races in which I participate. This time I'll skip a lot of the introduction stuff and get right to the start.

The wind was light from the north that morning, and was forecast to stay light and fairly dry until late that afternoon. The course posted was from the S-F (Shilshole hamburger) to Meadow Point Buoy, the lower hamburger, and back to S-F -- twice around. There were about 25 boats out this cool and crisp day, with 11 of them in my division. Mata Hari, a Catalina 36 that is my new nemesis was there, along with the other usual boats in the 25 to 38 foot range. As we were maneuvering around for the start, Mata Hari went by us the other way so we said, "hi", to which he replied "hi back, and you know you have a target on your back!" I guess he remembered the last race well, where he crossed the line about a minute in front of us, but we corrected out over him on time. We snickered and wished each other luck, and continued on with our starting preparations - knowing full well that the gauntlet had been thrown!



Picture from the first Snowbird race this year, courtesy of *Backslider*, a Cal 27 that has been racing. Yes, that is Dave Motter on the main, and yours truly at the helm; I must be discussing something about the sail trim. This was taken just a few minutes before the start, although the wind was a little better for the first race.

We were in a decent position at the start, and although we didn't get the best start ever, we were over the line within about 30 seconds of the gun, and about where I wanted to be on the line. The tide was coming in, so we tacked over to port and headed for shore. We were doing OK, but Mata Hari was ahead a little, mostly due to a better start and a little clearer air where he sailed. As we approached the Meadow Point Buoy, we were about in the middle of our class. Mata Hari looked like they over-stood the mark. They had already tacked from shore towards Meadow Point Buoy, and I figured they were going to round about a minute ahead of us. As we got the chute set up on the bow and got closer, I watched in amazement as he got swept by the current and missed the mark! There were about 10 other boats converging on the mark at that same moment, and he ended up losing about 2 minutes dodging all the boats.

We rounded the mark, set the chute, and stayed out towards the middle to keep clear air and run with the current. The wind was pretty light, and we were just holding our own with the rest of the fleet. Many of the bigger boats had caught up, and we were all heading for the lower mark using varied strategies, from running back by the breakwater to going well out towards the middle. We opted to just stay pretty much on the rhumb line since the wind seemed to be clocking around to the west. If it continued to back around and finally from in the south, being in the middle of the course made a lot of sense. About 5 minutes behind us Mata Hari rounded the mark and opted to head for Shilshole. We just kept an eye on him as we slowly worked our way down towards the lower hamburger buoy.

As we approached the Ballard Blinker (about 2/3rd of the way down) the wind went really light, then just died. There we sat, barely moving, and every time we caught a little puff, we would move a few feet, then the sails would backwind due to no wind and our movement through the water. None of the other boats were doing much either. A couple of the really fast boats had made it down near the lower mark when the wind died. So there we all sat for about half an hour, with no wind and the current ever so slowly taking us past the blinker, and debating whether to call it quits for the day. As time went on, we noticed that Freebyrd (the Swan 45) had made it around, but was going nowhere, and Nefarious, a Mumm 30 was not far behind. The Mumm 30 ended up first overall.

A little while later we heard Freebyrd call on the radio that they were quitting the race; followed by several other boats that were just tired of sitting there. We thought we would wait it out a little while longer, and after another 15 minutes, I could see a little dark line on the water near West Point, and it looked like it was headed our way. During the time we were just sitting there, Mata Hari (my nemesis remember?) had gradually caught up, and was now only a few hundred yards away. During our dead air time, we had managed to move about 200 yards toward the windward mark, done a 360 degree turn with no ability to do anything about it, and generally sat there frustrated. The 5'ish knot wind finally got to us, and off we went, but Mata Hari was only about 30 seconds back, and soon had the breeze as well. All the bigger boats that were ahead of us caught the breeze first, and they were off and running while we had to just sit and watch. On the other hand, about half the fleet was north of us, and I'm sure they felt the same way about us as we caught the breeze and began to move as they just sat there.

As we approached the lower mark, there were a couple other boats inside us, and one of them was Mata Hari – with an overlap! We gave them room to round the mark, got ourselves around the mark without incident. We again set the chute for a downwind run to the finish line. We were pretty much running even with Mata Hari all the way back, but right at the end, they got a surge of wind and finished about 15 seconds ahead of us. I knew we would correct out again, so next time I know they will be gunning for us.

Overall, we finished in 6th place – about in the middle again, but we corrected out over Mata Hari, and it was a nice day to be out on the water.

Musings? Ok, I'm trying to get the skipper of Mata Hari (Paul Walchenbach) to join CAPS. I'm also looking forward to the next race on January 14th. Anyone want to come join the fun? I'm also thinking of petitioning the PHRF Northwest for a blanket reconsideration of the ratings for all Catalinas – at least in the greater Puget Sound area. I have been looking closely at all the races I have participated in, as well as those of other Catalinas. It seems unfair that many boats with higher ratings (like Thunderbirds (PHRF 201) and J-24's (PHRF 186)) can usually beat me boat for boat, yet I have to give them time. It does not just seem to be a Catalina 34 issue, but applies to C-30s and C-36s as well. I'm going to ask for a blanket increase for all Catalinas of 15 seconds/mile. This will not change anything when we race against other Catalinas, but I believe will give us a little better chance of actually finishing races where all the Catalinas are not last.

All for now – see you all at the awards banquet on January 21st!

CAPS 2012 Calendar

(The new Calendar is being developed)

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