



The Voice of Sailing on Lake Nockamixon

THE COMPASS



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The Newsletter of
The Nockamixon Sail Club
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The Thistle Midwinters WEST Championship – It's all about the WIND!

Craig Smith

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Craig Smith takes the helm in the Larry Kline Memorial Match Race

Photo by Craig Priniski



**Spring
Warm-Up!**

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In early February, I had the luxury of attending the Thistle Midwinters WEST Championship, which is held each year at the Mission Bay Yacht Club in San Diego California. This is probably my favorite regatta on the Thistle calendar for a variety of reasons. First, February in Southern California! Who can argue with that, especially when you can watch the sunsets over the Pacific Ocean after a 5 minute walk from the club. And the sunshine and palm trees, WOW! Second, it is only a 3 day regatta with practice racing the day before and a Match Race regatta immediately following, so you don't have to take a full week off work to attend. Third, with at least 3 races scheduled for each day, you can do a bunch of racing in a short period of time. Fourth, and this is the real reason I love this regatta, YOU CAN COUNT ON THE WIND!!! On a normal day, the sea breeze comes in from the northwest (about 300°) at about 12:30 and stays through

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Commodore's Corner

Brian Scarborough

It's been a curious Winter, hasn't it? On the one hand, it's been relatively warm. On the other, we've had one of our largest snowstorms in quite a while. The other day, it was close to 60°, and I wondered if we might have a warm March as we did several years ago. But the following morning, I awoke to a coating of fresh snow.

While I have been thinking of all the prep to do on boats in the Spring, I have still been working on boat projects all Winter as well. I've been able to pull wood off the small boat, and re-varnish and replenish.

And at this time of the year, that is exactly what the club does, too. I'm sure that being sailors, we'd like to sail all year long. But our Winter allows us to take some time off, think about other things that need doing, and maybe study up on sailing without actually doing it.

Fleet Council is doing the same. We have met for our first meeting, and our second meeting is fast upon us. This year, we have been investigating another Leukemia Cup Regatta to follow our "every other year" schedule.

We have thought of some service projects for the park. And I have asked for some new focus on getting our young people more involved in sailing.

Although the Fleet Council strives to plan a good season for all club members, we can't forget that all members are important and helpful to the club having a good year. I'd like to remind everyone that Council meetings are open to the general membership, and are published on the web site calendar. If any member has questions or suggestions, we welcome the input. Club officers are listed on the website as well, and you can reach out to us via email.

I will renew our call to get involved. Come out to any club event this Summer, especially a service project. We will need to have members devote some time to park projects, as this defrays costs for the Sunfish program and for racing permits. It also makes us stewards of the park, and good neighbors to other park users. Keep a lookout for more formal service project announcements to come. Also, we are beginning to plan the Leukemia Cup, and we will need volunteers to help set up the event, corral pot luck food contributions, and everyone can help fundraise for this worthy cause. Finally, we need new sailors! Sure, new members are always welcome, but we need kids who love to sail. We have a ready made kid friendly fleet of six Sunfish boats which members can use to teach kids how to have fun. If you have kids yourself, please get in touch with me regarding your thoughts on kid-friendly events that your children would like to be involved with. Of course, we will have another Sunfish picnic, which has been fun for adults and kids alike.

Well, we aren't quite there yet... the club website says 50-something more days to go until the season starts. On one hand, it seems far away, but it's really not too far off. We'll keep working – both Fleet Council, and me down in the basement, trying to keep the dust out of my varnish!





2016 SPRING WARM-UP BANQUET

and AUCTION TO BENEFIT LLS

MARCH 19TH 2016

6:00 P.M.

Perkasie Firehouse Banquet Room 100 N. 5th Street, Perkasie PA



This is a great social opportunity for all our current and new members to meet, reconnect, share some winter stories and celebrate, while looking forward to the 2016 Sailing Season.

Please note that the venue this year is at the **Perkasie Firehouse Banquet Room** located at 100 N. 5th St., Perkasie. The **Open Bar** will consist of beer, wine, soda, and water, beginning at 6:00, followed by a buffet dinner at 7:00. **Menu items catered by C & C include:** Chicken Parmesan, Linguini w/ garlic and oil, Macaroni & Cheese, Sausage and Peppers, String Bean Almondine, the famous Potato Croquettes, Mixed green salad, Rolls, Coffee, and Cake.

There will be two interesting presentations

“What to expect when attending a Major Regatta”, presented by Craig Smith

“A cruising experience aboard a Mahe 36’ Catamaran”, presented by Steve Averbuch

We again will hold a **LIVE AUCTION** where all proceeds from your donations will be going directly to the **Leukemia and Lymphoma Society**.

Following dinner, our Commodore, Brian Scarborough, will give an introduction of our Officers and a brief overview of the 2016 upcoming sailing season. Each fleet will have the opportunity to meet and elect a Fleet Captain.

Cost per person:

2016 NSC Members 18 and older	\$ 25.00
Children (9 and under)	Free
Young Adults (10 – 17)	\$ 15.00
NSC Guests	\$ 35.00



Please email your advance reservation by March 5th with the number of people who will be attending to:

keepsmlin49@yahoo.com

**Make checks payable to “NSC” and mail to: Laurine Valenti, 22 Skyline Dr., Chalfont, PA 18914
prior to March 10th**

Spring Warm-Up Fundraiser

In keeping with our plan to host a Leukemia Cup every other year, the Club has decided to host a Cup event again this year. The last time we hosted a Leukemia Cup, we held an auction to pay for food at the post-race picnic. This year, the Club has decided we should raise funds to directly benefit the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, again by having an auction at the Spring Warm-Up Banquet. If you would like to contribute items to the silent and live auctions, please email Commodore Brian in advance of the Warm-Up with a description and photo of the items.

(bscarborough@me.com) And don't forget to bring your checkbooks to the Warm-Up! It's a great way to contribute to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, especially if you can't attend the Cup event, or do not wish to race. Even so, you can still fundraise if you don't race in the event. Stay tuned for more information on individual fundraising!

Mariner Class Events

Russell Schuss



This should have been included in the fall edition of the Compass; but my computer was hacked, data was lost and it took time to get my computer back.

I bought a new suit of North racing sails for my Mariner, hoping to get into some action this past summer. Between other Mariner activities and my wife's motorcycling adventures, Lake Nockamixon, unfortunately, was not the activity center for me this past year. Although I did get a chance, late in the year, to carefully break-in my new sails.



Mariners had three rendezvous destinations this year. Lake Champlain, Mystic Sea Port and St. Michaels Maritime Museum. All were well represented by the Mariner owners. Twelve boats at Lake Champlain, 11 boats at Mystic Sea Port and 9 boats at St. Michaels.



I was responsible for the St. Michaels Rendezvous. We trailed the Mariners to the Kent Narrows MD, launching ramp to get the 10:00 a.m. tide. Between all the locals with their fishing boats and the 9 Mariners, it was a busy task. And since the bridge hadn't opened at 10:00; and we were a bit late getting all the Mariners in the water, the bridge tender made a special opening time for us shortly after 10:00. Great, because the openings are scheduled for the hour and half hour.

It's about a twelve mile sail if the wind is right, for that destination, if there is wind. We were not

lucky that day, because there was no wind. And it was a hot August the second day. When we arrived at St. Michaels, the Harbor Master guided us into our docks. Can you imagine backing a 19 foot boat into a space meant for a 40 foot boat? It's not the length. It's the height. Climbing up to the dock was an experience! Some of us built short plastic ladders out of 1" PVC pipe, just in case. Good move. I was lucky enough to have a ladder at my dock to climb up on.



Here we are docked for our two day stay. Since we were not members of the Museum we could not stay on the weekend; so we chose to arrive on late Sunday and stay Monday and Tuesday. Sunday night was pizza night. I had seven pizzas brought in and we feasted under the Hooper Lighthouse. There were a lot of full tummies afterwards.

(Continued on page 5)

Mariner Class Events (cont'd)

(Continued from page 4)

The next day was reserved for visiting the area or sailing the Miles River. Coming from the lake, it was a real treat to trim the sails once and just sail for miles with a nice steady breeze of 12 kts. At the end of the day we had a prepaid dinner (thanks US Mariner Organization) at the Crab Claw with cocktails beforehand. Folks who attended this event came from as far away as California, or as close as Maryland. Folks also came from New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

At dinner there were awards for longest distance traveled, oldest skipper and oldest Mariner. Shown here is the longest distance winner, Jamie from Coronado California. Actually he was taking a sail of a lifetime by sailing all the interesting waters between California and the Atlantic Ocean. Jamie came the northern Route and returned via the southern route.



Russ presents longest distance award to Jamie

The late morning return trip to Kent Island was great for sailing, because of a dying weather-front that would have been too strong for Mariners earlier in the day. As an aside, I am also a new owner of an O'Day 222 and would like to create a similar rendezvous for 22 foot boats from Nockamixon. Any takers?

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Rear Commodore of Racing Report

Gary Bonner

Snow is falling as I write this, but warm breezes will soon be here, and with them, racing on Lake Nockamixon. Actually, the racing will be here well before the breezes are warm, with the frostbite series starting in April. Details of the racing schedule are still being worked out, but tentative dates for the club-wide events are below:

Frostbite Series

April 16

April 23

April 30

October 8

October 15

ULDB/Club Picnic

June 25

Invitational Regattas

May 7

May 22 (Victor Jaczun Regatta)

June 18

July 16

August 20 (possible Leukemia Cup Regatta)

September 10

October 1

As I said, these dates are tentative. When finalized, the schedule will be posted on the club website. Racing fleets will be developing their own schedules which will be posted on the website as well.

The Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions will be revised before the racing season begins. They will be posted on the website and sent out via NSCPA.

Lastly, the race committee schedule will be developed soon. Please keep an eye on you inbox for details.

Hope to see you all on the water soon!

Save the Date For the Second Semi-Annual Lake Nockamixon Leukemia Cup Regatta August 20, 2016

Raise a Sail, Save a Life! The 2nd Leukemia Cup Regatta sets sail from the Lake Nockamixon Sail Club on August 20, 2016. This event combines the joy of sailing with the important task of raising money to cure cancer. The Leukemia Cup Regatta has raised millions of dollars for lifesaving research and patient services, bringing help and hope to patients and their families nationally. By registering for the event, you will be set up with an online fundraising page, and can help us further accelerate cures. You will also be eligible for great fundraising incentives! You can also make a donation in support of a fundraising participant!

Leukemia is the number-one disease killer of children. However, it affects eight times as many adults. The good news is that the cure rates have increased dramatically over the past 30 years. With your support, we could see the end of leukemia and lymphoma within our lifetime! These statistics are why we welcome this incredible opportunity to help others who are fighting these diseases.

The Leukemia Cup Regatta is more than boats and crews racing. It is sailors in 40 Regattas across the United States who have elevated their competition to a whole new level. Locally, it is a community of yachting enthusiasts coming together to help fight leukemia, lymphoma, and other blood cancers, through a weekend of fun events: sailing, silent auction, food, music and more!

Flying Scot Fleet 163: Top Ten Checklist for 2016

Phil Scheetz



1. Send in your 2016 Summer Slip Fee by Feb 28. Don't forget!
2. Come out to the Flying Scot Winter Social at Baucoms! Feb 20 at 6:30, hope you didn't miss it.
3. Socialize some more at the NSC Spring Warm up on March 19th at 6 PM at Perkasio Fire Company.
4. Don't forget to renew your 2016 NSC, FSSA and US Sailing Dues.
5. Get the boat ready to launch! I will be bringing my boat to the dry slips soon after May 1. Let me know if you need help with anything on your boat.
6. Come out on and support the Rotary International Regatta on June 5th! We will take some great students from all over the world sailing, and then have a picnic with the Rotary Youth Exchange Crew. What a great way to promote the club, and our great sport.
7. Grab your spouse and the boat, for the Flying Scot Wife-Husband Championships. This year it's June 11 and 12 at Fishing Bay Yacht Club in Deltaville, VA. This is a great venue, with southern hospitality!
8. Sail the ULDB, which is the most fun race that's really a picnic, of the whole year. The date is still TBD, but this is the social event of the summer season.
9. Race in the MAYRA Championships at Yacht Club of Stone Harbor on July 9th. Jersey Shore, Summer, The Great Sound, what could be better!
10. Head up to Newport Rhode Island for the Flying Scot North American Championships! All boat owners are welcome to enter and we will have boats going in 2016. Several Fleet 163S skippers are committed, on the helm and as crew. July 16th to the 21st. Don't forget, the Challenger Fleet is available for a more relaxed fleet than the Championship fleet!
11. BONUS: All the other great days on the water and opportunities to crew. If you want to crew on a Scot, or try one out, let me know.



Left to right: Take the kids sailing! Lots of Scots at the Wife Husband; Have a good friend steer at the NAC
Photo by Photoboat

The Thistle Midwinters WEST Championship (cont'd)



sunset. Velocity is rarely above 15 knots and most of the time is 8 to 10 knots. So you end up getting a bunch of sailing in FANTASTIC conditions in the 4 day regatta. Couple that with cheap airfare and the opportunity to get local free housing, this is also one of the cheapest regattas on the Thistle calendar.

This year I flew into San Diego on Tuesday night because I wanted to attend a Wednesday evening One Design Racing discussion at the US Sailing Conference which was also happening in San Diego this week. In fact, the US Sailing conference was at a hotel on the other side of Mission Bay, so I could have actually sailed there from the MBYC. My early arrival in San Diego provided the opportunity for my skipper and I (yes I was crewing) to get some valuable Wednesday practice time. Mike Ingham and Alex Camet, both from North Sails, volunteered to do some coaching on the water on Wednesday, so we got some valuable tips and a few practice starts. My old body was happy to have the practice time. Another of our local Thistle skippers, Craig Priniski, also came out to the regatta to volunteer on the Race Committee, and served as the Thistle Class social media chairman. He was able to broadcast some of the coaching and some of the racing LIVE on the Periscope App. Thanks Craig for coming out and helping improve our social media presence.

The actual regatta began on Thursday with 3 races scheduled in the Pacific Ocean. Winds were in the 10 to 15 knot range and the races were LONG with the first race being a THREE leg windward/leeward course which lasted over an hour. After race 2, my skipper said that he would like to go in because he was tired. I was not disappointed to skip the last race. We did not do well in the first two races, so we were confident that we would be in the lower division after the division of the fleets. We decided to save our energy for "our" actual regatta (in the lower division), which started on day two. Friday brought lighter winds, for which we were grateful. We had a much better day with finishes of 1, 3, and 3 in the lower division and finishes of 7, 8, and 8 among all competitors (the 2 divisions sailed together). We were happy to be in first place in our division at the end of the second race day. Saturday started again with light winds, and after a short postponement, race 1 got underway. There was a big left shift on the first leg of race 1, which didn't work out well for us since we were on the far right side of the course. In fact, the course was so skewed, the "leeward" mark ended up being a jibe mark for about half of the fleet who finished the "upwind" leg with their spinnaker (this kind of sounds like Nockamixon, huh?). The wind built a little for race 2 and finally locked into the normal sea breeze direction. In race 2 we performed a little better with a 6th place finish in our division (out of 15 boats). Race 3 was a comedy of errors for us, with a broken tiller extension, broken mainsheet block, and sailing over our spinnaker sheet, so needless to say, we worked our way to the back of the fleet. In the end, our first place turned into a 6th, and we ended up one position out of the trophies. Oh well.

The Final event of the weekend began the following morning (Super Bowl Sunday). This was the Larry Kline Memorial Match Race Championship, which is a separate regatta from The Midwinters West Championship. About half of the MWW competitors participated in the Larry Klein regatta. It started with 3 short W/L races to determine the top 8 spots. Then those top 8 boats went into a single elimination match race bracket to determine the Larry Klein Match Race Champion. My host/skipper offered for me to skipper this series of races, which I accepted. Our first 3 races went well enough for us to finish the elimination races in 6th place so I would make the cut into the match races. We had a fairly good start in our match race, but were 2-handing it against our competition who had 3 on board. With the short races, their extra set of hands significantly improved the spinnaker sets and jibes, so we ended up losing the race and packing it in early.

This is the fourth time I have attended the Thistle Midwinters West Championship and I have enjoyed every minute of every trip. Again, the best thing about this is the reliable wind. One of the weaknesses of the sport of sailing is that you normally have to plan on some down time because the wind and/or weather doesn't always cooperate. With 16 races over 4 days, this regatta again provided a significant amount of practice for the rest of the sailing season. If you ever have the opportunity to sail at a location that has a reliable sea breeze, don't miss it. There is nothing more fun for a racing sailor than reliable perfect sailing winds! Anyone want to join me next year??

(For more Thistle Midwinters photos, see next page.)

Rear Commodore of Cruising Report

Colin Hannings

READY TO TRADE IN THE SOUND OF THE SNOW SHOVEL?

I am. I can too easily recall the "flumph" the snow shovel made in the 22 inches in my driveway in the middle of January as I had to shovel it out by layers. As I got closer to the macadam, I heard the "screesh" as the shovel removed the last few inches and the forming ice as we scraped it off the driveway. And, of course, when you wanted to toss the shovel load of snow onto the lawn or street, the wind would always blow it back into your face.

I would trade it in a heartbeat to hear the "snap" of my mainsail as it fills with the breeze and my boat takes off across the lake. Sun bright over-head, low humidity and the gurgling of the water parting in front of the bow. Well, maybe not right now, but it is getting closer.

We have sent in our checks for the mooring permit and received the stickers from Fish & Game. And I am close to finalizing the Cruising Calendar and posting it on our Website.

The calendar will be up very soon and please take a look. We will be having all the usual events: the Launch Days, the Raft Ups, the Sunfish Cleanup and Sunfish Fun Day & Picnic, ULDB, Coves Poker Challenge, Single Handed Race and Ladies Dam Race. A few more elements of coordination need to occur and our dates will be set.

Challenges to the calendar were making sure we set the Full Moon Raft Ups on days as close as possible to full moons, and a later date for the Steelman Triathlon. The Steelman will be held on the 14th of August so we will request volunteers for that date and there will be a "raft up" the evening prior to avoid morning traffic issues.

Commodore Scarborough is asking all of us to find ways to interest and enlist young people in our great sport. Perhaps we can contact our old Scout Troop, speak with the neighbors' kids or even take our own children more often to the lake as we enjoy our favorite pastime. Events I believe that would be especially attractive to our young people would be our Sunfish Picnic and ULDB. I know I am going to speak with my church's scout leaders. Let's get them interested and "on board."

Please look for the calendar to be posted soon, make note of the dates and participate. I look forward to seeing you all soon at the lake.

More Thistle Midwinters WEST Championship Photos



Photos by Craig Priniski

Celestial Nav 101 Part 2—Declination of the Sun

Brad Kurlancheek

In Part 1 of Celestial Navigation 101, in the January 2016 issue of The Compass, we covered the following:

1) The earth is tilted relative to the sun approximately 23.45 degrees. The earth is always tilted the same amount - 23.45 degrees. That doesn't change. However, because the earth is in orbit around the sun, the plane of the earth's tilt, with reference to a vector from the earth to the sun, is always increasing or decreasing, like a sine curve, throughout the year, from minus 23.45 degrees, to positive 23.45 degrees. In celestial navigation speak, we call this angle of the plane of the earth's tilt relative to the sun - "Declination." Another way to look at it is that Declination is the amount of degrees, north or south of the equator, on any given day of the year, that a ray of light from the sun to the center of the earth, will strike the earth's surface.

2) Latitude is a Position on earth describing how many degrees that Position is north or south of the equator. The latitude of the equator is 0 degrees. The latitude of the North Pole is 90 degrees North. The latitude of the South Pole is 90 degrees South. Therefore, all latitudes by definition must be some number between 0 and 90. The reason is because the earth is a sphere. Therefore, once you've gone up or down, north or south, as far away as you can from the equator, or 90 degrees of distance, to the north pole or south pole, if you keep going, you start coming down (or going up) the other side of the planet, back towards the equator again, and so, your latitude starts coming down from 90 degrees back toward 0 degrees.

3) The maximum declination of the sun is 23.45 degrees. Maximum declination happens 2 days a year - first, on the summer solstice, on or about June 21st, when the sun's declination is 23.45 degrees NORTH, which latitude we refer to as the Tropic of Cancer, and then again, on the winter solstice, on or about December 21st, when the sun's declination is 23.45 degrees SOUTH, which latitude we refer to as the Tropic of Capricorn. On all other days of the year, the sun's declination is somewhere in between those two latitudes. The sun's declination crosses through the equator twice a year, once on the Vernal Equinox, which is on or about March 21st, when the declination is moving from south to north, towards the Tropic of Cancer; and again on or about September 21st - the Autumnal Equinox - where declination is moving from north to south, back towards the Tropic of Capricorn.

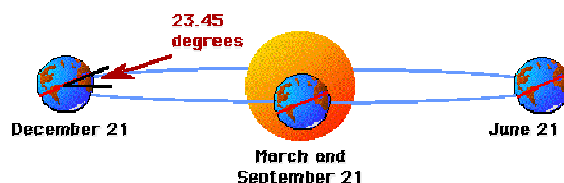
Why is it important to know the Declination of the sun, for purposes of Celestial Navigation? Well, think about what we're doing here.

We're trying to fix our Position on the planet, with reference to a celestial body - in this case, the sun. We can start to calculate our Position by first knowing what day of the year it is. The reason is because the movement of the earth, around the sun, is a fairly regular ordeal. It's been going on for quite a while. It isn't about to change.

Therefore, this movement of the earth around the sun, can be tabulated, mathematically, to the day, and to the hour, even. It's all written down in a handy little book called The Nautical Almanac, published annually. If you're curious to know what one looks like, here's a full copy of the Nautical Almanac from 2008: http://navsoft.com/2008_Nautical_Almanac.pdf

So here we are, on this blue green planet called earth, on a journey around the sun, whizzing along at a pretty good clip (18.5 miles per second) completing such journey every 365 days. And because the earth is tilted 23.45 degrees, a ray of sunlight from the sun, through the earth's surface, directly to the center of the earth, say, at 12 noon on May 22, 2016, will actually go through a slightly different place, through the earth's surface, on its way to the center of the earth, at noon, 24 hours later, on May 23, 2016. Why is this?

The key to understanding this change in declination from day to day (and actually, from second to second) is to remember that the tilt of the earth is fixed in space, relative to the sun. In this case, the star Polaris, also known as the North Star, trumps the sun. In other words, were you to stick an arrow, into the South Pole, and out the other end of the earth up through the North Pole, the tip of that arrow would be pointing to the star Polaris. Always. All day, all night, all year. So no matter where the planet earth is, on its annual orbital journey around the sun, the earth's



(Continued on page 11)

Celestial Nav 101 Part 2 (cont'd)

(Continued from page 10)

tilt will always be such that the earth's alignment in space is fixed, with its South to North axis pointing towards a different star than our sun, which star is called Polaris, or, The North Star.

Does this mean the reason why the earth is tilted is because of Polaris? No, of course not. Polaris is just some really distant star that the north-south axis of the earth happens to be pointing at. (Whereas the sun is 93,000,000 miles away, Polaris is 433 light years away. Just one light year is 5,878,499,810,000 miles. Do that 433 times.) But it's actually a good thing Polaris is so far away, because that way, no matter what day of the year it is, and no matter what time of day it is, the tilt of the earth is a constant, not to the sun, but to a vector in space independent of the sun. It's just a helpful coincidence that that vector happens to be pointing directly to Polaris, the 50th brightest star in the northern hemisphere night sky.

The practical consequence of this constant cosmological tilt of the earth, is that the angle of the face of the earth toward the sun, changes by roughly 1/365th, every day. We refer to this changing angle, as the sun's declination, relative to the earth's equator, as if it were the sun that is the one doing the moving, but the sun is so big it has better things to do, as in, not move at all relative to the earth. It is, the earth, as we know, that is the thing doing all the moving, relative to the sun. It's going around it, once a year, with a constant fixed tilt, relative to space, not the sun.

Again: We call the angle of the earth's tilt with reference to the sun, the sun's declination, though, and not the earth's declination, because we are observing this phenomenon from the earth. We can't see our own tilt, in other words, relative to ourselves. But we can see the change in the sun's movement in the sky, going higher and higher till June 21st, then going lower and lower, till December 21st. Therefore, we call it sun's declination.

The Nautical Almanac lists the amount of this change of the sun's declination relative to the earth, for every hour of every day of every year.

Remember, all we are talking about here is the change of position, relative to the equator, of a ray of sunlight from the sun, through a spot on the surface of the earth, to the earth's center, on a day to day basis. You can even see that change occurring hourly, if you wish, by referring to the Nautical Almanac for any particular day of the year.

How big is that spot? Its size is arbitrary. Think of it as the size of your boat.

Looking at the Nautical Almanac for January 10th, 2008, 1200 hours GMT, the sun's declination is listed as 22 degrees, 0.4 minutes, South. The sun's declination, in other words, decreased 0.4 minutes, in only 1 hour's time, as it very well should. January 10th, is, after all, after the winter solstice. The nights are getting shorter, the days are getting longer, and the tilt of the earth relative to the sun is changing such that every ray of sunlight passing through the surface of the earth to the earth's center, is moving closer and closer, on its journey northwards from the Tropic of Capricorn, to the equator, each and every second of every day. And actually, at the time of the Vernal Equinox, on or about March 21, 2008, those rays of sunlight on their way to the center of the earth, will pass right through the equator.

And so in fact, if, on or about March 21st, you were standing somewhere on the equator, at noon on that day, when the sun is highest in the sky, if you looked at the sun, it would be straight up. It would be 90 degrees up, exactly perpendicular, from a line stretching from you to the horizon.

Let's look in fact at the 2008 Nautical Almanac, and see what the sun's declination was on or about March 21st. To give you an idea of the sun's progress, on March 13, at 1200 hours GMT, the sun's declination was only 2 degrees, 39.8 minutes, South. Remember, back in January, it was some 22 degrees South (of the equator). So we're getting there. Finally, at 0600 GMT, on March 20th, the Nautical Almanac lists the sun's declination as 0 degrees, 0.2 minutes North. Therefore, sometime between 0500 and 0600 hours GMT, the Vernal Equinox happened. A ray of sun directly to the center of the earth passed directly through the equator.

So you're wondering... "Help! How does this &^%\$* useless trivia help me know where I am!?" Well, it's a start. (This is why they invented GPS's.) Next installment will be about using the sun's Declination, and a sextant, to calculate Latitude.

A Girl, a Hobie, and a Gust of Wind

Ken Van Camp

"Most people assume it is far more risky to cross oceans on a small boat. In fact, it is the bigger boat, with its lethal swinging spars and highly loaded lines for sails, anchors, and towlines, that is more likely to maim or kill you." -

James Baldwin, ***Bound for Distant Seas***

Hanging on to a capsized Hobie Cat with my ankle stuck three feet above my head was not quite the way I expected this sail to end. The ropes that hold my ankle in a secure grip are chafing with each passing wave, and I'm beginning to lose feeling in my foot. Thankfully, I am wearing a life jacket and I am in no danger of drowning. A passing sailor has gone for more help to try to right the Hobie, which will hopefully free my foot.

My survival instincts kick in, along with my pride. I want to untangle myself and emerge, saying, "no big deal," and "I got this." I pull myself up, searching for the end of the rope that is holding my ankle. I feel for it with my hand, but it is nowhere within reach or sight. There is nothing to do but wait for help to arrive.

It all started with a beautiful girl, a boom to the forehead, and a ride to Southampton Hospital with the Bay Constable... but that was 35 years ago, so maybe that's going back a little too far.

Today's adventure began on the unthreatening, Caribbean beach of the Sandals Grande Antigua resort, with my even-more-beautiful wife of 31 years decorously lounging on a beach chair while I confidently strode to the water sports desk to take out a Hobie.

The wind was initially light as I took off from the white sandy beach without a care in the world. With the warm turquoise waters passing harmlessly beneath my pontoons, how could there possibly be any risk? As patches of darkening ripples preceded the occasional puff of wind, I leaned out farther over the side and hooked my foot under the hiking strap. The Hobie was really beginning to fly now.

A big gust brought the windward pontoon high above the water, and I realized the boat was overpowered. I've been sailing small sailboats all my life, so I know the first step is a quick jerk up on the mainsheet to release it and spill wind from the sail. Of course, this isn't my boat. On the Hobie, the mainsheet block is reversed, so the jerk to release the mainsheet has to be *down*. Or should I say, the jerk pulling the mainsheet the wrong way was *me*? Lesson one: know your equipment.

The second step when sailing all alone on a small boat like the Hobie in a non-hostile environment, if you can't spill wind from the sail, is to try to climb over the windward side of the boat before it passes the 90 degree tipping point. When I was a kid sailing a Minifish, I had gotten so used to the feel of my boat capsizing that I could almost always



(Continued on page 13)

A Girl, a Hobie, and a Gust of Wind (cont'd)

(Continued from page 12)

get a leg over the side and onto the centerboard before the sail barely touched the water.

But this, of course, was not my boat and I didn't know the feel of it well enough to anticipate the capsize. Lesson two: see lesson one.

The worst part was the foot hooked under the hiking strap. This foot was now supporting my weight as it slipped down the trampoline-like material I was sitting on and came to rest in the center webbing that held the two halves of the tramp together. The hiking strap, meanwhile, was now over my shin. As the boat passed the 90 degree mark, my last thought was, "Something's going to break, and I doubt it will be the boat." My ankle and tibia seemed the most likely candidates.

Fortunately, the Hobie design is forgiving. The trampoline material stretched, and although my ankle became firmly gripped between the tramp ropes and hiking strap, nothing broke as I tumbled into the water. After spending the next 10-15 minutes in the water with my foot extended a few feet over my head, the Sandals "red shirt guys" quickly righted the Hobie, I was able to extricate my foot before all feeling was lost, and I escaped with nothing worse than an ugly bruise and minor abrasions. (Those of you who are Star Trek fans know the "red shirt guys" are expendable, and one of them got trapped momentarily under the Hobie because he was trying to pull me up at the same time he righted the boat. I saw him come sputtering to the surface moments later.)

For me, I'm not sure which was bruised more: my ankle or my pride. The nurse's recommendation was to keep the foot elevated, out of direct sun, and a warm bath in the evening. ("Uh honey, I'd get it myself, but the nurse said...") Could've been worse. Actually, it could have been a *lot* worse. Lesson three: never underestimate the importance of your support network. We all need help sometimes.

The next time I took a Hobie out, I brought my "movable ballast" to help keep the windward pontoon down on the water. Lesson four: Don't call your crew "movable ballast", even if it's preceded by, "Honey, in all the Caribbean, you are by far the most beautiful..."

Follow Ken on his blog at

<http://followthewake.blogspot.com/>



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Time to Renew Your NSC Membership!!! (Or Time to Join!!!)

Robin Bonner

It's that time again—time to renew your membership in the Nockamixon Sail Club! (Or, if you've been waffling, then to go ahead and join for the first time!) Don't miss out on anything the new season has to offer:

- Get the Member's Price for the NSC Spring Warm-Up (the season kick-off) on March 19th. (See details elsewhere in this issue or at nockamixonsailclub.org, or watch for an email coming via "NSCPA Yahoo Groups." Sneak preview: Great food and libations, Silent/Live auction to benefit Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, presentation on prepping for a national racing event, and talk/slides on cruising in the Caribbean.)
- Network at Club Events (Purchasing a boat? Fixing one up? Need advice? Hobnob with other club members early and often.)
- Avail yourself of Launch Assistance (April 15th)
- Skipper or Crew in Frostbite Racing (begins April 16th)
- Join other NSC members in a Spring Volunteer Project for Nockamixon State Park. (Come on out, meet other members, and give back to the park! Watch the website and NSCPA emails for details.)
- Sail the Club Sunfish throughout the season (whether or not you own your own boat)
- Crew for other sailors during club events all season long (again, whether or not you own your own boat)
- Enjoy formal and informal Get-Togethers on the water *and* on shore most weekends throughout April through November.

What's your sailing pleasure? Enjoy beautiful Lake Nockamixon this spring, summer, and fall with your favorite people—other sailors!

See the 2016 Membership Application, included in this issue. Please fill out completely. (Renewing members can indicate "same as 2015."). Mail with your check to the PO Box indicated. Easy! By submitting your application by March 1st, you help your Fleet Council—volunteers, all—do planning and record-keeping in advance of the season.

Note: Members not renewing by April 1 will lose all Club privileges and disappear from the NSC Directory until renewal is submitted and processed.

Thanks to these new and renewing members who have joined or re-upped since the last Compass issue:

New Members: David Morris & Carol Giamario

Renewing Members (since last Compass issue):

Brent & Barb Benson
 Randy & Debbie Blough
 Gary & Robin Bonner
 Harris & Patricia Brody
 Joseph & Darlene Cehlar
 Bill Clark & Beverly Turner
 Chet & Gretchen Geyer
 Ralph & Norma Hall
 Colin & Mary Hannings
 Gwen Jacobs
 Ernie & Helen Korchak
 Doug & Karen Maloney
 Mike & Stephanie Mandell
 Greg & Judy Morrison
 George & Judy Mott

Tom Napier
 Steve & Pam Polak
 Paul & Jennifer Prozzillo
 Phil & Jill Scheetz
 Russell & Elsie Schuss
 Tom & Kris Smith
 Brian & Julie Snader
 Doug & Gretchen Swart
 Craig & Gail Tourtellott
 Laurine Valenti
 Ken & Mary Ellen Van Camp
 Gil & Carole Weiss
 Glenn & Dorothy Wesley
 John Whelden & Arlene Rabin
 Rob & Lois Wilkinson



NOCKAMIXON SAIL CLUB

PO Box 133, Telford, PA 18969
www.NockamixonSailClub.org
email: NSailClub@aol.com

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2016

☐ New Member ☐ Renewal

Please fill out and return each year!

Contact Information

Name:	Spouse/Partner:
Street:	Family Members:
City:	Phone:
State: Zip:	Cell Phone:
Email:	

Your contact information will be included in a Directory for use by Club members. No officer or member of the Club may use this information for any purpose other than legitimate social or Club-related communication. By signing below, you agree to be bound by this policy.

Membership Level

Active Racing Member	Active Racing Member (full membership level) - Includes all members of a household and entitles the member or family to one vote on club business, receipt of "The Compass" newsletter, and participation in all NSC activities and programs.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100/year
Active Cruising Member	Active Cruising Member - Includes all members of a household and entitles the member or family to one-half vote on club business, receipt of "The Compass" newsletter, and participation in NSC cruising activities and programs, and all NSC social activities.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50/year

The membership year is January 1st through December 31st. Dues are payable by March 1st. Any member's dues in arrears by March 31 shall necessitate that his/her membership privileges be rescinded and all rights, title, and interest in and to all the property and assets of NSC shall cease. New members who join after September 1 enjoy full membership benefits throughout the following calendar year.

NSC Capital Fund

Capital Fund <input type="checkbox"/>	Contributions are applied to the "Capital Fund" of the club and are always welcome. A contribution by non-members of \$15 or more will include a (1) one-year subscription to "The Compass" newsletter.	\$ _____ Contribution Amount
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Make check payable to:
Nockamixon Sail Club

Mail to: Nockamixon Sail Club
PO Box 133, Telford, PA 18969

Boat Type	Sail Number	Boat Name	Slip# (if applicable)

If you are a member of other organizations listed, please check:

☐ ASA membership
☐ Boat US membership
☐ US Sailing, membership no. _____ Expiration Date: ____/____/20____

DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY: Sailing and sailing-related events are activities with inherent risk of damage and injury. Participants at Nockamixon Sail Club (NSC) events are participating entirely at their own will and risk. The Event Organizers (organizing authority, race committee, protest committee, host club, volunteers, sponsors, or any other organization or official) will not be responsible for damage to any boat or other property or the injury to any participant, including death, sustained in conjunction with or prior to, during, or after the NSC event. By participating in any event at NSC, each participant agrees to release the event organizers from any and all liability associated with such event participation to the fullest extent permitted by law.

WAIVER and INDEMNIFICATION: To the fullest extent permitted by law, I hereby waive any rights I may have to sue the Event Organizers involved with an event at NSC with respect to personal injury or property damage suffered by myself, my crew or my guest(s) as a result of our participation in an event at NSC and hereby release the event organizers from any liability for such injury. Further, I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the NSC and Event Organizers from any and all claims for damages and costs of defending same, including reasonable attorneys fees, arising out of my participation in any NSC event.

INSURANCE: All boats sailing in NSC activities shall be insured with valid, and adequate, third-party liability coverage for the type of sailing in which they participate. An Active Racing Member shall carry insurance coverage adequate for racing. An Active Cruising Member shall carry insurance coverage adequate for cruising.

☐ I acknowledge to be insured with valid, and adequate, third party liability coverage for NSC sailing and sailing-related events.

SIGNED: _____ Applicant (Name) described above. Date: ____/____/20____



Nockamixon Sail Club



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Any Questions? Contact Dan Reasoner

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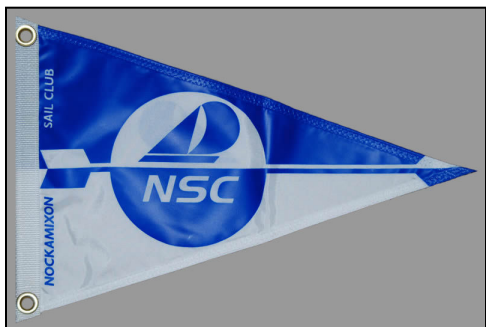
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Order Form and Sizing Chart available on <http://www.nockamixonsailclub.org>

Club Hats, Visors Patches, Burgees, Tote Bags and Water Bottles are available "in stock" and for sale at Club events and/or contact Dan Reasoner or Glenn Wesley.

Also, see the NSC website for these items.



NSC Burgee

\$20 for 12"x18"

\$30 for 14"x21"



NSC Tote Bag and Water

Bottle \$5.00



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The Nockamixon Sail Club

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Photos by Brian Scarborough