



THE COMPASS



www.nockamixonsailclub.org

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The Newsletter of
The Nockamixon Sail Club
P.O. Box 133
Telford, PA 18969

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Keep an Eye Out

Brian Scarborough

Fleet Council has been working on several initiatives this Winter. It's sort of like maintenance projects for the Club. Look for future announcements on the Club Website, NSCPA Yahoo Group, and the private Facebook group for these topics:

Annual Service Project: Saturday March 25, from 9:00 to 12:00 at the Marina. Bring appropriate clothing and tools for a big trash cleanup and some brush thinning.

Online Club applications and PayPal membership payments and renewals: Our Club webmaster Glenn Wesley is hard at work putting this needed system together for us. For details see page 7.

Online Club activity registration: Our Cruising Fleet often has difficulty running activities. Sometimes there is great turnout, sometimes none. Rear Commodore of Cruising Colin Hannings is looking to use Eventbrite.com activity registrations to have a better idea of who plans to participate in an activity. Links to register for activities will be posted on the Club website calendar, and will be included in the Commodore's weekly event reminder notices.

Thistle District Regatta: Our Club will be hosting the Thistle District Regatta on Saturday, June 10. Pencil this event on your calendar! All members should plan to come to the lake to view exciting and competitive racing. Additional activities are being planned so the whole Club can support this event.

Mark Your Calendars for these Upcoming Events!

Membership Renewal Due
Spring Warm-Up (See page 3 for details)
Annual Service Project
ULDB - the biggest club event of the year!
Fall Awards Banquet

Wednesday March 1
Saturday March 18
Saturday March 25
Saturday June 17
Sunday November 12



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Com-Pac: Bill Pfanstiel
Flying Scot: Phil Scheetz
Impulse 21: Warren Mangan
O'Day: Doug Swart
Precision: Steve Hayick
Portsmouth: Craig Tourtellott
Thistle: Craig Smith

Park Liaison

Warren Mangan

Web Master

Glenn Wesley

Compass Editor

Ken Van Camp

Commodore's Corner

Brian Scarborough

It's tough, folks. It's that time of year. This winter has had all the bad parts of winter, and not much good. It's been kinda warm, at least warm enough to sail up to New Year's Day. But it's been chilly since then, and not chilly enough to freeze the lake. We've had no snow yet, so there hasn't even been the Winter payoff of snowshoeing around the lake, or cross-country skiing. The car needed to have an expensive job re-done (my mistake for buying aftermarket parts). The computer decided to die, and wanted a \$600 transplant (still cheaper than a brand new one). We've got challenging situations in our national affairs. And to top it all off, it's now February, the month where winter really closes in and makes me go crazy. It may be sunny as I look out my office window, but it's also breezy and 32°. And that's not enough degrees for a breeze!

So, what to do? Well, start a few simple projects. Apply some varnish on removable items. Repair some things. And start planning the coming summer. It'll get here eventually. And so the Fleet Council has already had its first meeting of the year, and a second soon to come. So, I'd like to take an opportunity to talk about what the Club is, and what it does.

First off, we are volunteers. We volunteer to sail. We volunteer to sail at the lake. We volunteer to get together for activities. Maybe that's racing. Maybe it's tying up alongside a friend to share some food, drink, and a pleasant view. Or maybe it's volunteering to help pull someone out of the weeds, or fix a broken widget.

But what happens when we get more people? 50 or 100 people, who all say "Let's do this watery stuff together?" Well, then we get our club. Still more volunteering, because people step up to say, "Hey, we need to communicate to everyone. We need to come up with stuff to do. We need to organize. We need big picnics (the important stuff!)" So, every year at this time, we've got the Fleet Council and officers coming together to do all of this. And I'll be honest, in the 5 years or so that I've been involved, it's been much the same, trying to plan the same things.

Of course, people come with some agendas. The racers definitely want to have races. We like Spring Warmup banquets and Up the Lake, Down and Back picnics. Some of us have advocated for Leukemia Cup Regattas, to donate and help a worthy cause. As Commodore, I've shown up with agendas of my own – things that I think we can do better; things that I think will benefit the club.

But I also feel that Fleet Council comes into a vacuum. It's a vacuum of "Do it like we have always done." A vacuum of "What does everyone else want?" A vacuum of "How do we get more people, and keep things going?" I'll be honest, I like to pretend that I'm more modest than that. I don't think I have answers to all of our questions. I don't think we are doing the best job for our members that we can do. I think we are doing well enough, because I don't hear many complaints, so don't mistake my meaning.

But there are many of you in the club. Surely there are things you are looking for from your friends and fellow volunteers. What do you think is missing? What do you specifically want from a large group of like-minded boaters – because surely if it's something you want, someone else will find value in that idea. I'm hoping there are some more voices out there. Please let Fleet Council know.

And finally, think about some of the tough things you have going on right now. Now, think about you as a volunteer. Because we are missing an important officer for the Club, our Membership Secretary. In order to keep the Club going, the Membership Secretary plays a crucial role, keeping track of our members, renewing and new. They provide initial contact with the new members. And they serve as a volunteer, helping to provide what members want from the club. Please consider volunteering your time for this position.

2017 SPRING WARM UP BANQUET



SATURDAY, MARCH 18TH

6:00 p.m.

DUBLIN Firehouse Community Room **194 N. Main St., Dublin PA 18917**

Another great social opportunity for all our current and new members to meet, reconnect, and share their winter stories and celebrate, while looking forward to the upcoming 2017 sailing season

Note that the venue this year is at the **DUBLIN Firehouse** located at the intersection of Route 313 and Rickert Road with plenty of free parking.

The **Open Bar** will consist of beer, wine, soda and water beginning at 6:00, followed by dinner at 7:00

This year's **BUFFET** will be catered by *Giuseppe's Restaurant* and include:
broccoli bites, chicken fingers, healthy steamed vegetables,
vegetable lasagna with tomato sauce, chicken bruschetta, hot roast beef served with rolls,
and plenty of mixed green salad, dessert and coffee

Following dinner, Commodore Brian Scarborough will give an introduction to our Officers and a brief overview of the 2017 upcoming sailing season. Each fleet will have the opportunity to meet and elect Fleet Captains. A discussion 'Communication' for Club Members will be presented.

Be sure to get your membership dues in

Cost per person:

2017 NSC Member, 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 Monday, March 6th with the number of people attending to:
Keepsmlin49@yahoo.com

Make checks payable to "NSC" and mail to: Laurine Valenti, 22 Skyline Dr., Chalfont, PA 18914
By March 12th





Mariner Fleet Report

Russell Schuss



Lots happening at Lake Nockamixon, PA. Mother Nature doesn't seem to want to participate in our activities. In the first invitational we just sat and waited for any breeze. The only boats to make movement were the Thistles. We ate lunch and finally the event was called off.



Here's Steve Hock waiting to get underway for the second Invitational. As you can tell from the water surface, it's going to be a quiet day also.

The weather forecast is for 5mph from the southeast. Those are the prevailing winds during summer here at the lake. There's a little hill to the north-northwest that disturbs the air flow in the area. So who knows what's going to happen.

So here we are rounding the second mark and we see ahead all the Thistles; and if you look there's a catamaran in front of the trees. How really picturesque is the scene. Sails shimmering in the water reflection, is this sailing, let alone racing? Another day of canceled races. Sorry Steve. We paddled back to the docks.

Among the other activities there is a Ladies Dam Race. So if there are any lady Mariner skippers, this would be a race for you. Also, there was a Leukemia Fund race for two categories, racers and cruisers. I was surprised not to see Mariners out there for either category. This was a worthwhile event. Addressing the event were Leukemia survivors to tell their story and was quite emotional. Food and prizes followed the event.

There's still many events on the calendar for this season going out to October for frostbiting. For a small fee, if you are not a member of Nockamixon Sail Club, anyone can come out and have a fun day on the water.



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Thistle Fleet Report

Craig Smith



At the January meeting of the Nockamixon Thistle Fleet, I was elected the 2017 Thistle Fleet Captain. I look forward to doing this job again. Thanks to Paul Prozzillo, who has served as Thistle Fleet Captain for the last 2 years. He will now assume the role of Assistant Fleet captain and be the Thistle Fleet Representative on the NSC Fleet Council, as he has been for the last several years.

I thought that now would be a good time to re-introduce myself to the NSC family. I have been a member of the NSC and Thistle Fleet 176 since 1991, when I began crewing with Lincoln Baxter, who was one of the founding members of the NSC Thistle Fleet. I purchased my own Thistle in 1994 and became active in both the local and regional Thistle events. I fell so in love with the boat and the class that I became a National Thistle Class officer in 2005 and served as Thistle Class President in 2009. Since June, 2014 I have been serving as the Thistle Class Secretary, for which I am responsible for the collection of membership dues, administration of mailing lists, distribution of the bi-monthly magazine called the Bagpipe, managing the Thistle Class Web site, and serving as the recording secretary for all of the TCA organizational meetings.

Even though these responsibilities consume much of my free time, I accepted the NSC fleet captain position because I believe that a **STRONG LOCAL THISTLE FLEET** is the backbone for a strong National Thistle Class, and that serving as Thistle fleet captain is the best way to demonstrate that philosophy.

At our winter fleet meeting held at Paul's house, I shared some of my thoughts and ideas for 2017. I'll re-share some of them now. I think strong attendance at our fleet racing is an essential part of maintaining a strong fleet. I plan to contact many of you to get your thoughts on what the best formula will be to make sure we can have great attendance for all of our fleet racing. Generally, I believe that this means that we don't schedule too many race days, and try to make sure that the dates we schedule are days in which most of our members can participate. If I have not yet contacted you for your thoughts on our fleet racing calendar, please reach out to me to share what dates are good (or bad) for you, and what can be done to help you participate more often.

We are excited to be hosting the NJ Thistle District Championship in 2017. We have decided that this will be a one day event on June 10th, and are still looking for NSC volunteers to run the races that day. We will probably have several former national Thistle Class champions racing with us, so it should provide for some great spectating. If you are interested in helping to run the racing, please let me know.

Here are some of my other thoughts about our fleet activities for 2017:

Travel Regattas - There is a great series of regional Thistle Class regattas within a short drive of Philly. Let's try to get as many Fleet 176 boats to these regattas as possible. If you have difficulty finding crew for travel events, I suggest that you team up with another Nockamixon skipper and plan to alternate skipper rolls at several of these regattas. This is a great way to share the fun AND increase participation. Here are some events you should put on your calendar: Kitchin Regatta at Lake Hopatcong on May 20-21; Atlantic Coast Championship, in Westport, CT on July 8-9; East
(Continued on page 6)



Craig Smith and his friends sail in San Diego at the Thistle Midwinters West Championship



Thistle Fleet Report (cont'd)

(Continued from page 5)

Coast Fall Series in Sept and Oct at all the best Thistle regatta sites; and the 2018 Midwinters East Championship in St. Petersburg Florida in March, 2018.

2017 Thistle Nationals - will be at Chautauqua Lake in Western New York in July. Let's have a great NSC turnout at this event. If you sail the NJ Thistle Districts at Lake Nockamixon on June 10th, you ARE QUALIFIED to sail 2017 Thistle Nationals.

Let's get our KIDS sailing with us! Several of the NSC Thistle Fleet members have young children, so let's make a concerted effort to get some of them to sail with us for our fleet racing. If you are willing to take kids on your boat with you, please let me know. I know that Paul, Tony, and Quinn have kids that might be willing to join us for our fleet racing. The more kids that join us, the more fun they will have. We are discussing ways to incentivize the skippers who are willing and able to sail with our young sailors. Also, please consider recruiting your grandchildren, neighborhood kids, and those of your co-workers. The more the merrier!! If we can get our young sailors to join us, we will be training the next generation of Thistle sailors!

Thank you for electing me your 2017 Fleet Captain. I consider it an honor and privilege, and look forward to helping the NSC Thistle Fleet become one of the strongest Thistle fleets on the East Coast. Please join me and help us achieve that goal!



Nockamixon Thistle Sailors meet Paralympic Silver Mentalist, Brad Kendell at 2016 Thistle Midwinters East in Florida



NSC Thistle Fleet Captain, Craig Smith, will do anything for the Thistle Class!

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Rear Commodore of Cruising Report

Colin Hannings

IT'S BLEAK ON THE LAKE!

EVENTBRITE

CLUB SERVICE PROJECT – MARCH 25, 2017

Been at the Lake lately? Brrrr! It's looking pretty lonely, cold and uninviting. The only person I know who dares to sail on it now is our Commodore, Brian Scarborough. I have seen images of him on Facebook sailing his Force 5 in early January outfitted in full wet gear. That is probably one of the reasons why he is our Commodore. I know I have to force myself soon to go up and just check on my boat and the tie-downs just to make sure nothing is amiss. While I enjoy the winter, the snow and the skiing, I am eagerly awaiting the warmth of the Spring and getting our boats ready for launch.

The Cruising Schedule has been set and will be posted very soon-perhaps even before you read this edition of the Compass. This year we intend to use the Eventbrite web site for sign-up and registration for our various events so we can get some idea of who and how many will be attending our various events so we can plan accordingly. I encourage each and every one of you to utilize the Eventbrite site for registration for each event. I am currently awaiting technical assistance from Eventbrite to get our Nockamixon Sailing Club Service Project on March 25, 2017 listed so all of you can register to help on Saturday, March 25th from 9AM to 12 AM.

Last year's turn-out and effort for the Service Project was spectacular and I am certain we can do as well this year. Warren will get our task from the park office and direct us through the morning. Get your trimmers, cutters and shears sharpened and fueled up!

As we await the change in the weather, the arrival of the warmth and the lengthening of the days, check to see you have sent in your membership dues and have noted our Spring Warm-Up Event at the Dublin Fire Hall on March 18th.

I'm certain by the Spring Warm-Up our sailing plans will be close to being finalized and we'll all be ready to go and get them launched. Don't just sit home for the rest of the Winter and allow Cabin Fever to get the best of you. GET OUT THERE and enjoy the rest of the Winter. See you all soon.

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On-line NSC Membership Application and Dues Payment

The 2017 Nockamixon Sail Club Fleet Council is happy to announce on-line membership application and dues payment. For those who want to use the traditional method of joining or renewing you can still download, fill out the paper application and send in you dues using US mail.

Both methods can be found on the web site Join Us page. (You will also find the 2017 paper application in this issue of The Compass.)

You can go directly to the 2017 Online Membership Application by pointing your web browser to <http://nockamixonsailclub.org/content/2017-membership-application-0>

Renew your membership NOW! It will help reduce the hassle for your NSC membership team with renewals received after the March 31st deadline.

Glenn Wesley - NSC Webmaster



Flying Scot Fleet Report

Phil Scheetz



2017 is the 60th year of the Flying Scot

It's been 12 years since I found my Flying Scot. It was in the backyard of a business contact, and it had not been used in years. Little did I know that I would enjoy this boat, as much as I have. I have traveled to various regattas, as the Flying Scot Class has numerous fleets and regattas within easy driving distance.

The Flying Scot is mainly found in the eastern half of the US, as the builder has been supporting the Flying Scot class from Deep Creek Lake in Maryland for 60 years. Every Scot is the same, a true one-design, and Flying Scot Inc has every part, and expert advice on repairs, upgrades and maintenance.

The Flying Scot Class offers so many local and national events, and they can be found at www.FSSA.com. All national events are open to all class members, and all skill levels are welcome. It's truly awesome to race, then come in and have a Rolex Yachtsman of the Year give a clinic around the keg. At this year's NAC, Olympian Anna Tunnicliff will be giving a clinic, and so will Greg Fisher, who is a Multi-class national and world champion. (Greg is currently Director of Sailing at the College of Charleston.)

In 2017, the North American Championship is in Sandusky, OH, starting June 24. You can sail the NAC, and ride some of the biggest rollercoasters in the world.

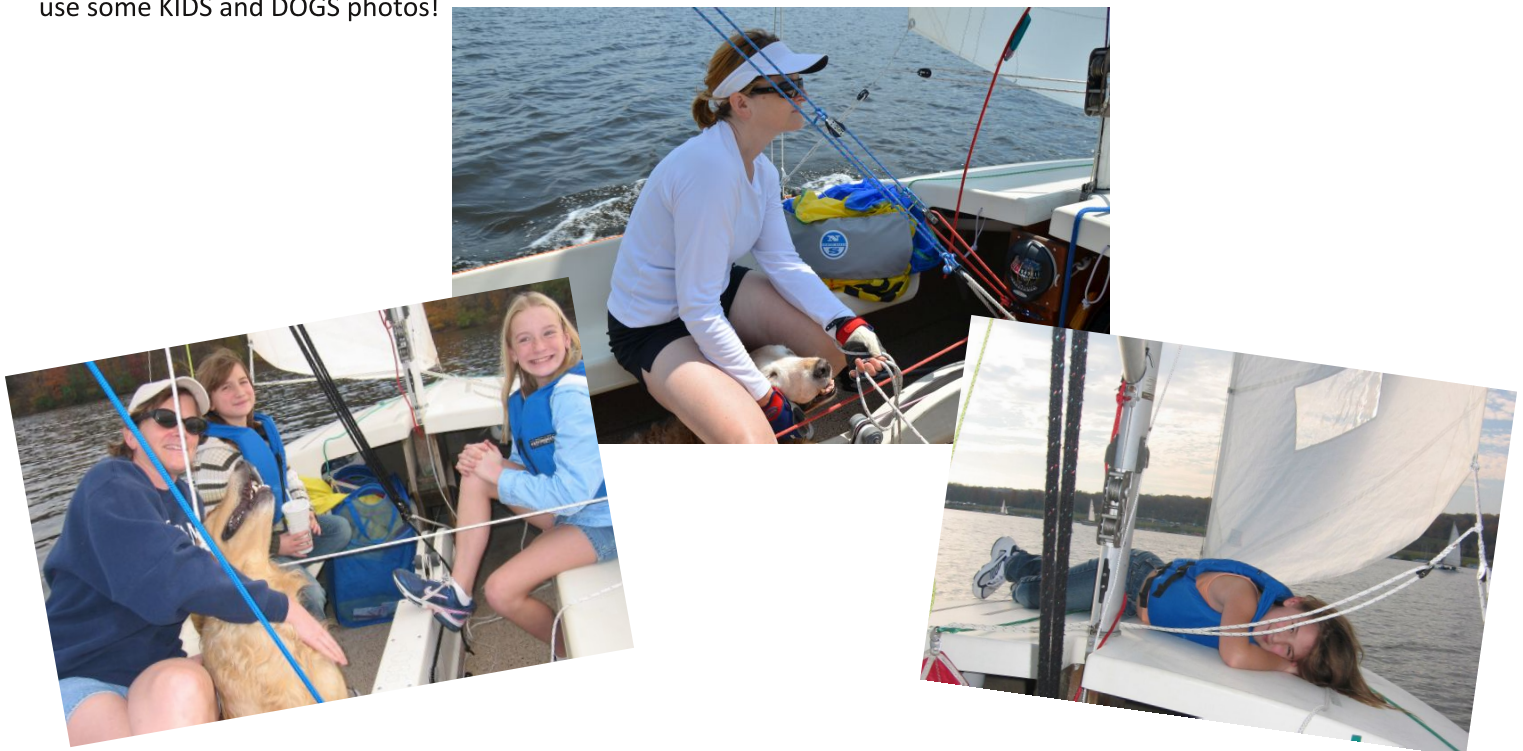
The Scot Class also offers a Wife-Husband Championship, which starts July 22 at Sandy Bay Yacht Club in Rockport, MA. Fleet 163 usually fields 3 to 5 boats for the Wife Husband, is this your year?

Don't forget, the Atlantic Coast Championship and this year's MidWinters, in March at Southern Yacht Club in New Orleans could be the antidote for winter cabin fever.

The Scot is an awesome family boat, and DOGS love them. Since I usually include photos of racing, I thought y'all could use some KIDS and DOGS photos!



FLYING SCOT
SINCE 1957



Clockwise from left: Family boat; Jill and Sawyer at the ULDB; Room on deck for napping



Basic Sailing

Craig Tourtelott

Nockamixon Sail Club members range from the basic beginner to the more advanced sailor. Some if not all need to remember our beginnings – basic sailing. I found over the winter a web site training company <http://www.nauticed.org/freesailingcourse> They offer, for free, two lessons – basic sail trim and navigation rules clinic. If you feel the challenge, go, login and have at it. Terms in the navigation course were different from what I knew, but understandable. The format is easy and the testing helps you refine your knowledge of the course material.

I had posted to our web site a link to other sites which offer sailing simulators. Some better than others. <http://thefinalbeat.com/categories/other-sailing-topics/online-sailing-games-simulators> Try out the one which sails upwind in varying winds. Can you beat the computer boat often?

I search for many topics on sail making to help me with my 'hobby' part of sailing, videos, sailing in the Caribbean and others. How can you miss topics relating to the upcoming Americas Cup in Bermuda this summer. Did you get to see some of the video on the Vendee Globe? To watch boats, sail the world in less than 80 days only to be miles apart at the end. Now this was high performance monohull sailing with lifting wings. Hugo Boss could get out of the water behind the keel!

I guess you could say sailing is not always Basic. Enjoy the remaining few days of winter, spring is coming fast, get your boat to do list ready, if not done on time.

As the Fleet Captain for the Portsmouth Fleet we offer sailing events to all members with any type of boat. If you have joined as a cruising member, remember you can still sail in our fleet events to try your hand in racing without the heat of hard rules, etc. We would love to get some boats each date to have an open long distance course. Give it a try in 2017. Helps those even with basic sailing knowledge with a love to learn. This year we are trying out a performance handicap system like golf. It allows for skippers to sail each day with a handicap that varies from past results. The software is from HAL, developed by Peter Hopford, UK. The software takes the guess out of scoring. Your times for each race are entered and the software scores your fleet. The Portsmouth fleet will score two ways in 2017 to see how each gives results. Maybe it could help with other events.

Are you ready for the spring time events and getting your boat ready – do so. Enjoy_/_)

Park Liaison Notes – Club Service Project

We are planning for an early spring club project in the marina area.

Saturday March 25 is a possible date, 9am-12 (heavy rain date April 1st).

We did a major shoreline clean up last year. This year we will be less ambitious but park would like help with general clean up in the marina area and shoreline of fallen branches, trash and other winter damage. We can also add any missing tie down anchors In the dry slips if any are needed.

This early date should be before the vegetation has grown much, to make our job easier.

Please mark you calendar.

Warren Mangan
Park Liaison





How to Keep It Going

Brian Scarborough

I once overheard this quote at outdoor equipment store REI: "There's no such thing as bad weather. There's only bad clothing choices." Granddad taught me about water safety. And then there was the whole kayaking training emphasizing cold water safety. Sure, wetsuits work to extend a season, but not as well as a drysuit. Funny that it works on sailboats as well as it does in kayaks. In years past, I'd been kayaking late into the season, on one occasion dragging the kayak over snow and ice to get to soft water.

This year, it was a bit different. Now that I have a small, easy to trailer and rig Force 5, I vowed to sail deep into the "season," even though it's probably not considered much of a season by everyone else. It turns out that Mike Mandell has use of his son's Laser, now that Sam is off at college. Mike found a clearance dry suit, and the two of us were out sailing in November. My previous late season sailing record was capsizing a Hobie 16 in Barnegat Bay on October 23. (Unfortunately, there is video evidence of me causing the capsize...)



Throughout December, Mike and I emailed often, searching for a good weather window and possible racing at Marsh Creek. It seemed almost every Sunday was 20-25 knots. But one weekend, I emailed, and the reply was, "Well, the bad news is no, I'm not going to be able. However, the good news is it's because I'm going to pick up a new boat! (more details to follow...)" I speculated a bit, and suggested it might be a bigger boat than his Laser or Flying Scot, to be kept in the water in New Jersey. "I'm not divulging any details for fear of jinxing (old sailor superstition)!" came the reply.



After the deal was done, I got a wonderful email, "Look what followed me home! It's a J/70!" Wow, how much fun is that, a friend of mine just bought a hot new keel boat!

Well, I couldn't let that pass, so I responded with, "Hey, I got a new boat too!" Too bad it was only a LEGO kit, but it's still a new catamaran!

Now considering that Mike has been out cold water sailing with me, I was especially happy that he was willing to try to rig and sail the new boat around the Christmas holidays. I started to hold him to it, considering I had taken off work the week between Christmas and New Years. At first, he thought Wednesday, December 28th would be good. But then he started chickening out, and said he thought it wouldn't be very nice weather. Well, lucky for me, his son Sam insisted we sail the boat before he had to go back to college.



The day dawned breezy, cloudy and cool. We agreed to meet around 10:00 so that we'd have plenty of time to figure the boat out. Temps were somewhere around 40° and it was cloudy. The breeze seemed a bit foreboding, but was forecast to diminish through the day. Here's what they showed up with:

I've never seen so many covers before. Well, ok, for my Force 5 I now have a top cover, spar bag, and foil bag, so I suppose if I get a bottom cover, I'd have as many covers at the J/70.



Even though we were chilled and bundled up, we began taking off the covers. This bottom cover is the most amazing origami I have ever seen, as it is cut out to fit around the trailer bunks, as well as the lifting keel. There was much unzipping and unsnapping. Even then, there was a challenge pulling the bottom cover out.

Now, this boat of theirs is fairly new, maybe only 2 years old. And it had been raced. But the curious thing was that the seller has stripped it. We had a bag of standing

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How to Keep It Going (cont'd)

(Continued from page 10)

rigging, and a bag of assorted blocks and lines which were supposed to constitute the running rigging. Shrouds were removed from the mast. Spreaders and the backstay flicker had to actually be screwed into place. The fairlead blocks for the jib tracks had even been removed. Mike was understandably overwhelmed, but Sam must have studied up, and he charged right ahead. I'm sure his sailing on J/22s the past season helped quite a bit. We laid the carbon mast onto sawhorses, and forcibly yanked the mast cover off. Ooooooh, carbon fiber spars! We tried to lower the mast off of a sawhorse so we could attach the backstay flicker, but it was still too long. I eventually gave up and installed it when we had the mast back on the boat, before we stepped it.



Finally, we had the boat rigged and ready to go. It took us hours, but there were still challenges to surmount.

When Mike and I had sailed our small boats at the end of November, the lake levels were still very low. We didn't have much rain through the end of the Summer and Fall, and the launch ramp floating piers were actually grounded on the shore side end. It didn't matter much to us that the gangplanks had been pulled back onto the concrete pier anchors, because we were floating singlehander boats off of launch dollies. Well, by the time Christmas had come and gone, we'd had a considerable amount of rain. The water was higher, floating the piers, and we were unable to get up onto them. Oops. We thought about it, and finally went over to A dock, just to see if the combo to the door had been changed or not. Luck was with us, and it had not been. We were now able to get out on a dock.

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used. In fact, Mike had never even bothered to change any fuel! I backed the boat down the ramp with just Old Faithful on the transom. We didn't mount the rudder, because we were afraid it wouldn't clear the bottom during launching. Mike and Sam were onboard the boat. And Old Faithful started right up, running long enough to get the boat to the end of A dock. They tied up while I parked the truck and we proceeded with our final rigging. The J/70 uses a temporary crane over the lifting keel, with a winch and Dyneema single braid line on a 3:1 purchase. Mike had brought along his Dewalt cordless drill, and I'm not kidding, you really need one for the winch. It made quick work of winching the keel down into deployed position. Sam hung the rudder, and we hoisted the main. I shoved off the bow, hopped on board, and away we went.



The breeze was still a bit puffy, as it is almost always at Nockamixon, and we headed down the middle of the lake past No Name Cove under main alone, almost dead downwind. Then we unrolled the jib, and beat back up the lake. I had noticed our vang didn't seem to be rigged correctly, and started fiddling with it, trying to re-rig it for proper purchase. I was thankful for my Force 5, because the vangs on both boats were quite similar. I hadn't been paying attention since we passed Marina Point, but when I finally had the vang re-routed, I looked up, and we were already very close to the Fishing Pier. Wow, talk about a fast boat! We went a bit farther past the Fishing Pier, then decided to turn around.

We were headed back down the lake, and Sam called for foredeck to get ready. Yes, he wanted to try and fly the huge masthead asymmetrical spinnaker. Why not? I hoisted away the chute, and rolled up the jib, and the boat took off. Sam just sat there at the tiller looking

(Continued on page 12)



How to Keep It Going (cont'd)

(Continued from page 11)

quite pleased with himself. Unfortunately, with the wind coming more from the North, we weren't reaching as much as we hoped. The wind was pushing us closer and closer to the South shore of the lake. I called out to Sam, "Sam, we need to watch out, this shore gets very shallow!" Then the wind did us one worse, and shifted NNE. There we were, with the chute as close hauled as it could get, sometimes pulling the boat into a bit of heel, but we had no water left to turn downwind, lest we run aground! We quickly made the decision to do our best to pull the chute down without the benefit of turning downwind and blanketing it with the main. I hauled the foot in as fast as I could, and then started stuffing armfuls down the hatch as best I could while my mind screamed "No shrimping! No shrimping!" at me. If you've ever seen a boat drag its spinnaker in the water, that's known as "shrimping," because it looks like a shrimp boat dragging its net in the water.

Mike made a good call at this point, and said we should go in. Sam and I weren't quite happy with the idea, but Mike had a really good point: "Guys, it took us hours to rig. We sure don't want to be un-rigging in the dark." Reluctantly, Sam pointed the bow back toward A dock. Luckily for us, the wind had started to dissipate, and we were easily able to sail to the end slip and pull down the main without getting blown around.

I ran back up to the truck while Mike and Sam pulled off the rudder, and winched the keel back up. Now, how were we going to get the boat on the trailer? Mike decided they should just run the boat up on the trailer like the fishermen do. But our first few tries, the keel didn't sit in the tray on the trailer. There wasn't much I could do, because most of the trailer was back in the freezing water. I almost stripped my shoes, socks, and pants off to wade in and guide the bow, but remembered I was wearing long underwear, which would have been soaked. I called out directions to Sam, who was steering only with motor. Old Faithful had no transmission, and was always in gear. Sam was able to spin it around for reverse, moving the boat back out for another try. Somehow he managed to line up the bow, counteract the wind, and get the keel on the tray. That boy is quite the capable captain! I jumped on the half submerged trailer box without getting wet to hook the bow to the winch, then pulled the boat out with the truck. It would have been so much easier to get the boat on the trailer if only one of us could have been on the floating pier pulling the boat into trailer alignment with a dock line. Still, with the three of us, we were able to "coax" the boat on the trailer so the keel was centered.

Surprisingly, taking a boat apart and putting covers on was much easier and quicker than putting it together. Even though dragging the bottom cover underneath the boat and around all the trailer parts was not easy at all, we crawled around and got the job done. If only we had a crane to lift the boat out of the water onto the trailer... We soon had everything stowed, and towed the boat over to its storage barn. We finished up with a warm and well deserved dinner in Ottsville.

While we had Mike and Sam's boats holed up in the barn for the season, I wasn't quite finished with 2016. Was I pushing deep into the season, or would I be starting the next one early? New Year's Day dawned crystal clear and not too cold, with a reasonable breeze. I had to do it again, just one more time before I put the winter cover over the Force 5. This time, I remembered that I had bought knockoff GoPro-style adventure video cameras the previous Spring. I managed to get one charged enough before heading for the lake, and I got some fun video. As my final hoorah to the sailing season, here are screen captures. First we see some fast close reaching (see page 18).

And later, before my feet got too cold, a relaxing cruise into the marina past my bigger boat's slip.

I finally caved in, and covered the boat for the winter. I can't wait for Spring! I'm so happy I'll be able to start the season with the little boat as soon as the weather allows.





Celestial Navigation 101 - Part 5 - Using Polaris to Find Latitude

Brad Kurlancheek

Yesterday, when putting pen to paper to write about the next step in this series, which was to go through the practical aspects of physically using a sextant, in order to measure the height of the sun above the horizon, I ran into a problem. It occurred to me that unless we first went through as to why the height of the North Star (Polaris), above the horizon, tells us roughly what our latitude is, then we'd risk missing out on gaining a basic theoretical understanding of how a sextant helps us determine latitude by measuring the height of the sun above the horizon. If such step was omitted, sure, we'd learn the step-by-step of using a sextant, but anyone who's made it this far in the series, knows that theory, as in, trying to understand how the nuts and bolts of these celestial matters work scientifically, is a big part of the writing here. And so...

Most sailors of the northern hemisphere, or at least those who are members of the Nockamixon Sailing Club, know that if you measure the angular height of Polaris - a/k/a the North Star - above the horizon, the resulting number is roughly equivalent to the observer's latitude. Plainly, the way it works, is that if we can figure out how many degrees, on a scale from 0 to 90, the star Polaris is above the horizon, then that result gives us our approximate distance from the equator, in terms of degrees latitude.

First, some terminology: The term *angular height* refers to height of a celestial body, like Polaris, measured in degrees, and not in feet or miles. We use angular height, and not linear height, because we are covering distance on a curve, and not on a flat surface. Consider the sky above us as a huge curved dome, like an upside down bowl. The bowl, or dome, has a visual distance of 180 degrees, from horizon to horizon, in each direction. A celestial body situated at the very top of the dome, would have an angular height of 90 degrees. One situated at the horizon, in any direction, would have an angular height of 0 degrees. A celestial body halfway between the horizon and the top of the dome, in any direction, would have an angular height of 45 degrees.

The term *latitude* is measured in a similar fashion, because the surface of the earth is curved. As such, latitude is an observer's "angular distance", along the surface of the earth, *from* the equator. This angular distance from the equator starts out a 0 degrees, and as one approaches either north or south pole, increases to a maximum of 90 degrees.

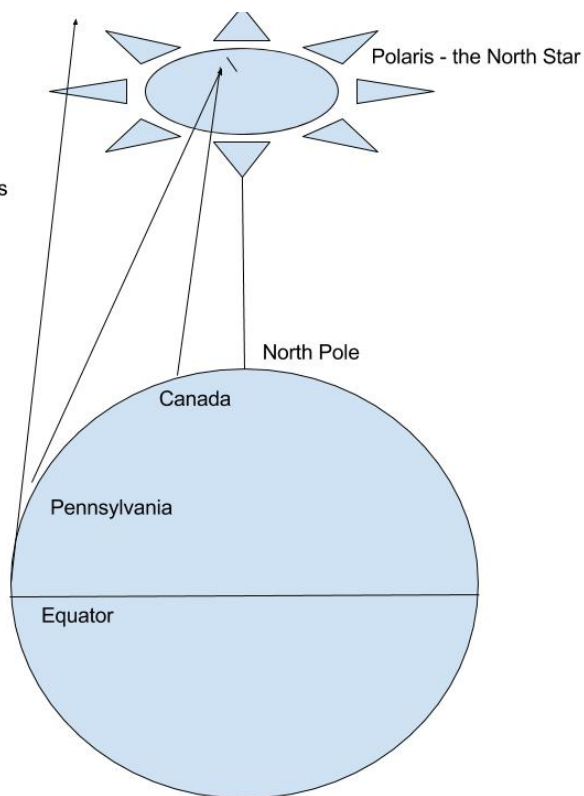
Ok, now the fun stuff: In the northern hemisphere, using the Polaris method, we use a star that's several million miles away, to almost instantly determine our latitude, or, in other words, our angular distance from the equator. In other words, just knowing where Polaris is in the sky, can perhaps someday, save your life, or at least, get you home again.

The reason the Polaris method of determining latitude in the northern hemisphere works, is because Polaris is situated in space on a direct straight imaginary line originating at the south pole, going up through the earth, then through the north pole, and on out several million miles till such line

(Continued on page 14)

Observer sees Polaris as::

- 1) at North Pole, straight up, 90 degrees above horizon.
- 2) at northern Canada, almost 70 degrees above horizon;
- 3) at Pennsylvania, about 40 degrees above horizon;
- 4) at Equator, between 0 and 5 degrees above horizon





Celestial Navigation 101 (cont'd)

(Continued from page 13)

finally bumps into the humble little star (relatively speaking) we call Polaris.

The beauty of it all is that as the earth rotates east to west around its north-south axis, Polaris, *all night*, stays fixed in its position in the heavens, relative to any observer in the earth's northern hemisphere, as being on that line of the earth's north-south axis, said axis imaginarily extended straight northward out into space about 400 light years.

Consider also that a line drawn from the North Pole to Polaris is perpendicular to the east-west plane of the equator, said plane slicing if you will through the middle of the earth. Hence, if we are located at the North Pole, and look straight up, we will be looking directly at Polaris.

Consequently, imagining that we're standing on the north pole, then in such case, the angular distance between:

- a) a line from us to the horizon (which line would incidentally be parallel to the east-west plane of the equator), and
- b) a line straight up to Polaris,

....will be 90 degrees, with lines a) and b) forming a perfect right angle.

But, if instead, we are standing at the equator, and look straight up, we will see anything but Polaris.

Or even if, as we're standing on the equator, we look 45 degrees up from the horizon, we will still not see Polaris.

In order to see Polaris, while standing on the equator, we would have to look directly on a plane that is parallel to the horizon. In such case, Polaris would be approximately zero degrees above the horizon. This is because Polaris is above the north pole, and is not above the equator.

In a sense, by looking northward, *from the equator*, directly at the horizon, we are looking as well as we can towards the north pole. And since Polaris is several hundred light years above the north pole (millions of miles), although we can't see the North Pole (because the earth is round), we can see Polaris from our position at the equator, where it rests (in the heavens) just barely above the horizon looking northwards.

Not coincidentally, our latitude at the North Pole is 90 degrees North, and our latitude at the equator is 0 degrees. Our latitude, in other words, is the same, in each case, as the angular height that Polaris appears above the horizon.

Let's look at this in practice. Imagine you're taking a hike, from the North Pole, to Pennsylvania. As you walk southwards, every now and then you look up into the sky, and you try to locate Polaris. At first, up at the North Pole, Polaris is directly straight up. Hence the angle between looking straight up at Polaris, and a line straight to the horizon, is 90 degrees. Hence, your latitude there, is also 90 degrees.

Yet, with every step you go southwards towards the equator, Polaris appears to get lower and lower in the sky. This is because the earth is round. As you hike southward towards the equator, you're looking at something that is above the north pole, and less and less, above you.

Back on our hike, as we journey into Canada, say into lovely northern Baffin Island, you look behind you, northward, and see that Polaris is about 70 degrees up from the horizon. Baffin Island's latitude is also about 70 degrees.

Finally, when you hike even further south, and arrive in Pennsylvania, Polaris' height has slid even lower in the sky, down to about 40 degrees above the horizon, pretty much the exact latitude for Pennsylvania.

Consequently, you've proven on this hike, that wherever you are in the northern hemisphere, all you need do is observe, using fingers, a protractor, or sextant (or just a rough guesstimate), how many degrees Polaris is above the horizon, and that measurement also provides your approximate latitude.

This is all wonderful, and is a great little trick for your navigation bag, but why exactly, is the height of Polaris, above the horizon, from where we're standing, roughly equal to our latitude? Latitude as you'll recall, is our angular distance, north or south, from the equator. Yet, the equator itself has nothing to do with Polaris. It's not even a star. It's a place on this planet, earth, where it's really hot.

Yet here we are using the angular height of *Polaris* - a remarkably bright and gigantic fusion factory, some several *million* miles away - to give us our angular distance from that equator, while sailing a tiny boat, on a harmless little blue planet called earth. How can this be? Why does the trick work? Stay tuned.



Book Review: The Sea-Wolf, by Jack London

Ken Van Camp

"Even the wheel, quite a deal higher than the waist, was covered and swept again and again. At such moments I felt strangely alone with God, alone with him and watching the chaos of his wrath. And then the wheel would reappear, and Wolf Larsen's broad shoulders, his hands gripping the spokes and holding the schooner to the course of his will, himself an earth-god, dominating the storm, flinging its descending waters from him and riding it to his own ends. And oh, the marvel of it! The marvel of it! That tiny men should live and breathe and work, and drive so frail a contrivance of wood and cloth through so tremendous an elemental strife."

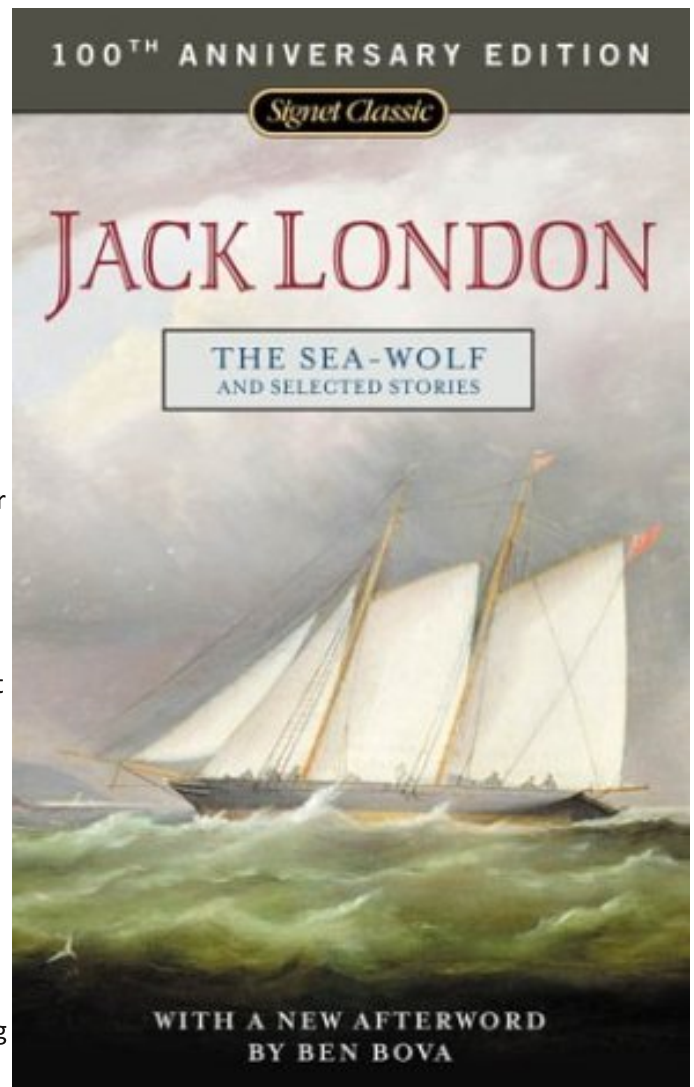
From *The Sea-Wolf*, by Jack London

On first glance, it seems obvious to compare *The Sea-Wolf* by Jack London, to Melville's classic tale *Moby Dick*. Both are told in the first person by a man who is propelled along the high seas on a sailing ship, by events set in motion by an apparently insane captain. But there the similarities end. Whereas Captain Ahab is a man driven by revenge, Captain "Wolf" Larsen is a brutal man driven by a strong intellect that has convinced him that "might is right" is the only true law of the universe. He makes comparisons to Darwin's theories of evolution to reinforce his opinion that life "is like yeast, a ferment, a thing that moves and may move for a minute, an hour, a year, or a hundred years, but that in the end will cease to move. The big eat the little that they may continue to move, the strong eat the weak that they may retain their strength. The lucky eat the most and move the longest, that is all."

The Sea-Wolf is the tale of Humphrey Van Weyden, a "gentleman" who is forced into servitude aboard *The Ghost*, a seal-hunting schooner bound from San Francisco for the coast of Japan when he is rescued from the sea by Captain Larsen.

The Sea-Wolf has also been compared to Rudyard Kipling's *Captains Courageous* because it depicts a protagonist who, although compelled into a situation completely unlikable to their character, ultimately results in their education and personal growth. Van Weyden is nicknamed "Hump" and depicted by Captain Larsen early in the novel this way: "You stand on dead men's legs. You've never had any of your own. You couldn't walk alone between two sunrises and hustle the meat for your belly for three meals." But by the end Humphrey has learned to sail, he has learned courage, and he has learned to make decisions for himself. Larsen acknowledges this when he meets up with Van Weyden later in the book: "It seems as though you're standing on your own legs at last, Hump."

I knew London was a sailor, from having earlier read *The Cruise of the Snark*, a non-fictional account of London's trip across the Pacific in his ketch the Snark. But this was the first novel I had read by him where sailing or the sea were prominent parts of the story. London, as a storyteller, does not disappoint; and as an experienced sailor he is able to bring the elements of the sea vividly to life for me. *The Sea-Wolf* is one of the classics of the sea that deserve a spot on any sailor's bookshelf, or e-reader library. Many of the classics whose copyrights have expired are available for free on the Kindle and other e-readers, although the free versions frequently have bad formatting. I spent \$0.99 to buy the properly formatted copy on my Kindle. Good reading was never so cheap.





NOCKAMIXON SAIL CLUB

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2017

Contact Information

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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 their 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 1st enjoy 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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Boat Type	Sail Number	Boat Name	Slip# (if applicable)

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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 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.

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