River Debris

June 2009 Newsletter of the Grand River Sailing Club page1 of 2

GRSC Club Calendar

1. Board Meetings are held the second Tuesday of the Month

2. Crew Training every Wednesday nite at Chester's Legacy Tavern in Painesville

3. Tuesday Libations at Capp's in Leroy

4. Wed. nite after the race – meet at Chester's Legacy Tavern or Sunset Bar at HTP marina.

5. Sat./Sun. brunches will resume in the fall. Stay Tuned.

From the Commodore –

I do not have much information to pass along this month to inform the club of. Things seem to be running smoothly and nobody is complaining, so no news is good news to me…The board is doing a good job of keeping the club running and I think some of the changes that the board has put in place this year is helping, at least there are more jam boats out racing. I hope this improvement keeps moving forward in a positive direction. Kendra, the regatta chairperson seems to have everything under control and we should pull off a good regatta in August.

As per our club membership, if you see any new boats at the sailing center, please contact them and talk up our club. We need to keep pushing the club and bring in new membership. Membership applications are available from Colin or the website.

Anyone interested in attending a board meeting and having any input into the running of our club, please attend the upcoming board meeting on June 9th at GRYC. brad

A reminder to the cruisers that our annual picnic is scheduled for Saturday June 13th at 1:00 p.m. it will be at the Sailing Center Pavilion. Also Chef Colin has a scheduling conflict for the clam bake so that date is now scheduled for Saturday October 3rd. The rest of the Cruising schedule is posted on the GRSC Website so be sure to check it. Also as of June 1st you will need a passport when reentering the United States from Canada at any of the videophones. And I hear that Sue Brannon is available for the cleaning of the nether regions on your vessel that require a contortionist as long as Jack is there to pull her out by her ankles!!

George and Pat Schlauch

Please note – several jam racers caught Sue cleaning the little boys (or is that little buoys) over at the yacht club. What a cougar… fyi by the commodore

See next page

From the Vice Commodore: Bob Valentine:

OK everyone, with the sailing season now in full swing I thought the short articles below on upwind sailing would be appropriate whether (or weather) you are cruising or racing.

If you haven't heard, "E" mark sprung a leak and was bobbing low in the water during Sunday's, May 31st race. Thanks to Cindy, Brad, Phil, Bob, John, Tim and all others that helped bring the mark in for repairs. I've added a little reflective tape to "L" mark which was still at the pavilion, making it our new "E" mark. Will work on repairing water logged "E"

It looks like we will have good weather for Mentor's Regatta the weekend of June 6th & 7th for all those planning to attend. Good luck and be safe!!!

Beating in light air

When you are sailing upwind in light breeze, err on the side of sailing a little too low and fast rather than too high and slow. If you try to point and sail on the high side of the groove, all it takes is a lull or a wave or a header to kill your speed and force you to accelerate all over.

* Try to manufacture at least a little bit of windward helm so you will have some "feel" to help you steer. Adjustments to increase helm include adding more rake, heeling the boat more, moving crew weight forward, pulling the traveler farther to windward, and so on.
* It's important to stay focused on steering the boat fast. This is not easy since most light-air races are long and frustrating. As a famous Olympic and America's Cup sailor once said, "If you don't finish the race with a splitting headache, you probably didn't concentrate hard enough on steering."
* Move the rudder as little as possible. On a tiller boat, consider using a 'frying pan' grip on the hiking stick to keep the rudder straight and quiet (see page 3).
* Set up your sails and rig so they are more forgiving. You want full, powerful, draft-forward sails with a twist that is good for footing rather than pointing. This makes your sail plan less critical and helps you steer the boat in the groove much more easily.

Heavy air and waves

When it's windy, one of the biggest problems for the helmsperson is having too much windward helm. This can be a steering nightmare because it is physically demanding and hurts your boat speed. So work on reducing helm by using less mast rake, keeping the boat flatter, moving crew weight farther aft, dropping the traveler to leeward, flattening the sails and so on.

* You should usually bear off and power through chop, but as the waves get bigger you need to start steering around each one. In general, head up on the face of each wave and bear off down the back side. In dinghies, move your weight in sync with this – out and forward as you bear off over the wave and then in and aft when you hit the trough and head up again.
* Waves (and flat spots) seem to come in sets, so make sure that someone on your boat watches for these and gives you a warning. Point higher in the flat spots and then bear off to power through the unavoidable waves.
* When you're overpowered is a good time to steer by heel angle. Point the bow high enough to keep the boat on its feet. And when you want to turn the boat, you must absolutely help a lot with sail trim since weight placement and even the rudder often have little effect. •

Naval History Lesson about Cannon Balls as passed down thru the years:

It was necessary to keep a good supply of cannon balls next to the cannon on old war ships, but how to prevent them from rolling about the deck was a major problem. The best storage method devised for the most cannon balls was to stack them as a square based pyramid with 1 on top, resting on 4, resting on 9, which then rested on 16. Thus, 30 cannon balls could be stacked in a small area right next to the cannon, but how to prevent the bottom layer from sliding/rolling out from under the others.

The solution was a metal plate with 16 round dimples, called for reasons unknown, a Monkey. But if this plate were made of iron, the iron balls quickly rusted to it. The answer to the rusting problem was to make the plates of brass, hence, Brass Monkeys.

Few landlubbers realize that brass contracts more rapidly than iron when chilled. Consequently, when the temperature dropped too far, the brass indentations would shrink so much that the iron cannon balls would come right off the monkey. Thus quite literally, cold enough to freeze the balls off a brass monkey. And all this time, you thought that it was just a vulgar expression, didn't you!