



May 2008

Footnotes...

Commodore's Corner

Commodore: Lance Jones

When having fun, keep your head in the game!

We've all gotten caught up in the excitement of the minute. It doesn't matter if it's watching a baseball game, playing tennis, hunting or many other fun activities, we get focused on the moment.

In most of those sports or activities, you can get lost in the moment and not worry about too much as far as physical penalties. Yes, you may drop a throw, miss that putt, step out of bounds etc. However, some of these activities are dangerous if you let your head go. Sailing is one of those. Remember, even some of the smallest cruisers still weigh over 2,000 pounds and that is where the danger presents itself.

I'm guilty of that. This past Celtic Crossing, I was caught up in the fun, camaraderie and simple enjoyment of the event. I was in a water fight with Bill Gray. At the time, I was winning. We wanted to keep him from successfully recovering the Leprechaun who had just jumped over board. In doing so, I came right across his bow with, what I thought, was ample space to clear his bow, soak Julie who was sitting on the bow and get away clean. A typical Errol Flynn, swashbuckling act.

Two things, I was only thinking of my boat and its course and I forgot to remember how slow a slow moving boat reacts. Focusing only on my boat, I failed to see his moving faster than it had been moving and take that into account in my planned route. Too late, I realized we were on a collision course. Here's where part two comes into play. When I swung the wheel to avoid him, my boat did BEGIN to react appropriately; but, it was all too slow.

That resulted in damage to both boats. Thankfully, no one was hurt and the damage is repairable. But, it does highlight a couple of points that I knew and completely lost my head in the fun.

Always keep safety first. I should have never planned an approach that close across Bill's bow. Remember that sailboats don't react quickly to directional changes when they are moving slowly. Also, inertia is a major factor when dealing with these heavy boats. It's hard to change a 7,000 pound boat's heading that easily when there is little control input. You must always keep your head in the game when you're playing a game. However, your head needs to always be in the safety game.

Cruising Updates

Cruising Captain: Marie Graham

The Celtic Crossing

The Celtic Crossing was another good time for the cruisers. The skippers passed the official starting boat at X. Each was blessed by the Druid Priest while bagpipes played in their honor. The skippers and their crews danced jigs and sang tunes and bribed judges for points. But the leprechaun toss was the big event. Catch the Leprechaun, which is floating in the lake, and toss him into Favored End in a round bucket for 10 points or 1 of 2 square buckets for 5 points each. Each competitor had 2 tries, so that challenge had a possible 20 points. The competition was furious and all did well. The overall points tallied up for Bill Gray, Lance Jones and Tom Graham in 1st, 2nd and 3rd place and Brad Jude, Jim Chambers and Daniel Piche following.

After all boats completed the competition, the sailors took advantage of the improving conditions, comfortable temperatures, 7-10 mile an hour winds, to sail for another hour before joining the party. Village Tavern did a fabulous job on the meal. Lance's band, Pog, played Irish folks songs and sea shanties; they got everyone laughing and clapping. This is a must for your calendar next year. Special thanks to the planning committee for their great job, Steve O'Hagan, Tedd Meinersmann, Brad Jude, Daniel Piche and Charles Watson.

Racing Updates

Racing Captain: Chris Webster

In my article last month, I focused on key to success on the race course is good “communication” on the boat between the skipper and the various crewmembers. In this article I’m going to ramble on about “shifting gears” in the boat on the race course. In our vehicles, when driving down the road, we have a transmission that shifts gears for us to make forward progress and improve the efficiency of the power plant (engine). Our sailboats are similar in that we must adjust the running and/or standing rigging to make better forward progress. There’s one thing you can be sure of, . . .out on Lake Lanier, the wind is constantly changing, so you’ll need to learn/practice the technique of shifting gears. But you also need to keep communicating well amongst the crew so they can help keep the boat trimmed for max speed.

Let’s start with setting up for the start of a race during the count down sequence. On a light and variable day, I normally reach back and forth between the boundaries of the RC boat and the pin end of the line. We time the runs so we know how long it takes us to get from one end to the other, and try to get no deeper than 2 boat lengths behind the line. When the time is right, we tack to reach down the line, accelerate away from the pack (who usually barge in like bumper cars at the RC end), and then like a sling shot, trim in the sails to head to windward just as the start audible sounds.

As we work our way to windward up the race course, time will come when we need to tack. When we tack onto another course, leave the main traveler down to leeward and have the genoa trimmer quickly sheet in so the genoa is 8-10 inches off the spreader. A few seconds later the boat will start accelerating out of the turn/corner, and then simultaneously travel the main up to windward as the genoa trimmer slowly grinds the genoa winch sheeting in the genoa so its only 3-4 inches off the spreader.

Tracking along up the course, you notice that the boat speed starts to drop and the headsail begins to luff as the wind speed/”pressure” begins to decrease. OK, it’s time to downshift, and the skipper asks the genoa trimmer to ease/”crack” the genoa off an inch or two. The main should also be eased, as well as the backstay to “soften” the rig. Once the boat speed and the pressure comes back on and the tell tales start flying, then re-trim to the original settings.

The same goes for the down wind legs with the spinnaker. Under normal “pressure” the skipper drives the boat as deep (closest line to the next mark) as possible. However, the wind speed and direction is constantly changing. If the spinnaker trimmer says that the “pressure” is dropping (as will be the boat speed), then the skipper should announce it to the crew and head up closer to the wind to increase the boat speed and hopefully catch the next puff sooner. Once the spinnaker trimmer announces increased pressure (and boat speed), the skipper should steer more downwind (and announce same to crew) to stay in the lane of that puff as long a possible. Your course will look much like a snake on the top of the water, but your velocity made good (VMG)/progress to the next mark will be much quicker.

Sail fast!

The racing line up for the next couple of races is:

Women’s Skipper	Saturday	5/17/08	1pm start
Fair Winds #3	Sunday	5/18/08	1pm start
Fair Winds #4	Saturday	6/7/08	1pm start
Evening Breeze #1	Saturday	6/14/08	5 or 6pm start?
Evening Breeze #2	Saturday	7/12/08	5 or 6pm start?

For the BFSC Saturday and Sunday races normally the skipper’s meeting (11am) is at the Aqualand Ship Store parking lot, and the races start in the vicinity of “X” mark at 1pm (weather permitting). Since longer summer days are about on us, we’re going to try evening racing (ICW the Evening Breeze series) with a 5 or 6pm start time. That means that the skipper’s meeting will be 2 hours beforehand (3 or 4pm). Yes, there is still plenty of navigable water in the Chattahoochee Bay area (more specifically around/between the marks: X, B, C, D, & E). Please print out and review the 2008 BFSC Sailing Instructions from our website.

For anybody needing crew or trying to find a boat to race on, please feel free to contact me.

EVERYBODY, . . .CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR RAIN! Either that or we’re going to have to start dropping sandbags in front of the Dam’s spillway.

Social Life

Social Captain: Linda Webster

Last month we postponed the Wing Fling/ Learn to Sail graduation due to extremely high winds. On Sunday, May 4th, we finally got our students out on the water for their “on the water” drills. It was a beautiful day and outside a short period of drifting, the winds were just about perfect for new sailors. There were 4 flavors of wings (HOT, tequila lime, garlic pepper and honey BBQ), celery with blue cheese dressing, and an assortment of goodies that were brought and shared by various members (Thank you for sharing!). The company was great and for those of you that missed it, there’s always next year!

Membership Drive Contest

Membership First Mate: Jimbo McKean

In order to increase our membership, we are calling upon those who know better than anybody, the value of BFSC membership: YOU! So, we are launching a membership drive contest. The rules are simple:

Any current, PAID, member who is responsible for signing up a new (paid) member, will have their name entered into a contest. Multiple new members will give you multiple entries. The prize is will be the winner's choice between a Garmin Handheld GPS or a West Marine Handheld VHF radio.

To enter a new member, all you have to do is submit their application along with a check for \$45.00 to any officer of the club. You will then receive an entry for the drawing to be held at the June membership meeting.

The Barefoot Classifieds--Boat for Sale



1980 CAL 25, Excellent condition, race or cruise ready, 4 head sails including large Kevlar Mylar racing sail, spinnaker, 8 hp sailmaster engine, stand up cabin, sleeps 4, new cushion covers, great boat, must see, \$9500, 770-965-6115.



2008 Barefoot Sailing Club Board

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