

Greenwich Flying Squadron
e - Humbug
Members' Newsletter



February 2011

Clubhouse: Bay Street Wharf, Greenwich. PO Box 5092 Greenwich 2065. Phone/FAX 9436 1901.

Web Site: www.gfs.org.au

Saturday: Keelboat Racing - Mixed Divisions and Etchells' Class

Sunday: Sabot and Laser Classes – Winter Races

Keelboat Cruising Division.

Editor's Comment.

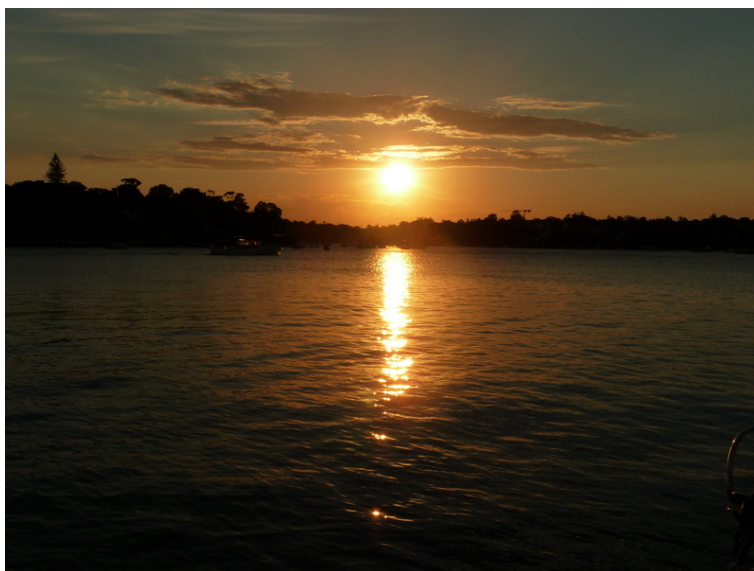
We are well into the autumn season with only a few races to go to the end of Twilights and the start of the winter races. The summer races with a different twist – handicapped start – was generally well accepted as shown in the report by Geoff.

The club is in good shape as noted by our commodore. But there have been a few issues on the water prompting the committee to publish a special notice to all skippers. Several of the contributions comment on sailing infringements and protests. In addition our protest convenor gives insight in rules and protests.

Besides sailing the February Social Night was again a great success. Organisation, decorations and an excellent band – nothing was left to chance with Maree at the helm! And the weather gods were with us – a beautiful evening, hopefully to be repeated.

So until next time – Happy Sailing.

Johan
DolphinII
Humbug Editor



Commodore's Cockpit.

One thing that I would like to pass on to all our members, and particularly to members who have undertaken work on the clubhouse over the years, is what the Lane Cove Council building inspector told me two weeks ago.

After his inspection that day he reported that our clubhouse was the best maintained, or one of the best maintained, of all the Council community group facilities.

Given the immense amount of effort it takes to maintain a wooden building standing on the water's edge on salt water, this is a high compliment. I would like to take the opportunity to thank each and every person who has contributed some of the endless hours into maintenance at working bees and otherwise. This has contributed to our good relationship with Lane Cove Council.

2011 Twilight sailing has been a little more eventful than earlier in the season. We have had a number of incidents on the water.

If you are involved in an incident where there is any damage or injury, make sure you let the sailing officer in charge (Twilight Captain for Twilights) know about it. The Club and the skippers involved have obligations to report these incidents to Maritime.

It makes it difficult for the Club if the first notification we have is a 'Please explain' letter from Maritime as to why we haven't provided a report.

It makes it difficult for a skipper, who may not even have realised that there was damage to another boat, if Maritime, alerted by a report from one skipper, prosecutes the other for failure to report.

These things can all be sorted out if the sailing officer in charge is given the relevant information on the night, so please make sure that you do so.

Best wishes for the remainder of the 2011 series. I look forward to seeing you all on the water.

Regards

Gordon McGrath
Commodore



Important message to all skippers

We are becoming increasingly concerned about the lack of tolerance on the water.
Remember that sailing has to be safe.

Don't cause an accident – protest instead!

If you deliberately do something dangerous, even if you are technically right,
there is no place in this club for you.

The law of manslaughter applies at sea too!

GFS Committee

Sailing Secretary's Report

The end of the season is nigh! It was the best of times, it was the worst of times!

The good bit is that sailors are sailing, enjoying the competition on the water and the company on the deck after racing.

The worst bit is that on water incidents have spilled over from week to week. This has made an enjoyable sport tainted. (I was always coached as a representative rugby player that after the game all is forgotten and go and have a drink!)

On the subject of incidents, it is a club requirement that any on-water incidents during GFS events are to be reported to the club. Incidents where a substantial amount of damage results must be reported to NSW Maritime by each party involved. However, for incidents where no or minor damage occur it is a condition of our (GFS) Aquatic Licence that the club investigates. Remember significant or substantial damage varies depending on the boat (e.g. Sabot vs exotic maxi). If Maritime deems we are at fault we risk not acquiring a licence for next season.

I wish to thank the Saturday duty crews for their diligence. The rostered crews have set marks, conducted starts and recorded finishers with precision. It is my hope that this duty gives the duty crews an oversight of a race from start to finish. It should give a different view of the start line which, in itself, should allow an insight into what, or what not to do in future starts.

The 'Twilight Girls' need special mention. As young persons they have mastered the intricacies of starts and the rush of finishing boats in groups, especially in fading light at twilight. Well done girls!

Over the season there have been many notable (and not so) instances that deserve special mention – these include navigation (the what coloured start flag thing on Saturday's), landing on land to make an ownership claim, challenging smaller vessels (Sabots) to a strength test and taking on harbour cruise vessels at Onion's Point. I hope some of these will be rewarded later.



I would like to publicly thank John Amos for his diligence in following up the Saturday Australian Regatta Day medallions which I had neglected. Thanks John.

Please enjoy the rest of the season's races, treat each other with respect, follow the RRS and if a protest occurs remember it is a part of the game and not the be all and end all of life.

If you have any suggestions for next season (2011-2012) please let me know.

Cheers

pH
Flair

Twilight Summer Series

This Summer Series saw us introduce into our 2010/2011 Twilight Program, handicap starts as a trial. This format is also known as "Pursuit Racing".

Over the last few seasons, several skippers had mentioned it would be nice occasionally to have some handicap starts included in our sailing program to give the slower boats in each division the chance to be out in front and have to be "caught" by the faster vessels. It was originally envisaged the handicap starts would be intermingled with the scratch starts held over the whole sailing season.



A survey was conducted amongst the twilight skippers and as a majority of responses were in favour of a trial, the committee decided to proceed. It was considered however that it would be better to leave Spring and Autumn series untouched and dedicate the whole of the Summer series to Pursuit Racing. This meant that of a total of twenty five races conducted in the full season, eighteen would be scratch starts and seven would be handicap starts.

The December/ January period generally has a lower

participation rate at GFS because many people are away on holidays. This period was considered to be ideal by the committee for the pursuit format.

Harvey was able to fine tune the starts by moving some divisions in total, back or forward by several minutes, in order to reduce the number of boats starting at any one time. In addition a second line of flags was laid back from the start line in order to minimise the number of boats in the immediate starting area. Both these measures seemed to work and made starting a lot easier for skippers.

After the series finished on 26 January, twilight skippers were asked in an email to vote (Yes or No) whether they would like the format to be included in the Summer Series for next season.

A total of sixty three skippers responded. Forty six said Yes (73%) and seventeen said No (27%). Your committee has therefore decided to run the Pursuit Racing format in next season's Summer Series.

Geoff Lucas

For Committee

Twilights - "Good evening everyone..."

Reflections of a Twilight Captain

With just four scheduled races left this season there is still everything to race for. Standings look tight across all divisions and there is still interest in the J24 trophy and the Cavalier 28 Cup. The fleet has been strong averaging over 60 boats each week. The weather has also been kind and we have been averaging around 200 meals every Wednesday evening.

Protests

Generally good sportsmanship is continuing on the water which is great to see. There has however, been several protests and collisions which have detracted from enjoyment on some evenings. Whilst protests are not encouraged, it is important that we all sail by the rules and that as a club we enforce the rules. Primarily this is necessary to ensure that racing is fair but also to avoid injury or damage to property.



In the event that you do protest on the course, remember that you must yell "I protest" and display your red protest flag at the earliest convenience. If you fail to do this your protest will be deemed invalid. If you break a rule you should take a penalty as soon as possible after the rule has been broken.

In relation to protests we will offer the two skippers mediation to discuss the incident and the relevant rules. During this mediation the skippers may resolve their differences resulting in either the protest being withdrawn or the offending skipper disqualifying her/himself. However, if this outcome is not achieved, we will convene the protest committee and hear the protest formally. This initiative is frequently used at regattas and I am hopeful that it will reduce the frequency with which the committee needs to meet.

Remember that if you have an on-water incident (damage in excess of 10% value of the boat, a collision with a commercial vessel or a vessel from another club or injury), you need to fill in the club incident register and complete the NSW Maritime form and report the incident within 24 hours. **Please notify me if you are sending a report to NSW Maritime as it is a condition of the GFS Aquatic License that if a Incident Report is submitted to Maritime then the club must also submit a report. We also require to keep a copy of your report for our records.**

The Social Night

We could not have asked for a better evening. A huge thank you to Maree and all the team from "Jackpot" who put in so much time to make the evening the success that it was. The live music from "Reviva", the lanterns that extended from one end of the

clubhouse to the wharf, the table decorations including shells with secret prizes, driftwood and frangipani flowers, the organising of the wonderful prizes for the raffles....it could not have been better. Maree you are all class!!!

Duty crew

The duty crews for the final four races are as follows (unless they have been changed):

9-Mar-11 Young Obsession
16-Mar-11 The Sinner
23- Mar-11 Caliban II
30-Mar-11 Chloe

Sponsors

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Oatley Wines

On behalf of all the club I would like to express our sincere gratitude for their continued support.



Twilight Team

It takes quite a team to make the Twilights possible. I would in particular like to thank the following;

Starters – Eliza and Emma
Caterers from Double D café – Deb & Dah
Course Setters – Harvey Porter and Keith Tierney
Start buoy setters- Bill Wilson
Social Secretary – Maree Van Bellen
Handicap setter – Harvey Porter
Auditing – Rod Stewart
Duty Roster co-ordinator – Han Kannegieter
Webmaster and "heart & soul of the club" - Harvey Porter

Final note

After five years as your Twilight Captain, this may well be my last one. The role has been a honour and privilege and I have enjoyed it every week. As I may have mentioned once or twice...."It doesn't get any better than this!!!"

Regards

Michael Armati
Twilight Captain



Social Secretary Report

GFS Social Night

The annual Social night was held on 26th February on the deck at the club.

We were again blessed with fantastic weather and the night proved to be a great success.

I was told that the club had never looked so good with all the lanterns and fairy lights giving a special ambience that really added to the mood of the night.

The music from the band "Reviva" treated us to many of the old 70's and 80's songs as well as many recent hits. It was great to see so



many members and friends up enjoying the dancing.

(Al McIver will be pleased that we managed to keep all dancers on the deck so the ramp didn't get a workout)

I would like to give a special thanks to our wine sponsors Backvintage wines and Oatley wines for their donations for the raffles as well as club members Tracy Austin from Zig Zag and Rodney Dixon and Janessa Jabor from Jackpot. The donated prizes added to the fun on the night.

It was a great pleasure to organize the night and I hope that we can do it all again next year and get a few more people along to share the night with their sailing friends.



Sailing Rules etc.

RUN AGROUND Penalty Turn???

What if you run aground "on/off" an island which is a mark of the course, and manage to sail off? Have you hit the mark, and therefore need to perform a penalty turn (Rule 44.1)?

It depends!

I investigated this a few years ago, when a boat on which I was crewing was protested. We'd run aground UNDER SPINNAKER off the south end of Clark Island (SOUTH of the green channel marker – beware!). I sought an international judge and he assured me that there had been a defining precedent and the “mark” is only that part of the island above Mean High Water. The protestor must have received similar advice: he withdrew the protest after a day or three.

When you think about, this makes sense. Otherwise, we're at the vagaries of the terrain. What if it's shallow 50M from an island mark? 100M, etc? Ponder waterways like Port Stevens.

There are several places on our GFS courses where it would be possible to hit the island mark above MHW before touching bottom – feel free to try!

PROTEST PROCEDURE

- a) On water. See Rule 61.1(a). Note “first reasonable opportunity” for hailing and red-flag display. Re hailing, keep the no. of hailers to one loud voice (skipper or delegate) and the words to a minimum (i.e. “Protest!”). Resist a lecture on sailing, protestee's parentage etc, lest the key word(s) be lost. [Ditto for “Room to tack!” Rule 20.1)].

Until further notice, take 30 seconds as a guideline limit on red-flagging, if no damage or injury. So, have one or more red flags handy in the cockpit, pocket, etc. Red Division boats may NOT merely point to the divisional flag!

Witnesses from other boats are strongly recommended, so a crew-person should be delegated to spotting nearby boats and pursuing contact later.]

If no injury or damage, a protestee can nullify the protest by making two full turns ASAP when clear (Rule 44.2). (One turn if mark hit). Protestors should delegate a crew-person to watch for that and remove the red flag if satisfied.

Note in Sailing Instruction 23, “The starter must be notified of the protest on completion of the race ...”.

- b) On form. On front page, complete ALL sections possible, including phone no. AND email address, rule allegedly broken, Show wind-speed, wind-direction. Ask a race officer to make two copies of the front-page, with one for yourself, one for the protestee and the original (double-sided) to the Protest Convenor or a Race Officer. It can help if the protestee also emails a response to the Protest Convenor and to the protestor. Note the time-limits for form submission in Sailing Instruction 23.
- c) Protest Hearing. We basically follow the procedure in Appendix M. It is worthwhile reading, mainly the first three pages. See also Rules 63 – 68. Note that it is YOUR responsibility to track down your witnesses and communicate timing etc. The club can usually provide a member's phone no. The Protest Committee MAY call witnesses independently (Rule 63.6) but is not

obliged.

- d) When? We try to hear protests on Wednesday evening between 8:15 and 9:00, with the first few minutes for the Protest Committee to pre-consider the matter. Completion of dinner AT the hearing is preferable to delaying. We need cooperation to focus on the critical facts and follow procedure in the limited time. For a Saturday protest where NOT all parties are twilight sailors, a different evening hearing will be held. Ditto if a backlog of Twilight protests.

PROTEST PANEL VOLUNTEERS

GFS needs more volunteer panellists. With a sizable pool of potential panellists, we can save people participating more than once per season, unless they want to. (Alan Bull has kindly participated several times).

Members who don't do OTHER volunteer work in the club are particularly wanted, as participation will ease their consciences and enable easier sleeping! And members who have WON a protest surely feel particularly keen!

Please don't try the line "But I don't know the rules!". It is truly scary the number of SKIPPERS with that line. If it's a genuine problem (due to, say, illiteracy), joining the protest panel will do yourself and others a favour by force-feeding knowledge on one or more rules per hearing.

And don't fear retribution from protest losers. You can always take the "Olympics" defence, that YOU voted for the loser!

So please contact me NOW!

Richard Kelly, Protest Convenor,
richardfkelly1@optusnet.com.au,
0428 640 975

Junior Sailing.

Useful information can be obtained from the following websites:

<http://www.gfs.org.au>

<http://www.sabot.com.au>

<http://www.sabot.au.com>

GFS Web Site: www.gfs.org.au

It is important to regularly check the club web site. There are results to check, club information, rosters, and warnings of up-coming events.

GREENWICH FLYING SQUADRON
INC.

Bay Street, Greenwich NSW
2065

HOUSE POLICY

When our restricted licence permits the club to serve alcohol, Greenwich Flying Squadron Inc. has a policy to serve patrons in a responsible, friendly and professional manner.

Our staff are on hand to assist patrons in their decision to drink alcohol in moderation and where appropriate avoid the dilemmas of combining drinking with driving. Staff will not serve any person under the age of 18 years or any patron to an intoxicating level.

The Committee wishes to encourage patrons to enquire about our range of low and non-alcoholic drinks, our food menu and our safe transport program.

Please support our club's sponsors.



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