



Jr Advisor PC Stuart Adams oversees Mitch, Rob, and Alex washing boats for the new sailing season

Volume 45, Number 2

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Safety at Sea – Lessons Learned

The sailing community saw three major racing accidents last year, two tragically involving sailor fatalities. In the annual Chicago to Mackinac race on Lake Michigan, Wingnuts, a lightweight Kiwi 35 with port and starboard “wings” for hiking, capsized in a sudden storm resulting in the death of two crew members. In the Fastnet Race off Ireland, Rambler 100, a high-tech canting-keel boat that previously won the Transatlantic Race, lost its keel and capsized, fortunately with no loss of life. And in Annapolis, Maryland, an accomplished 14-year old junior sailor was drowned when her Club 420 dinghy capsized on a training sail during a spinaker douse.

The U.S. Sailing Association (USSA), the national organization that sanctions sailboat racing in the United States, has investigated these accidents and identified some serious issues impacting the safety of sailors participating in yachting events. On January 5, several Fairhope YC members attended a discussion of these accidents hosted by the Mobile YC and led by Alan McMillan, Past Commodore of the Pensacola YC and a member of the USSA Safety at Sea Committee.

Some of the issues raised in the USSA findings are highly specialized, such as whether the Kiwi 35 design or Rambler’s lightweight build were appropriate to the weather and sea conditions they faced and if changes are needed to required safety requirements in sanctioned events. Full details of the investigations and findings are available at USSA’s website, www.ussailing.org.

Other issues involved in these tragedies are immediately applicable to all of us involved in the sport of yachting – sail and power, adult and junior:

★ **Tethers** – In both the Wingnuts and Rambler incidents, sailors on deck were tethered to the boat, which was appropriate to conditions. But once the boats capsized the sailors were then tethered under water. One sailor was temporarily trapped because he was wearing an older-style tether which only had a quick-release clip on one end, and an old style “cow’s tail” loop in the other end. Another sailor successfully released his tether at the boat end, only to have the tether then get hung up in the rigging. Both of these sailors fortunately were able to get to the surface and were rescued. The lessons: make sure your tether has a quick-release clip at each end, and make sure you know how to use it – you could find yourself trying to get free under adverse and stressful conditions. If you find yourself having to release your tether from an inverted boat, release it at the harness, not the boat end, to lessen the chance of a trailing tether getting hung up. And always carry a knife so you can cut yourself free if necessary.

★ **Self-Inflating PFDs** – Sailors in both the Wingnuts and Rambler incidents were wearing automatically-inflating PFDs. Some sailors found that their inflated PFDs coupled with their tethers, pinned them to the deck underwater once the boats inverted. The lesson: consider having both manual and automatic PFDs available, and using the PFD appropriate to conditions – say, automatic PFDs in daylight hours and normal conditions, and manual PFDs when tethered to the boat. Some PFDs are now available that allow you to switch the automatic feature on and off. Of course this is a judgment call – some like the thought that an automatic PFD will

Continued on Page 7

Dauphin Island Race report!

To all Members of FYC: We are proud to inform you, the members of FYC, and surrounding neighbors; that the City Council of Fairhope has unanimously approved a noise ordinance variance for the night of April 27, 2012 for the purpose of the Dauphin Island Race Skipper’s Party. Below is a copy of the minutes from the meeting on Sept 12, 2011.

12 September 2011: Councilmember Quinn moved to grant the request of The Fairhope Yacht Club requesting permission to use the parking lot at the City Pool for the Dauphin Island Race, which will be held on April 27, 28, and 29, 2012, and requesting for barricades, bleachers, stage, and a variance

in the sound ordinance to accommodate a large party to be held at the club on Friday 27th from 3:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m. Seconded by Councilmember Kingrea, motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

We probably should also announce the FYC restaurant will be closed that night. The Board has already approved it. We would like to invite all members to come out to our “county fair” since the restaurant will be closed that night.

Remember that FYC’s Dauphin Island skippers’ parties are the stuff of legend and are so due to the members. Come join us that Friday night for the fun!



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From the Commodore

It's always refreshing to see the flurry of activity around the club in January as newly elected committees meet, elect chairs and begin planning activities and submitting their budgets for the upcoming year. The FYC Cruisers had a planning meeting and have some great cruises planned. The Juniors, under the guidance of 2012 Jr. Advisors Stuart and Brenda Adams and Joel and Mikeal Donald, have been busy planning for the year and working on ways to get more Juniors involved with the program and then keep them involved. Ann Moore, with the assistance of Dean Koch, will Chair the Associates Committee in 2012, Andy Patterson will Chair the Harbor Committee, Dan Kolenich will Chair the Membership Committee and Harvey Cunningham will Chair the House Committee.

A couple of people have indicated they will be willing to help with Entertainment, but we still need someone to take the reins and plan events for the upcoming year. FYC's regatta season will be in full swing before you know it, starting with the Dogwood Regatta in March. Rear Commodore Eric Reuss will be looking for volunteers to assist with race committee throughout the year. On February 12 at 11:30, Fleet Captain Gary Garner with the assistance of 2011 Fleet Captain Chris Dabney, will hold a meeting in the boat barn for all adults and juniors interested in getting involved with Capdevielle racing.

The Dauphin Island Regatta Committee is in the final stages of prepping for another great event. Whether you plan to race in the regatta or not, all are invited to attend the pre-race party/County Fair, on Friday night, April 27. There will be great food, music and activities. You never know what you'll see at a County Fair.

As you can tell, it's been busy around the Club and will continue to be busy as we begin another year. Thank you to all of our members for your continued support of FYC and all that it has to offer. It's your Club – use it, enjoy it.

Cathy Cromartie



GYA Winter Meeting Report

At this year's GYA Winter meeting the committees dealt with several new issues and made some recommendations that will bring about some positive movement in the next year. The Capdevielle Committee was able to set a deadline of 2018 for the GYA to determine and have in place a new club boat and the Jr Lipton Championship is being changed to a six race format. The Race Management Committee has redone the form for the race observers for the Race Management trophy, and is writing an official NOR and SI's for Jr. Lipton and Lipton Championship events. The One-design Council is redoing the circuit races for Lasers and 420's to promote participation, and asking clubs on the circuit to not compete against each other, for classes, in overlapping events. The Off Shore Council has changed the rating bands for Challenge Cup, the biggest being the requirement that "A" class boats must be sport boats. The Youth Committee is still working on their manu-

al to help clubs with their Youth programs. The VX One was on site, thanks to David Reich, who took delivery of his boat at BYC. The designer, Brian Bennett, was there and made himself available to several of the Committee meetings to talk about the boat and answer questions. David had the boat at GYC on Sunday for anyone to try out; whether or not the boat is adopted by the GYA as its club boat, this boat has a bright future as a One-design Class. At the Board meeting on Sunday, the Commodores passed all the presented motions and after, election of officers; Commodore John Matthews (PYC) passed the torch to Vice Commodore Pete O'Neal (BucYC), Danny Killeen (PCYC) moved to Vice Commodore and Corky Potts (SYC) was named Rear Commodore. They seem to have the GYA moving forward in a positive direction.

Randy Fitz-Wainwright, FYC GYA Coordinator

From the Junior Commodore

As many of you may know, I am once again Junior Commodore. First off, I would like to thank Mrs. Carol and Mrs. Alicia for their several years of service to our Junior Yacht Club. Secondly, I would like to thank Mikeal Donald and Stuart Adams for taking the position as Junior Advisors. Hopefully they will be able to do good things for our club! We have already had one successful work party on the 21st, and we will be having another on February 4th from 10-4pm. Please come and join us on our open house February 25th at 3:00. We will be showing the different boats available for Juniors to sail, cooking out, and answering any questions you may have. We are looking forward to the 2012 Summer Sailing sessions this year. Applications will be online shortly, if they are not already. The Dogwood and Wet and Cool Regattas are coming up in March. We are planning to have some practice days in the weeks before. I am looking forward to competing in the Junior Liptons this summer and having a chance to bring back the title.

I would like to congratulate my board: Vice Commodore John Pereira, Fleet Captain Mitch Powell, and Secretary Margaret Ollinger. I hope that this year can be as good if not better than last year, and wish the best of luck to all of our sailors.

See you at the club, **Robert**



At left, new Jr Advisor, Joel Donald, learned what being a jr advisor meant on the roof of the Boat Barn during the work party!, At right, Sue and Cricket Powell take a break from the work!



Junior Event Calendar

The Juniors are holding the raffle for a parking spot of the winners choice. Tickets are a dollar and will be available at the bar.

They will also be sold by the juniors before the February and March meetings. The drawing will take place at the March meeting.

Feb 4: Work Party @ the Boat Barn, 10am-4pm

Feb 25: Open House Party, 3pm

Mar 3, 10, 17: Sailing practice

Mar 24/25: Dogwood Regatta

Mar 31/Apr 1: WET N COOL JR REGATTA!

From the Junior Advisors:

First, we would like to extend a warm thanks to Carol Revel and Alicia Pereira for the last 3 years of service with our juniors. Carol and Alicia did a great job and we are very appreciative of all their time and efforts. Stuart, Brenda, Joel, and I hope to continue the good work and continue to grow the junior program and allow these kids a great opportunity for sailing!

Mikeal Donald

Juniors Sail across the GYA:




AJ Pereira, presented with the Laser Circuit trophy by John Matthews, GYA Past Commodore at the GYA Winter Meeting



Restaurant & Bar Hours Of Operation
(251-928-8888 for Dinner Reservations) **Happy Hours 4-7pm EVERY NIGHT!**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
11am-9pm	4-9pm(Bar)	4-9pm(Bar)	4pm-9pm	4pm-9pm	11am-10pm	11am-10pm

February~2012

Look for a menu change soon to bring back some old favorites and other menu items requested by the membership.			1 6:30 JrYC Meeting 7:30 M'ship Meeting	2	3 Prime Rib Night	4 Jr Work Party Baby Back Ribs
5 2pm Sun Race	6 6pm PotLuck	7 Taco Tuesday	8 6:30 M'ship Comm.Meeting	9	10 Prime Rib Night	11 Baby Back Ribs
12 <i>Capdevielle Team Meeting</i> Valentine Dinner 	13 6pm PotLuck	14 Taco Tuesday	15	16	17 Prime Rib Night	18 <i>Polar Duck Swim</i> Baby Back Ribs
19 Joe Cain Jr Parade 2pm	20 6pm PotLuck	 21	22	23  US Sailing Small Boat Instructor Level I @ Southern Yacht Club	24 Seafood & Prime Rib Buffet	25 Jr Open House Baby Back Ribs
26	27 6pm PotLuck	28 Taco Tuesday	29			

Back by popular demand, beginning in February, on the last Friday night of the month the restaurant will be serving a Seafood and Prime Rib Buffet. The buffet will include soup, salad, seafood, prime rib and desserts, and the cost is only \$24.95.

Valentine's Dinner: Due to Valentine's Day falling right in the middle of Mardi Gras this year, and with the Saturday before Valentine's Day being the same night as the KOER parade and ball in Fairhope, Chef Rob will be preparing a special Valentine's fare on Sunday evening, February 12.

February, 12th: Capdevielle race team meeting-at 11:30: We will have a get together for 2012 Capdevielle race team for all people who are interested, including Junior members in boat barn.

Saturday, February 18: The polar duck swim; Participants and spectators should gather in the bar for registration. There is no charge for participants, however spectators will be charged \$1.00 to be donated to the junior yacht club. The rules are: No speedos, no neoprene, or other body warming garments. Basically general beach/pool attire is acceptable. Any protests will be judged by the participants.



See you there, weather permitting. *Capt Dan*

Thursday, March 1, We're pleased to announce that **Roman Street** will once again be entertaining us at the club on Thursday, March 1, from 6:30 until 8:30. In addition to Noah, Josh and Dan, Roman Street will have with them Melody on violin and JoJo on stand-up bass. Make your reservation now to enjoy a great evening at the Club.

Saturday, March 3, 2012: North U Racing Trim Seminar @FYC Go here to register www.northu.northsails.com. Special Discount Code: FYC-7245
March 22-25: US Sailing Small Boat Instructor Level I @ Southern Yacht Club



Below is the information on the course that will be offered the week of Mardi Gras. To register, log onto www.ussailing.org/training/ to guarantee your spot. Summer is right around the corner and we all want to be prepared for summer jobs.

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
11am-9pm	4-9pm(Bar)	4-9pm(Bar)	4pm-9pm	4pm-9pm	11am-10pm	11am-10pm
March ~ 2012						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Join us for First Sunday Buffet and Last Friday Seafood/Prime Rib Dinners!				1 <i>Roman Street</i> 6:30-8:30pm	2 Prime Rib Night	3  NorthU Sail Trim Seminar Baby Back Ribs
4 2pm Sun Race	5 6pm PotLuck	6 Taco Tuesday	7 6:30 JrYC Meeting 7:30 M'ship Meeting	8	9 Prime Rib Night	10 Baby Back Ribs
11 2pm Sun Race	12 33 6pm PotLuck	13 TacoTuesday	14 6:30 M'ship Comm.Meeting	15	16 Prime Rib Night	17 Baby Back Ribs
18 2pm Sun Race	19 6pm PotLuck	20 Taco Tuesday	21	22	23 Prime Rib Night	24  Dogwood Regatta
25  Dogwood Regatta	26 6pm Pot Luck	27 Taco Tuesday	28	29	30 Seafood/Prime Rib Night	31  WetNCool Jr Regatta

Whats happening!



The 2nd Mystery Dinner Theater brought a crowd of strange characters to the dining room for the pleasure of an eager audience.



With Vivian Weaver's imagination in charge, the transformation of FYC into a County Fair for the incoming sailors to the Dauphin Island Skipper's Party has gotten under way, Damn the torpedos-full speed ahead! Anyone who is interested can join this crew every Saturday to help build the best party place on the Bay! Join us; all your friends are here and we're having a party, sawing, hammering, painting. Don't be left out of the fun!

The Harbor committee spent Saturday tending to the docks and piers getting ready for the Spring sailing season and, of course, the Dauphin Island Skippers' Party and Race



Just Cruisin' - January

Mary and David Lucas continued their cruise in *Liza* through South Florida and the Keys. They spent the holidays through mid-January in Ft Myers, visiting with family and friends. They also did some "car cruising" down into the Everglades. On the 17th they headed up the Caloosahatchee River and into Lake Okeechobee en route to Stuart and Florida's east coast. Follow their progress in their updates in the Mainsheet and at their blog at <http://cruisingwith-liza.wordpress.com>.

Long-time Club members and veteran cruisers Arla and Tom Kern visited with Mary and David in Ft Myers mid-month. A last minute change of plans prevented Arla and Tom from leaving for the keys in *Barefoot*, which they now keep in Ft Myers; they're back in Fairhope and hope to try again to head south in a couple of months.

Cruiser of the Year for 2011 Stan Brown re-set *Nepenthe's* odometer for 2012 and did several short-term local cruises in January, with longer trips on the horizon.

Sally Conlee and Jerry Weeks untied *Encore's* dock lines on January 9 and started south. They stopped at

Cruise Planning for 2012

Don't be a loser, be an FYC Cruiser!

Over 20 FYC Cruisers met at the Club on January 15 to plan the 2012 cruising season. The group reviewed last year's cruises and discussed popular cruising destinations and events for the coming year.

The 2012 cruising schedule includes some of our most popular events, like the spring Delta/Blue Gill Cruise; June's Summer Sailstice day-sail to Middle Bay Light; The Wharf get-together with Pensacola YC in August; the Blue Angels Homecoming in November; and the Holiday Open Boat "dock cruise" in December.

We'll spend Memorial Day weekend in the Mississippi Sound Barrier Islands with a follow-on cruise to Gulfport and Biloxi through early June; have a quiet weekend exploring Fort McRee in July; and make a Labor Day weekend expedition to the Sand Island Lighthouse with a raft-up at the Dauphin Island golf course and a shrimp boil on the beach.

Plus we'll have impromptu day-sails and overnights, spectator fleets at major FYC regattas and our popular "car cruises" to destinations such as the WWII Museum in New Orleans and the Madisonville Wooden Boat Show in Louisiana. There are preliminary plans to repeat last year's springtime offshore cruise to Apalachicola. A bus tour "club crawl" to neighboring yacht clubs was also discussed. And as in prior years we're all invited to take part in planned cruises with our friends at the Mobile and Pensacola Yacht Clubs.

The Spring schedule for the 2012 cruising season is shown below, more can be found on the website..

We'll kick off the 2012 cruising season with a

Ingram Bayou and Pensacola YC before heading offshore to Port St Joe, continued through the ICW to Apalachicola and then jumped back offshore for a direct run to Tarpon Springs. They experienced some rough weather all along the route. After waiting out weather a couple of days they continued south through Clearwater and on to Palmetto. Ultimate destination: Points South. Duration: as long as the fun lasts.



Sally Conlee and Jerry Weeks enjoy a break from sailing somewhere South of here!

Send your cruise information to Cruising Captain Mike Turner at nautacop@aol.com for inclusion in future editions of the Mainsheet.

February 18-19 circumnavigation of Gaillard Island and overnight in the Dog River. We'll follow that up March 9-11 with our always well-attended Delta/Blue Gill Cruise, once again led by Past Cruising Captain Michael Connell. This 2-3 day cruise takes us through the Port of Mobile and the Mobile, Tensaw, Blakely and Apalachee Rivers, with dinner and overnight docking at the Blue Gill Restaurant on the first night and an overnight stop at one of the many anchorages along the route in the Delta on the way home. Fall-back dates for this cruise if the weather is unfavorable are the following weekend, March 16-18.

Full details on cruises will be distributed via the FYC Cruisers email network – if you're not getting our emails or want more information contact Cruising Captain Mike Turner at (251) 458-4775 or nautacop@aol.com. Also check the Cruising page for updates at the FYC website at www.fairhopeyachtclub.com.

Plan on cruising with us in 2012 – it's always a great time!

FYC Spring 2012 Cruising Schedule

February 18-19: Gaillard Island

Circumnavigation/Dog River overnight

March 9-11: Delta/Blue Gill Cruise

March 24-25: Dogwood Regatta Spectator Fleet

April 14-15: Day sail/overnight, details TBA

May 5: Start of Offshore cruise to Apalachicola (tentative)

May 26-June 4: Memorial Day Weekend: Mississippi Sound Barrier Islands; Gulfport and Biloxi

The Matteis report:

Sunday 01/08/2012 This was too nice a day to stay home and watch the NFL playoff games. Temperature just over 70, wind south at about 12. Seven boats came out to race. The course was set as X - S - E - N - X. The wind direction and speed were unusually consistent throughout the afternoon. Finishers were Jim Chapman, Fred Chadsey, Dan Herzog, Jack Ardrey, Rick Skinner, Rick Matteis, John Helmstadter.

Sunday 01/15/2012 Another nice day for January. A

little over 60 degrees and winds of 5 to 10 from the south-west. Let's see, should I stay home and watch professional football or should I go out and sail with my friends? I think I'll go out! Five boats started this race in light air. The winner took about two hours to cover the five mile course, which was X - SW - NW - NE - X. Two boats that were toward the back of the fleet elected not to complete the course and went in early. Finishers were Jim Chapman, Dan Herzog, and Rick Matteis.

SUNDAY FUN RACES

Now that winter is over (not too bad this year) it is time to start some serious FUN Racing. Starting February 5th we will start keeping score for our February through June Series. We will have a lot of fun and some great prizes for the top boats. All you need to do is determine your handicap from the book at the bar and sign in each Sunday. The rules and results will be kept in the book at the bar. The more the merrier so come one come all.

Safety at Sea - continued from Page 1

inflate even if the wearer is knocked unconscious in going overboard.

★ Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs)—Sailors on both Wingnuts and Rambler had SPOT and other types of PLBs, and both were activated during their incidents. In the Rambler incident, however, the contact information for the PLBs had not been updated to show that the boat was in foreign waters and provide a local emergency contact – in fact, the contact information was to a secretary to the boat's owner back in the United States. This complicated rescuers' responses to the PLB activation. The lesson: keep SPOT/PLB contact information up-to-date. This also applies to VHF/MMSI boat and contact information if your boat is so equipped.

★ Grab Bags and Safety Gear – Sailors on both Wingnuts and Rambler had abandon ship grab-bags and waist packs with safety gear (hand-held VHF's, PLBs, flashlights, etc.). In almost all cases, however, this gear was not on deck or on the sailors' persons, but stowed below. The lessons: fit out a waist pack or a belt pouch with emergency gear and wear it. Put grab bags on deck (suitably secured against being lost overboard) or in the cockpit, not down below.

★ Boat Gear and Racing Rigging – The junior sailing Club 420 accident occurred on day of moderate winds (5-10 knots with puffs to 12) and calm waters, the crew was experienced in the class and had practiced righting the 420 in prior training sessions. The boat was sailing downwind, about 75 yards from a turning mark to an upwind leg, and was beginning to douse the spinnaker. Crew had already rigged a trapeze for the upwind run and had the spinnaker about half-way down when the wind shifted and the boat unexpectedly jibed; crew was pinned by the boom against the shrouds on the now-lee side of the boat. She reportedly stated, "I'm stuck on something," before the boat capsized and turtled. Members of a chase boat immediately went in the water and found the trapeze gear was hung up in the rigging; they were unable to free the crew and she was drowned. It was found that her trapeze harness was hooked into the wrong part of the trapeze bail, entangling her underwater in the rigging. The lessons: Accidents can happen at any time, even in calm conditions. Even experienced sailors can make mistakes that can have tragic consequences. Double-check all gear to ensure it is being used properly, particularly gear that could hang you or others up in an accident. Be prepared to respond to accidents even in calm conditions.

★ Coast Guard and Other Rescue: Interestingly, in all three incidents, rescue came, not from the Coast Guard or similar agencies or from PLB activations, but from fellow sailors on the scene: race participants and chase boats. Moreover, in the Wingnuts incident, when a request was made to the Coast Guard to send divers to help rescue sailors trapped under the boat, the Coast Guard responded that they don't allow their personnel to go under boats due to the risks involved. The lessons: don't assume there will be "professional"

rescue personnel immediately on the scene of an accident. Be self-reliant. And be prepared to render immediate assistance if you are in the vicinity of an accident.

In addition, USSA recommends that yacht clubs and other organizations sponsoring regattas and similar events have an incident response plan in place to manage emergency situations and their aftermath. For example, crews of committee vessels and support boats should have an established protocol to respond to emergencies on the water, such as launching rescue efforts and contacting emergency responders; and should ensure they have functional and well-maintained safety, first aid and emergency gear on board.

Organizers should also have plans in place for contacting family members and managing media inquiries in the event of an incident.

Yachting remains a very safe sport - but one with the potential for injury and even death if things go wrong. We as skippers are ultimately responsible for the safety of those aboard our vessels. Addressing some of the points raised in the investigation of these accidents – having properly maintained safety equipment appropriate to expected conditions and recognizing the limits of likely rescue in an emergency – are steps we can all take meet our responsibilities and help to ensure that our sailing experiences are safe ones.

Afterward: As this edition of the Mainsheet was going to press, details began to emerge regarding a fourth sailing fatality in 2011. On November 11 during the annual North American Rally to the Caribbean, a 655-mile group sail from Newport, Rhode Island to Bermuda. Jan and Rob Anderson, a husband-wife sailing team aboard their Island Packet 380, were struck at about 1:00 PM by a 30-foot wave approximately 300 miles north of Bermuda in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Sean. Jan, who was at the helm, was swept overboard. Rob, just coming on deck from working below, successfully deployed the boat's Lifesling. Jan was able to reach the towed line, but then sank beneath the waves and was lost. She was not wearing a PFD or tether. The lessons: Wear a PFD. Wear a tether when alone on deck.

Report submitted by Mike Turner. Thanks to PYC PC Alan McMillan for permission to use notes of his remarks in the preparation of this report



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