

Gal' Warnings

COMMODORE'S QUARTERS



By
Patti Eagan

Welcome to a new year that holds lots of promise and good times! The year bodes well with lots of cruises and races that members of all levels of ability can participate in. I look forward to a year of challenges, fun and growth of the club. I need all your help as I am like a child that needs a village to raise them. You are my village and the reason that the club is admired throughout the Southland. Our members are awesome!

We have a new board of directors under a new setup that like all new projects is going through a period of adjustment. The Board of Directors is streamlined but figuring out who is doing what is still confusing! We are still looking for volunteers to work on the newsletter and publicity. These jobs are committee jobs that report to the Communications Director, so no attendance at board meetings is required! Our Social Director is looking for volunteers to help on her



committee. You like to come to the meetings so why not help out for a little while on Tuesday before or after the meeting?

An organization such as ours succeeds on the participation of our membership. We really need your help!

This year our scheduling should be more efficient with our website calendar

reflecting our activities. WSA sponsored day sails, race clinics and races are all listed on the website. Sign up for sails, join us for meetings and get together with like minded people. You benefit from our club when you take advantage

of what it has to offer! We look forward to seeing all of you on the water!

This year I challenge you all to help WSA grow by recruiting new members and spreading the word. We have a lot of new skippers that have great boats to share on daysails and cruises. Any ideas on helping us grow would be greatly appreciated.

Remember, your membership fees are due. Please fill in a new waiver and membership form so that we have the most current information. Anytime you have address changes, telephone changes or e-mail changes

**The Only Thing Missing
is Your Contribution!!!**

**Please Send Your Articles and
Pictures to
Newsletter@WSASMB.org!!!**

please send the information to our P.O. BOX (P.O. Box 10034, MDR, CA 90295). Shortly, we will have a link on the website to help facilitate these changes. We are trying to make our website easy to use and a resource for you all to enjoy.



SAFETY AT SEA

In recent days, we have seen some almost tragedies on the sea because of poor planning and not following simple safety procedures. Fortunately, the individuals involved were rescued but it has prompted a reminder list for safe boating. These suggestions are more applicable for cruises but keeping them in mind whenever you are on the water, may save your life.

- **KNOW WHERE YOU ARE ON THE WATER.** Find landmarks and reference points. The reference points may be bouys, the breakwater, or a pier.
- **KNOW HOW TO WORK THE RADIO.** Learn how a radio works, what are the distress call signs. Ask the skipper where the vessel # is, what type of boat you are on and the name of the boat. Usually the number is posted by the radio.
- **CALL SOMEBODY WHO CARES.** Tell someone who would miss you when you are leaving and when you are returning. If you are on a cruise and will be sailing a distance, call them before you leave and give them an ETA.
- **KEEP THE RADIO ON ESPECIALLY ONCE THE SUN GOES DOWN.** Everyone should keep an ear for radio

transmissions. It is advisable to leave cell phones on if you have given this number to a concerned friend or family member.

- **AFTER DARK, WEAR SAFETY VESTS AND SAFETY LIGHTS.** West Marine or other boating stores sell the lights that wrap around your arm and can be activated if you go overboard. You can't see someone without lights.
- **WALK THROUGH EMERGENCY PROCEDURES.** You can do this with the skipper or an experienced crew member to learn how to operate the boat if you are the only one able. Learn what steps you should take if you are the only one able to get the crew back to shore.
- **PRACTICE PLOTTING COURSES AND WORKING A GPS.** Knowing where you are on the charts hones your navigation skills and helps to get the crew home especially in bad weather. Learn how to work a GPS and what the numbers mean to the charts. Look at the GPS used on a boat and familiarize yourself with it as there are many GPSs that work slightly differently.
- **FILE A FLOAT PLAN EITHER WITH SOMEONE WHO CARES OR VESSEL ASSIST.** A float plan gives a general idea of where you are going, with whom, what type of boat, the name of the boat and the expected time of arrival. You need to explain to the person receiving this what it means and what do they do with it and when. .
- **LEARN HOW TO DO MAN OVERBOARDS UNDER SAIL AND POWER.**
- **STAY CALM, USE YOUR HEAD AND IF IT SEEMS DANGEROUS, DON'T DO IT!**



Fun in the Sun at Key West Race Week 2006

By Sue Service

I was lucky to get my 2006 racing debut off to a BANG – I raced on WSA member Alice Leahey's J/105, *Grace O'Malley*, in Key West Race Week! This was a great experience – I've been racing on Alice's team for almost 2 years now, and she has been planning to take her boat to KWRW for well over a year now, and I was delighted to be included on the team.

Alice had the boat trucked out to Key West. It arrived about a week before racing started. The rest of us caught up with the boat on Friday, January 13. The crew consists of 6 persons: Alice at the helm, Ron Baerwitz as main trimmer/tactician, Michael Bradley on jib, I am the pit person, Tom O'Connor on spinnaker trim and Ari Steinberg on the bow. Our group was rounded out by our "shore component" – including our boat maintenance guru Ken Havard and WSA member Marylyn Hoenemeyer, Tom's wife, as chief provisioner.

Our intention was to practice on Saturday and Sunday, before racing started on Monday, but the wind goddess had other plans. We woke up Saturday morning to a steady 30 knot breeze. Rather than break something, or hurt ourselves, in a practice, we decided to spend the day working on the boat and buying food for the week. It turns out that conditions on Saturday were so rough that 2 boats sank at the dock, in an area that was directly exposed to the wind and swells. Happily, we were docked in a very protected harbor and suffered no damage at all.

We were staying in a beautiful 4 bedroom home about 11 miles north of Key West. It was a lovely setting, right on the water, facing the Gulf of Mexico. The area was also full of iguanas! These reptiles are not native to Florida, but are descendents of escaped pets, who seem to be doing quite nicely. The iguanas get up to 4 and 5 feet in length, but thankfully are primarily vegetarians.



KWRW had over 270 entries, in 19 different classes, racing on 4 different race courses. There were participants from 14 different countries (lots of boats and crew from Italy!), and 37 different States. The regatta is one of the premiere racing events in the US, and as such draws all the "rock stars" of the yacht racing world: Russell Coutts, Dave Ullman, Buddy Melges, just to name a few.

The J/105 class was racing on the same course as the Melges 24 (a 60 boat fleet) and the J/80's (a 20 boat fleet). We had 29 boats in our class. The plan was to race Monday, 16 January through Friday 20 January – 2 races each day except for Friday. The first start was at 10am each day. The wind wakes up early in Florida – none of this SoCal sleeping in and starting at noon for us! As the race course was about an hour's motor away from the dock, this meant getting an early start each day.

The conditions on Monday were very mild. The winds were so light for the first race that we were sitting to leeward – it was like racing in Santa Monica Bay – only the water is a

beautiful turquoise blue and much warmer (70 degrees) than our local waters. The wind eventually picked up to 12 knots or so by the end of the second race. This wound up being the lightest day of the regatta, and our best showing – we ended up in second place at the end of the day, with a 4th and a 5th place finish! We were ecstatic!

At the end of each day's racing there were festivities in a huge tent – speakers, sailing videos, free drinks, performers (Key West is very much like a tropical Venice Beach) and trophy presentation. Since they handed out daily trophies for 1st-3rd place finishes, we stuck around on Monday evening. One of the exhibits was for Lewmar winches. They had a coffee grinder winch set up, and you were able to take place in a contest to raise an imaginary sail. Categories included men's and women's singles, men's and women's doubles, and mixed doubles. The team to raise the imaginary sail in the least amount of time would win. The winch simulated the actual loading that would take place as the sail was cranked higher and higher. Marylyn and I decided we HAD to give it a shot. For a brief time we were the #1 women's doubles team, but we were eventually surpassed. Ah well, it was fun and we have free T-shirts for our efforts!

The wind speed and direction in Key West is very unpredictable. They don't have a steady sea breeze direction as we do here in SoCal. Tuesday, the wind had shifted in direction 30-40 degrees from Monday's heading, and increased greatly in speed. We never saw less than around 20 knots on Tuesday, and the average was more like 23-27 knots. It was a blast! We were soaked through and through by the giant swells, and took on so much water that our floor boards were floating! On one downwind leg, when we caught and surfed one of the big swells, we got the boat up to 18 knots – crazy fun that was!

Tired, but happy, we were in 5th place at the end of Tuesday's racing, and delighted that we survived the big wind. Everyone expected Wednesday to be more moderate. No, it was even stronger wind, never less than 25 knots with gusts to 30. The wind direction was 180 degrees different than the previous day – and such that we didn't have the big swells to surf down. So despite having stronger winds we didn't end up going quite as fast. I was grinding for Tom on the spinnaker going downwind, and had to keep reminding myself to watch the kite – it was very distracting to see all the boat carnage all over the race course – Melges dismasting and capsizing – spinnakers exploding, boats rounding up. The race committee called it a day after one race, given all the break-downs. Even 2 J/105s dismasted. Amazingly we survived it all, and by the end of the day had climbed back up to 4th place.

The first place boat, *Masquerade*, and the second place boat *Zuni Bear*, were also from California. With 3 of the top 4 boats from the Golden State, we felt like we were showing our east coast cousins a thing or two ☺. *Masquerade* really dominated the fleet. This team is from San Francisco, so they have experience with the heavy air, and the crew had been together for 8 years. Just give the crew of *Grace O'Malley* another few years and we'll be right there with them!

Speaking of *Grace O'Malley*, a lot of people ask Alice about the name. Grace O'Malley was a 16th Century Irish pirate, very brave, very fierce, and an excellent sailor. Alice is of Irish descent, and named the boat after the pirate queen.

Thursday's winds were more less – 18 to 23 knots. Funny, here that would be honking, but by this time it seemed downright moderate. It was a beautiful sunny day, and the racing was great, but we slipped back to 5th place.



Crew of Grace O'Malley, Complete With Battle Flag

Friday was supposed to have just one race, but given that the race committee had canceled the second race on Wednesday, they took the opportunity to make the race up on Friday. The conditions were again 18-23 knots, and we were determined to get ourselves up in the standings. Mathematically it was possible to get as high as 3rd (*Masquerade* and *Zuni Bear* had first and second tied up). The boats in 3rd through 7th were all tightly clumped, and very competitive with one another, the final standing were very much up for grabs for these positions.

In the first windward leg of the first race on Friday, we went the wrong way, and were well behind for the first downwind leg. We caught several boats on the way to the leeward gates, and had another "lap" before the end of the race. We had high hopes of catching more boats in the last leg of the race. Coming into the leeward mark, as we were taking down our spinnaker, it was blown back into and around our jib, just that it was wrapped tightly around the forestay. We couldn't get the spinnaker down, we couldn't get the jib unfurled. It took what seemed like hours, but was probably only 5 minutes, to sort things out. In a one design fleet like the J/105's, however, 5 minutes is a lifetime and we finished solidly in last place. That pretty much tanked our hopes of getting silver (trophies went five deep), but we wanted

to do well in the last race and redeem ourselves. We pulled it together and got a third in the last race. Sadly for us, our class was the only class out of the 19 participating in KWRW that did NOT have a throw-out race, so we finished in 6th overall, just missing a trophy by a few points. Still, we were delighted with our performance for our first outing in this big regatta, and had an absolutely spectacular time.

The J/105 North American Championships will be held in MdR this August, hosted by California Yacht Club. They are hoping to have ~40 J/105s out for this event. It was be exciting one-design racing. If you're interested in watching some of the fun – contact Marylyn Hoenemeyer – she is the regatta chairperson at CYC and will likely need help with race committee etc.

Daysailing Daze!

By Laura Guggenheimer

This month was filled with many opportunities to get out on the water with the Day Sail Program. A total of five sails went out in the month of February. Not bad for California in the winter!

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Gil Speer as WSA's newest day sail skipper. Gil owns a 35 foot Santana named "Bad Company" which he keeps at the Cabrillo Way Marina in San Pedro. Gil was kind enough to take a couple of our members out in January for a whale watching sail on the 18th. Look for more sails with Gil in the future.

Jeannea Jordan took out her boat Chekkers for a total of three sails this month. She went out on February 1st and the 10th as well as a pre-general meeting sail on the 14th. Wayne Brandow took out his Olson 30 sailboat *Agua Cheetah* for a sail on the 12th. And Kay Miller took her boat out for her first WSA sail of the year on the 26th.

At press time, the following Day Sails are scheduled for March. All sails currently need crew.

Skipper Jeannea Jordan on Chekkers a Catalina 30 on Wednesday the 8th and Saturday the 25th.

Skipper Fran Weber-Melville on Lightning an Ericson 35 on Sunday the 26th.

Skipper Kay Miller on Shalako a Catalina 38 on Saturday the 18th.

As we all know, summer is on it's way. This is the perfect time to get out on the water and get back into practice, sharpen your skills for the upcoming racing season or simply to enjoy the crisp winter air and get to know more of your fellow members out on the water. Please, check your e-mail and join us for a Day Sail in March!

How the Day Sail Program Works

WSA members who would like to be placed on a Day Sail boat may sign-up via e-mail at wsadaysails@gmail.com. Day Sail opportunities are sent out in an e-mail 1-3 weeks prior to their scheduled date. We encourage you to reply as soon as possible as boats are filled on a first come, first serve basis. We will confirm your request for placement within 24-36 hours. One to three days prior to the actual Day Sail, we will send out confirmation e-mail with crew attendance, directions to the boat and provision assignments. It is critical to let us know as early as possible if you must cancel, so we can either place another person on the boat, or change provision assignments. Should you need to cancel on the "day of" the sail, you are still required to deliver your provisions to the boat. Also, if you have any questions regarding cancellations due to weather on the day of your sail, please contact your Skipper, as they are the decision-makers. Don't forget - novices and experts are welcome, so come join in!

Welcome new and returning members!!

New members:

- Fredericka Sylvester
- Emilie Zeug
- Kerry Russell
- Neil Teixeira

Returning members:

- Rosemary Donato
- John Loftus
- Bill Gaskell
- Sherri Smiler

"Gal Warnings" welcomes member submissions!

We're happy to include your articles and photos! Did you do a fun cruise, participate in an exciting race, or have some great sailing tips to share with the group? Send your submissions to newsletter@wsasmb.org. Text files or Word documents are preferred for the articles, and jpeg files for the photos.

As you can see we have room for more articles!

Upcoming Calendar of Events

March 2006

14 th Tues	WSA general meeting at SMWYC
18-19 Sat/Sun	Opening Day in Mdr
23 rd Thurs	Newport to Ensenada Seminar, SMWYC
25-26 Sat/Sun	Les Storrs regatta SCCYC
28 th Tues	WSA Board Meeting SMWYC – Deadline for April Newsletter Submission
30 th Thurs	Racing Rules 102 SMWYC

April 2006

1-2 Sat/Sun	Spring Keelboat regatta CYC
5 th Weds	Sailing and Safety Seminar CYC
9 th Sun	WSA Race Clinic
11 th Tues	WSA general meeting SMWYC
12 th Weds	Sunset Series Racing Seminar CYC
18 th Tues	WSA Board meeting SMWYC
19 th Weds	Sunset Series Starts CYC
22-23 Sat/Sun	Ahmanson Cup regatta Newport Harbor YC
28 th Friday	Newport to Ensenada Start

Racers – be sure to review a copy of the 2006 ASMBYC calendar – you can get a copy at <http://www.asmbyc.org>

Daysails: Daysails take place on Saturdays and Sundays, and are not listed on this calendar – contact Laura Guggenheimer (wsadaysails@gmail.com) for up to date information!

2006 WSA BOARD and COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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**WOMEN'S SAILING ASSOCIATION
Of SANTA MONICA BAY, INC.
P.O. Box 10034
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MISSION STATEMENT:

- To promote and support women's Sailing based on the following principles:
- To provide education opportunities;
- To provide information on gaining access to Races, cruises and other Santa Monica Bay activities;
- To support "Youth in Sailing" community Service programs;
- To Support established sailing programs For women; and
- To enhance networking opportunities.

<http://www.wsasmb.org>.....Women's Sailing Assoc of Santa Monica Bay