



BIRMINGHAM
SAILING CLUB

February 2005

The Hornblower

COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

I'm just back from the Gulf Yachting Association's Winter Meeting in Pascagoula. Commodores from 20 of the 28 member clubs were in attendance plus many other club members. Believe me, every suggestion, recommendation or rule change was enthusiastically discussed and debated. I doubt a UN debate has as much spirit!

BSC On Course

A meeting for new commodores was held entitled, "How to Improve Your Club in 2005." The two main suggestions were an education program and a juniors program. I proudly raised my hand when asked which clubs had such programs. Many clubs had neither. From what I heard, our Learn to Sail Class sounds like one of the best going. Mike Neilson, with help from Pauline Neilson and Kent Irwin, will be putting this on this spring. Also, on January 29, Mike taught the new racing rule changes. Check out the web site for details. (Mike does the website, too.)

Juniors Going Strong

Our juniors program has always gotten rave reviews. Diane Hart, along with Jerry Hart and Jack and Kathleen Rogers, will be running the program. Several of Diane's graduates are presently sailing in college. If you have a junior and would like to get them in sailing, please contact Diane.



A star is born? David Reich and teammate Julian Bingham practice in David's new Star.

BSC Gets Competitive in the Capdevielle Series

One of the functions of the GYA is to run the Capdevielle series. This is a series of 16 regattas sailed in Flying Scots at different GYA clubs.

Jackson and Pontchartrain regattas were added this year. Kent Irwin is our GYA representative and is pushing hard to make us a competitive club. If you are interested in sailing in this series, please contact Kent.

I'm looking forward to the new sailing season. Your board has put together an exciting budget for the new year, and we will soon be underway. Let me have your thoughts and suggestions. See you at the lake.

Richard

RACING REPORT

Racing To Start on February 6

Racing starts February 6, with our first Sunday race. Let's kick off the new season with a great turnout! We have an exciting racing calendar for 2005 with five Saturday One Day regattas and three Long Distance Races in addition to the major club and one design regattas. BSC will also be hosting the Thistle South Atlantic Districts and at least one DIYRA championship event. The Caldwell Cup is scheduled for March 12 and the Ironman for April 2-3.

Mallory Cup

Kent Irwin has formed a team for the Mallory Cup, which will be sailed in Flying Scots. He has issued a challenge to others to form teams to see who will represent BSC. If you don't have a Scot, borrow one and form a team. Don't let Kent win this without a fight!

Check Your Race Committee Assignments

Remember, it is the long-standing policy at BSC that if you cannot work race committee on your assigned date, you are responsible for finding a replacement. Just look at the race assignments for a day that is convenient for you, call or e-mail a member assigned for that date, and offer to trade. The new schedule should be available on the web soon, but in the meantime please check the February 2005 race committee assignments contained at the end of the 2004 schedule. You can find race committee assignments in the member's pages section of the website. Go to the homepage: www.birminghamsailingclub.org/ and click on the "Member's Pages" button. Your last name is your username. If you don't know the password, contact the webmaster.

If you're interested in learning more about race management, you might consider attending the U.S. Sailing Race Management Seminar to be held February 12 at Lake Lanier Sailing Club. Several of our members attended the seminar last year. For more information contact me or check the LLSC website at : www.llsc.com/newsite/index.html.

See you at the races,
Bob Blythe

NEILSON WOVES 'EM AT RACING RULES SEMINAR

The BSC Racing Rules Seminar was a great success. Mike Neilson did an excellent job explaining the rule changes for 2005.

The major change involves the starboard tack boat's rights to change course when a port tacker plans to cross ahead. Basically, the starboard tack boats can now change course if the port tack boat plans to cross, even if that would require the port tack boat to immediately change course. This will make it more risky for the port tack boat in close crossing situations. If you haven't studied this change, check out new Rule 16.2. The rules are available online at:

<http://www.usssailing.org/rules/>

Bob Blythe

A SUGAR BOWL TO REMEMBER

A Hornblower Special Report by Jim Delk

When Kent Irwin asked me to race Capdevielle with him at the Sugar Bowl in New Orleans, I was apprehensive to say the least, considering my entire racing resume is a handful of starts at BSC. Kent must have been desperate, however, and convinced me that he and Peter Hopkins, who grew up on the dingy docks of Southern Yacht Club, would cover for me.

With Ol' Blue in tow, we headed to the Delta, Kent expecting victory, Peter ready to party, and me hoping to return in one piece. After some fast food and a few disagreements between Kent's GPS and Peter's local knowledge, we arrived at Southern late Friday evening in time to find a front row spot for Ol' Blue. All the gleaming J22's, Lightnings, and Rhodes 19's mesmerized me with their perfectly faired hulls, tricked out rigging, and custom covers for everything from masts to booms to rudders to keels. While I was happy to explore all the neat gear on the docks, the gang was ready for some libations, courtesy of Race Committee Chairman Peter Hopkins, Sr.

Hopkins Hospitality

Mr. Hopkins really added to our weekend with his unsurpassed southern hospitality. Not only did he convert his lovely New Orleans-style home to a BSC bunkhouse, but also he served us homemade cake and cookies and prepared omelets to order each morning. Couple all of this with a big screen TV and a large selection of sailing movies, the Sugar Bowl would have been worth the trip had we never made it on the water.

A leisurely Saturday morning breakfast, exercise, and paper reading soon gave way to the hustle and bustle of the one-design dock at SYC. Teams from around the Gulf were rolling in and setting up shop creating a beehive of activity amid a sea of brightly colored canvas, sail bags, and foulies. I was lost in sailboat heaven and expanding my Christmas list as all the high-tech gear swirled around us. Kent quickly jerked my head out of the clouds and put me to work getting Ol' Blue rigged and in water. Seeing the J22's and Lightning's hoisted gracefully from their trailers and into the water with the push of a button on the jib crane pendant made me appreciate the commitment of BSC's J22 Fleet, whose launch is a struggle by comparison.

The first day's weather was perfect for sun bathing, but not so perfect for sailboat racing as it started light and got lighter. Nevertheless, two

windward leeward races taught us that, although our startw were sound, the middle was not the place to be in such light air. The boats that banged the corners and seemingly tacked only once beat us to the first mark, but we managed to pick up a few boats downwind each race and finished at the top of the bottom half of the fleet after Day One.

And the Wind Began to Howl ...

Day Two made the Hopkin's Special Omelet in my stomach a bit unsettled as we were welcomed to the dock by the loud, high-pitch singing of 25 knots howling through the boatyard. No one but me seemed to be questioning the wisdom of launching in such a blow, so I gulped hard and donned my running suit; foul weather gear in my book is a roof and central heat. The worn knees on Peter's bib and Kent's cheery disposition comforted me somewhat as we hoisted sail and quickly planed out of the harbor.

A truly exhilarating beam reach through five-foot swells gathered by a north wind at the southern end of Lake Ponchartrain brought us flying out to the course and screaming by the committee boat in a flash. As we prepared to tack, I again gulped hard and managed to stay in the boat as we came about and jumped back up to speed on starboard. About two seconds later, worst fears were realized as a loud bang sent our starboard shroud soaring overhead and our rig, as if in slow motion, floating downward into Lake Ponchartrain. To my amazement, without a word, we three began calmly hauling the sails and spars on board as we bobbed like a cork on the high seas.

“About two seconds later, worst fears were realized as a loud bang sent our starboard shroud soaring overhead and our rig, as if in slow motion, floating downward into Lake Ponchartrain.”

Team BSC Perseveres

The Race Committee nonchalantly towed us back in after ensuring the marks were properly set, apparently less impressed by this spectacular crash than I. Once at the dock, again, without much dialogue, we efficiently set about the job of finding a new shroud, installing it, and untangling the morass of lines and cables that was once our rig. In

what seemed like a very few minutes, we were again planing out to the course to the cheers of the Rhodes 19 sailors who, like me, had decided that good sense dictated a return to shore.

The Committee Boat allowed us to follow the fleet up the second beat of the second race, and we almost caught them on the run to the finish. Another good start showed us that hiking hard and playing the waves paid off as we passed a few boats upwind. Great downwind tactics by Kent and Peter kept them off our stern, and we captured our best finish of the weekend, all in by far the most challenging conditions.

Even with two DNS's out of five races we managed to beat several other boats overall and definitely won hand's down in the excitement department. I'm certain I learned more in a weekend with Kent and Peter than in a season on my own, and I think I speak for all of us when I report that the trip couldn't have been more fun!

J/22 FLEET #14 NEWS

The spring sailing season gets underway Sunday, February 6, which is a J/22 Fleet Day and the first event in the J/22 2005 series. Let's have a good turnout to start the series. Skippers should be receiving details of the series shortly.

The combined J/22 and Snipe Christmas party was held at the home of Paulette and Sam Yelverton. We had a great turnout from both fleets. There was lots of great food and drink. There was something for everyone in the "Pirate's Booty" gift exchange, including some rare BSC instructional sailing videos of questionable origin.

Fred Smith Wins New Perpetual Trophy

Before the gift exchange, Fred Smith was presented the fleet's new perpetual trophy as winner of the Fall Series. The names of past series winners, Fred Smith and Vincent Priola, have been engraved on the base of the trophy. The fleet owes a special thanks to Bill Berry and Bo Smith who donated the trophy base.

BSC Leukemia Cup Pics on Class Website

The 2004 J/22 Southeast Circuit received a great write up in the U.S. J/22 class fall newsletter, including great pictures of the Leukemia Cup at BSC. You can find the newsletter at: <http://www.usaj22.com/news.html>. This is great publicity for our fleet and BSC. The 2005 Southeast Circuit includes the Ironman and Leukemia Cup. The other circuit venues are Lake Lanier and Percy Priest. These are great places to sail and fun regattas, so start making travel plans for the out of town events.

See you on the starting line,
Bob Blythe

GYA REPORT

BSC To Buy New, Radical Racing Package, Flying Scot

Kent Irwin: "Our Ship Came In!"

For 20 different BSC members who sailed a Capdevielle event last year, they know what it is like to be sailing our 28 year old boat, Ol' Blue, against the gleaming new rigs of the other clubs. Although Ol' Blue has been puffed and fluffed to the max she is still a [Note from your editor: The precise term used by Mr. Irwin at this point in his report has been omitted.] After a year and a half of fund raising, your GYA committee raised more than half the cost of a new Flying Scot. Thanks to all who have purchased BSC merchandise and the support of last year's Board of Governors. Our 2005 Board of Governors sees the value of this program. As one of the main benefits, BSC sailors share their collective knowledge as one team to compete with other clubs. This has raised the bar of racing at our club. Our board approved the purchase of a new Scot rigged to the nines. With the Radical Racing Package, stiff new hull and sleek new aluminum trailer we will have even more fun practicing and sailing these events. We hope to take delivery in late April or early May. We are looking for volunteers who could take delivery of

our new boat in Maryland. If you think you can help, please contact Kent Irwin.

Mind Your "P"s

With the best equipment money can buy we will be implementing our 3P program: plan, practice, and then play. We plan to sail at least eight Capdevielle events in 2005. It takes eight events to qualify and we have already sailed one event (see Delk's Sugar Bowl report). We plan to have the GYA team practice on Scot Sundays before they go to their event. Our Sugar Bowl team practiced before this event, and what a difference it made when it came time to play! With the first two P's in place, sailing the event is so much more fun, and that is the ultimate goal. Plan the event, practice together, and then play and have fun at the event.

2005 GYA Capdevielle Schedule

Who qualifies for the Capdevielle team? ANY member of Birmingham Sailing Club who has a desire to plan, practice and sail these events. This is not limited to Flying Scot sailors. It is a fact that the top sailors sail many other types of boats well. We have a mix of junior, senior, and all the classes represented in our group. Since the Flying Scot is an easy, simple boat to sail and a difficult boat to sail well, the principles of sailing and racing transfer from class to class.

Two new events have been added this year, Pat Gilliard at JYC and Back to School at PonYC. This will be interesting to see how we fare sailing in Jackson, MS on an inland lake. The GYA clubs are making an extra effort to welcome the Capdevielle teams and throw great parties. Throughout the Gulf Coast, clubs are putting greater emphasis on Capdevielle sailing:

Feb 26-27	Mardi Gras, NOYC
April 9-10	GYA Opening, LAYC
May 14-15	Spring, BucYC
June 4-5	Candler, StABYC
July 9-10	Meigs, FWYC

July 16-17	Summer, MYC
July 23-24	Junior Lipton, PonYC
July 30-31	Weatherly, GYC
September 3-5	Lipton, BWYC
September 10-11	Back to School, PontYC
September 17-18	Race Week, PCYC
October 22-23	22 Schreck PYC
December 17-18	2006 Race of Champions, NOYC

Contact Kent Irwin with Questions or to sign up to organize an event.

Kent

BRING OUT YOUR LASERS

BSC Laser fleet and potential new Laser fleet members: the 2005 sailing season is getting ready to start up. As you may or may not know, we have Laser fleet days on the third Sunday of every month. The Laser attracts good competition and is always a lot of fun to sail. The first fleet day this year is February 20th, so break out the foulies and wetsuits and get back in practice for the year a little bit early. In case you haven't met me, I'm in the little red antique Laser (sail # 4374). Feel free to ask me any questions you might have about the boat or racing in general. See you on the water.

Peter Hopkins

**Check Out the Website
for the Latest in Club
News and Events**

www.birminghamsailingclub.org



©JYC - Ron Dike a Pack of Buccaneers

©Scott

A start at the Buccaneer Mid-Winters. Our own Rick Scarborough took fourth place in the regatta.

BUCCANEER MID-WINTERS

A Hornblower Special Report by Rick Scarborough

The Buccaneer Mid-Winters were held January 15th and 16th on Lake Pleasant, near Phoenix, Arizona. The last several years, this regatta has been held in Stuart, Florida, but hurricanes destroyed the hosting marina, so the Arizona Yacht Club stepped in, adding our eleven Buccaneers to the eighty boats assembled for the Leukemia Cup Regatta. It was a long drive, but I had two Patrick O'Brian books-on-tape to keep me company on the 3,600 mile round trip. So, Aurora in tow, I watched the scenery change from the gentle beauty of Alabama to something that more resembled the moon. Even the greenery growing on the rocky hillsides were not trees, but saguaro cactus.

The sailing conditions were odd in that there was a 180-degree shift each day, but the wind was generally light and variable. The morning races had more wind than the afternoon as the cool air flowing down the valley drove the boats around the smallish reservoir. Although we had our own starts, the crowded water made avoiding the wind shadows from the cruisers as important as hitting the wind shifts.

With six of the eleven skippers having finished in the top ten in the nationals, the Buccaneer fleet was strong. Four boats generally

lead around the course, three from Colorado and one from Alabama. David Spira, a two-time national champion, won the regatta, and Greg Twombly, who finished second at the Nationals, also scored second here. Jim Daus, who finished one place ahead of me at the Nationals repeated his performance, edging me for third while I snagged the last trophy at fourth. My crew was John Hamerslough of Vermont, who flew in for some sailing action since his home water, Lake Champlain, will not be liquid for several months. His club will be hosting our championships this August, so I will have another long road trip in my future. For my efforts this time, the Arizona Yacht Club gave me the "Road Warrior" award, a framed club burgee.



Rick brings home the hardware at the Buccaneer Mid-Winters.

WEB-BASED BILLING

The Club's transition to a web-based billing system is in full swing. Most members received their January 2005 statement by e-mail. A few members have not provided an e-mail address to the Club, and they still get their statement by mail. If you have not received your 2005 statement please contact Jim Sisson by e-mail or by calling him at 879-0501.

You may check your account at any time by visiting the BSC website. Click the "Member Statement" link on the homepage to view your statement. When asked to log in, use your last

name for the username. Contact any board member for the super-secret password. Member accounts are updated every two weeks. E-mail statements will be sent quarterly as were the paper statements.

You may also visit the website to check the accuracy of your e-mail address on file with the Club. Just visit the Member Information area of the website. E-mail any changes to your e-mail address to the Treasurer.

DAUPHIN ISLAND RACE

Hurricane Ivan thoroughly trounced the Deep Sea Rodeo site on Dauphin Island, removing the piers, dumping the debris in the bottom of Aloe Bay, and threatening to discourage the raft-up and island party that are a major element of the Dauphin Island Race. But it appears that the major cultural event of the sailing community will not be adversely affected by Herr Ivan.

The clean-up process is expected to be completed well before the race fleet arrives at the anchorage on April 23. The really good news is that this clean-up will probably leave the bay and the site in better shape than it's been in decades.

MYC has already booked bands for BOTH the skippers' meeting/pre-race party on Friday, and the End-Of-The-Race Party on the island Saturday night.

Mobile's Director of Procurement for Really Spectacular and Coveted Trophies has finished her shopping. Your trophy has already been engraved. All you must do is register and get your boat to the island to pick it up. Registration materials will be available soon at BSC and at mobileyachtclub.com.

(Thanks to Pauline Neilson for this Dauphin Island Race update.)

RACING SCHEDULE / COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Date	Event	Fleet Day	Event Chair	PRO	Race Committee
Feb 5	ALABAMA BOATING BASICS—9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at the Marshal Conference Center on the UAB campus				
Feb 6	Sunday Racing	Thistles/J22s		Jamie Grant	Alene Gamel, Bob Bamberg, Dianne Davis
Feb 13	Sunday Racing	Scots/Snipes		Rob Garrison	Dennis Blass, David Glasgow, Pat Goodhew
Feb 20	Sunday Racing	Lasers/Cats/ Dinghies		Chris Killion	Marrietta Williams, David Williams, Andre Millard
Feb 27	Sunday Racing	Aux		Alex Krumdieck	Kennith Smith, Chris Habig, Charlie Binion