



The Potter Yachter

Newsletter of the Northern California West Wight Potter Club

December 2003

Season's Greetings and Happy New Year!



Sail Calendar:

The 2004 Sail Calendar will be discussed and planned at the Potter Yachters New Year's Meeting which will be held on January 11th, at the Oakland Yacht Club. There will be 8:00 to 10:00am gathering for brunch, then a 10:00am to 1:00 pm meeting, election of officers and planning for the 2004 sailing events.

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“Red Right Returning”.... Dave Lawson sails past a sea lion festooned red channel buoy on Monterey Bay, during the October 2003 club sail. This 2003 year has seen a great turnout of all the Potter Yachters at the various locations, starting with the Delta Run to Bruno's Island, and once again featuring the excitement of the SCA Cruiser Challenge at Midsummer in Monterey. Lots of the Potter Yachters were seen sailing out of Richmond and on up Raccoon Straits and up the slot to Angel Island on a number of occasions this year, and “The Usual Suspects” continued to meet and sail regularly on the Oakland Estuary and at many other locations around San Francisco Bay. A number of Potter Skippers made the trek to Eagle Lake high in the Sierras, near Susanville, and enjoyed a great sail week-end and campout. Several of the Potter skippers had a great sail to China Camp and took some great photos of the Chinese fishing boat being built there. 2004 should bring another great year for the Potter Club.

Commodore's Corner



What a great year of sailing this past year. I knew it was going to be a good year when On January 7th I realized I had already spent 3 days sailing. The infamous foggy bay sail, the weekend at Lundborg Landing, SCA Cruiser Challenge, lots of lunches and day sails on the estuary ... I could go on and on. I'm looking forward to even more time on the water in 2004.

Remember our annual meeting is at the Oakland Yacht Club, on Sunday January 11th. This is the same location as last year and we will follow the same format. Breakfast starts at 8:30 or 9:00 and our meeting will probably run from 10 – 12:00 or so. Our agenda and discussion will follow last year's format. If you have a secret sailing spot you want to share with the club, let me know. In addition to the election of officers, we will review the need for trip sponsors. I hope that every scheduled sail in 2004 will have a Potter Yachter as a trip sponsor.

Winter offers some great sailing opportunities in Northern CA. With the recent rains, we know the Bay is full of water so come on out and sail!!!

Regards,

Richard McDevitt, Commodore

The Officer's Club

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Directions to Oakland Yacht Club, Alameda, for the Annual Meeting



From the South... (from San Jose)

Exit 880 N , at Broadway Exit , Oakland, and turn right onto Broadway

turn right on 7th Street

turn right on Webster (2 blocks) and take the Webster Street Tunnel under the Estuary, (aka Posey Tube), to Alameda, bear left out of the tube and go over the overpass, turn left at Atlantic Avenue (2nd light)

turn left at Triumph Street

the club is located at the foot of Triumph

parking is located in front of the club house, with additional parking across the street

Coming from the North, (from Berkeley, Walnut Creek, Bay Bridge), from 24 west, or 80 south via 580, , take 880 south and exit Jackson Street

turn left off the ramp and go under the freeway left on 8th Street (2nd light)

left on Webster Street and through the tunnel, follow above directions

2003 Has Been a Year of Sail Experiments



Shown above, the latest version of the Ullsail Four Batten Mainsail on Don Person's "Sarah Anne". Earlier versions of this sail have been tested by Jerry Barrilleaux, Rich McDevitt, and other P-15 skippers in the S.F. Bay fleet. International Marine, the Potter Factory, is now providing sails from the Point Sails Loft as the factory standard sail, and will also offer a performance four batten main as an option. The "J and B" Lapper jib was designed by Judy Blumhorst and Jerry Barrilleaux, and proved so popular that the Eliot-Pattison, and International Marine versions soon appeared rapidly on many P-15's in the fleet, and a factory lapper is now delivered as the standard fore-sail on the P-15. . Idasailor, the manufacturer of HDPE, plastic rudder blades and housings is now the supplier of rudder units to International Marine, the Potter Factory, for both the P-15 and P-19. The new rudders are impervious to delamination, and have hydrodynamically foiled blades. 2003 has been a year of great strides in experiments aimed at improving speed and pointing ability of our favorite boats. (photo by Dick Herman)

“Tack on a header, Sail on a lift... .” Learning to understand and use wind shifts can improve any Skipper’s ability to sail better..

When I got my first P-15 Potter in 1985, I was soon invited to join “The Potter Yachters”, and every time I traveled to San Francisco Bay for a sail with the other club members I learned something new and helpful from the members of the club. “Old Salts” like Harry Gordon, Terry Gotcher, Don Bergst, Jerry Barrileaux, and many others, were more than generous in sharing their experience, and I have been grateful for their friendship and help ever since.

I think it was Terry who first taught me the axiom “Tack on a header, sail on a lift.” What this means is....well let’s imagine you are leaving the dock on one side of a lake and you want to sail a mile up the lake to anchor alongside of a friend anchored out there. There is a huge pine tree on the shore right by where your friend’s boat is moored. Using the tree as a “mark” you steer for it and discover that the wind is coming straight at you EXACTLY from the location of the tree.. So you start tacking upwind in a nice zig-zag course.. And since the wind is continuing to come EXACTLY from the direction of the tree, you are making good progress toward the other end of the lake, regardless of whether you are tacking to

the left or to the right! OOPS! As I am sure you already have discovered the wind never comes from EXACTLY from one direction. Even though the wind may be consistently from the same general direction it will shift to the right or to the left as you are sailing along. Lets have a look at what happens, and what to do. Imagine once again that you are sailing to the pine tree with your boat on a perfect 45 degree angle to the left of straight into the “Exact” wind, but now that wonderful perfect wind stops being “Exact”, and moves to the left and is now coming from ten or fifteen degrees to the left of the Pine tree. To keep going, and keep the boat from stalling because now you are pointed too directly into the shifting wind, you now must steer, further to the left to keep the boat in motion. Now you are sailing further to the left and the tree is now further to the right, and you aren’t able to steer as directly toward the tree as you wanted to. You have just been “HEADED”! Being a brilliant sailor, you immediately tack back to the right and maintain a course close to the wind. Now sailing upwind on this new course you notice that now you are able to sail ten or fifteen degrees more on a direct line toward the Pine tree.

You have just been “LIFTED”, which means you are now able to sail a bit straighter toward where you want to go (The Pine tree!). Now you get really lucky! The wind moves even further to the left, and you are able to steer even more closely toward where you wish to go. Wisely, you continue to “Sail on the lift”.

Now there’s the basic strategy or “rule”, and I now understood why some of the “old salts” I was sailing with, often would gradually pull away from me and sometimes leave me a mile behind them! In time I also learned that this idea of wind shifts and adjusting to them can get a little more complicated. The major complication is that winds often oscillate, back and forth, that is, swing back to coming from the earlier observed direction... which would mean if I tacked on a header, and did not notice that the wind was shifting back to its original direction... I could then be “heading” rather than “lifting” myself!

Since those early “lessons” I continue to learn a lot from my friends and pick up useful sailing lore from them, which is just one more benefit of belonging to the friendly Potter Sailing community. Happy Sailing! *Bruce Hood*



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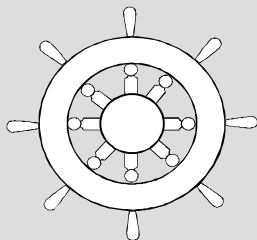
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With a Grain of Salt

The **Potter Yachter** is a forum for exchange of ideas and information among West Wight Potter (and other mini-yacht) sailors. But we Potter Yachters are mostly a bunch of amateurs finding our way by trial and error and luck.

You will probably find some very helpful tips or ideas in the Potter Yachter that will enhance your sailing experience, but you may also find some ill-advised suggestions or ideas that just don't work for your particular boat, your sailing environment, your level of sailing experience, or your boat-working skills. So please understand that any sailing tutorials, suggested boat modifications, recommended cruises, etc., are the opinion of the author, based presumably on his or her personal ex-

perience and judgment at the time the article or letter was written.

If a Potter Yachter believes s/he has a good idea and submits it to the newsletter for publication, we will usually pass it on to the rest of you in the newsletter, but take it "with a grain of salt" and a large portion of your own good judgment, and perhaps get a second opinion before undertaking a modification or cruise or sailing technique you read about in the **Potter Yachter** (or any other publication) - *The Editor*

