



The Potter Yachter

Newsletter of the Northern California West Wight Potter Club

May 2006

Boat Showing



Sailing & Event Calendar 2006

May 6 & 7. "The Delta Cruise, overnight.
Launch at Brennen Island Park sail to Lundberg
Landing .

June 3 & 4, Woodward Annual campout near
Oakdale, CA.

June 24 & 25, Eagle Lake Campout, Susanville
CA.

July 15 & 16, Monterey Messabout Weekend

Aug. 19, Day sail, Richmond-Loch Lomond.

Sept. 2, Day sail, Richmond to Pier 39.

Sept. 5 to 20. Usual Suspects North to Puget
Sound. (FYI) for experienced sailors only.

Sept. 30 & Oct. 1, Tomales Bay weekend.

Oct. 14 & 15, Monterey Overnight

Nov. 11, Day sail, Emeryville, day on the Bay.

Cruising past the Strictly Sail, boat show: Rich McDevitt, Pat Malone, Dick Herman, Pat Brennan , and Brad in the V. 17.



Pat Malone
enjoying the
day.

On Page 6
you can see
Pat's earlier
problems.

Delta Cruise information on Page 6.

Musical Telltales

by Ima B. Cheapscale

Telltales and wind vanes, there is a topic that seems to get almost as much discussion as anchors and with that discussion comes a lot of opinion but no real empirical evidence. The opinions are however, most often based on real experience and not just some marketing/package fodder. It seems the only real answer is, there is no real answer. If you are looking for the perfect telltale, well I don't think it exists. There are several options and I'm sure you can find something that will work for you in most situations. Some options are free, some are sold; some are durable, some are expendable; some are easy to read, and some can only be read by the enlightened. Today we will work with shroud telltales only.

The easiest thing is the bare rigging. You can listen to it sing to you in a stiff breeze but that just tells you the wind is blowing and hopefully you already figured that out. The shroud in itself is not the best telltale. It does provide us with an excellent platform to mount various telltales to however. Yarn and string are the basics representing inexpensive, easy to install by just tying a couple knots, but not the longest lasting. Often these will have to be replaced every time you hit highway speeds on your way to the launching ramp.



Some folks have experimented with professionally made indicators such as these from West Marine. Basically these have a nylon fabric ribbon connected to a plastic bearing that snaps around the stays. They seem to work pretty well for a lot of folks.

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Telltales cont.

(Continued from page 2)

I just took it a step cheaper on my boat. I already had the nylon ribbons left over from adding some to my mainsail and they come with

little round adhesive backed fabric discs. I just wrapped the disc around the shroud so it was going to stick to itself but before I pressed it to seal, I inserted the nylon ribbing. I need to replace them about 3 times each year. They have never come off but the ribbons do fray on the highway.



Dave Kautz is very successful with his use of old cassette audio tapes. I have tried this and in my opinion the audio tape is one of the best options when you see how responsive it is to slight shifts. I had to replace this every time I



trailed and I wanted something a little more durable. I have often wondered how other magnetic tapes would last. Data tape, reel to reel, 8 tracks, lots of options out there and in my opinion it can represent the first good thing any of that old 8 track disco stuff has accomplished since it was recorded! Now if you have 8 tracks of say, The Allman Brothers, look me up. I have never experimented to see if different music reacts differently but some folks think the type of music plays a role. For example, you're on the delta and you rip up a piece of old Jimmy Buffet 8 track tie it to the port shroud and wham you suddenly have enough wind to get to Lost Isle, or maybe you're at Cruiser Challenge so you tie on a little Van Halen and now your set to win the race like a rock star or you could always tie on a piece of Doug Kershaw and your boat will now catch up to Jerry. If you are a solitary type you could tie on some bagpipe tape and everyone would stay away from you (Sorry Dave and Bruce but I couldn't resist). If it's proven that the type of music makes a difference just imagine the possibilities.

Mythbusters we need you.

Other options exist also and you can see them in some of the accompanying photos. For example earlier I mentioned the only drawback to Dave's cassette tape was the frequency I had to replace it. Well, cassettes were largely supplanted by CD technology. Why not take telltales to the next level in audio media. So I tried a brand new invention, the CD shroud telltale.

I incorporated the previously used nylon ribbon and after careful mathematic evaluation of all the physical forces at play, I threw caution to the wind, did not consult Dr. Judy or even post my idea on the Trailer Sailor forum. I just tied it onto the ribbon. It sucked as a telltale but unlike Dave's cassette tape, my CD could still put out the tunes after serving double duty as a telltale so it was now a multifunctioning piece of boat equipment. I try to have many things on the Minnow serve multiple functions. Yes, it is a less than ideal telltale, but it is a trade off but some may find it acceptable. If you don't want to use your audio CD's I saw a huge rack of AOL CD's at Blockbuster last week, dig in!

(Continued on page 4)

Telltales cont.

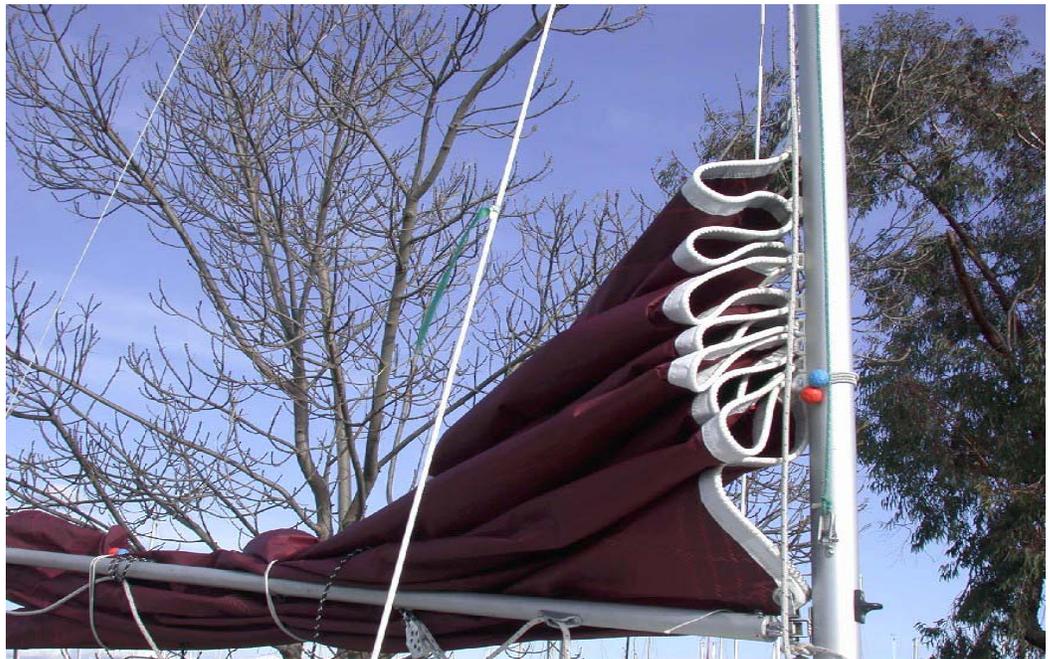
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That brings us to some of the cutting edge technology. This is not even out of the lab yet but I thought you may be interested in where the future of audio technology telltales is headed. With the success of the Ipod, CD's are much under fire as cassettes were years ago. Some would say, MP3's are the only way to go now and from what I've seen I believe them. Below you can see a test installation of a new Iplod shroud telltale.

It is very sleek and aerodynamic. The fact it's digital means the whistling, hissing, popping, and skipping are things of the past. The only draw back from what I saw, but it's a big one, is that only Steve Jobs can read the stinking things and he charges you a buck every time you want to now where the stupid wind is blowing from.

Does anyone else remember sailing as a kid and seeing the skipper tying Fats Domino and Elvis 45's to the shrouds? One time in Minnesota our boat was so old it had sheet music taped to the shrouds. You have to wonder, what sailors did before we had our attics and garages filled with old audio media to use as telltales. In conclusion, I just invite you to come out sailing. The best way to know where the wind is, is via a well developed sense. You often see competitive sailors cocking their heads so they can use their neck to feel slight changes in wind direction, speed, and pressure. There is a lot to do on a small boat and the more time you spend looking at telltales, the less time you spend looking at the water for indications of what the wind is doing or trimming sails. Telltales can be a great help but developing your inner sense is always valuable too.



Submitted by Rich McDevitt, P15, Minnow

Summer Winds

This past Sunday, I was working around the yard, catching up on some long overdue yard work. While I was enjoying the warmth of the sun, I also was aware of the wind.

It was the typical summer wind that blows in the south valley in the summer when bay area heats up. It was the first summer wind that I have felt this year, warm, blowing from the north, down from the San Francisco bay. Not many leaves to rustle, the new ones are soft and green, so the wind doesn't make much noise yet. It did whistle around the house some.

The wind blows in gusts trying to stir me into taking the *Lizzie D* to the lake for a afternoon of tacking up and coasting down, while enjoying the first summer like day this year.

Now that the summer wind has started, it will keep reminding me every chance it gets, to put down the rake and put in some time on the tiller. The time is here to hoist the sails and sail the afternoon away, whether alone or with friends, among skiers on the lake or ships on the Bay, the time is here to get on the water.

An interesting tale of wind indicators will keep you reading through the pages. Don't forget the Delta Sail next weekend, and looking forward to some other annual outings. See you on the water.

Mike Dolan, Newsletter Editor 2006



Cruiser Challenge

The Cruiser Challenge has been cancelled this year per se. It has been suggested that we make that weekend, July 15-16, into a "Messabout" with no organized races or dinner. It'd be more like a "regular" Monterey Bay Sail. Please stay tuned for late breaking information in next month's newsletter.

A Falling Out With a Center Board

I don't know the whole story, but as you can see the center board in the *Festina Lente* was knocked off the pivot pin. When I arrived, Pat Malone and his helper Pat Brennan were raising the boat with the car jack.

Pat put his limbs in jeopardy, to reset the center board on the pivot pin. After it was back in place, it was a fine day for sailing after all.

For all of the details, ask Pat Malone.

Mike Dolan, Newsletter Editor, 2006



Pat Malone's centerboard came off the pivot



Don't attempt this at home kids, only at the boat



Delta Sail May 6 & 7

We will be launching around 9 AM at Brannon Island State Park, and sailing over to Lundborg Landing at Bethel Island. This has been a favorite sail in the past. I called Craig at the Landing and they will be expecting us. They serve Breakfast, lunch, and dinner. And they will have LIVE music on the weekends.

To get to Brannon Island take Highway 4 and go over the Antioch Bridge, it turns into Highway 160 go for several miles, and when you cross the next bridge the entrance will be on your right. Tell the ranger you want launching and overnite parking. If the Ranger ain't there, you will find envelopes at the ramp. Berthing overnite at Lundborg Landing is FREE! If you have any questions call Jerry B. at 925 685 4577



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Safe at the dock.. It is good to know that the US Coast Guard is not far away.

All photos in this issue of The Potter Yachter by Jerry Kergan

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 experience 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*