



The Potter Yachter

Newsletter of the Northern California West Wight Potter Club

April 2002

Sailing Calendar

April 6-7:
Bruno's Island/Delta Ditch Race

April 17-21:
Pacific Sail Expo

April 27-28:
Richmond Marina
Sat - Salt & Pepper Sail
Sun - Lecture on Safe Sailing on SF Bay

May 4-5:
Woodward Reservoir/Boat Rodeo

May 25-26:
Richmond Marina to Loch Lomond

June 1-2:
Delta Cruise (To Be Decided)

June 29-30:
Eagle Lake

July 20-21:
Oakland Estuary to South Beach Marina, SF

August 2-4:
Annual Lake Tahoe trip

August 24-25:
SCA Cruiser Challenge IV, Monterey Bay

September 14-15:
Tomales Bay

September 28:
Richmond Marina to Angel Is.

October 5-6:
Monterey Bay

November:
To Be Decided

Woodward Reservoir May 4-5

Our annual weekend at Woodward Reservoir, near Oakdale, is one of our most "beginner-friendly" sails of the season. It's one of our best attended events every year. I'm expecting to see a lot of new faces mixed in amongst the regulars. The winds are typically light in the mornings, and a bit stronger in the afternoon.

This is the place for beautiful fresh water sailing and swimming. This annual event is special because there's an abundance of time to mix sailing with sitting on the shore and socializing. You can just sail your boat up to the water's edge, toss out your anchor and wade ashore - no hassling with waiting for a dock. Get back on your boat and go sailing whenever the urge strike you. Woodward is a perfect place to bring the kids or grandkids with short attention spans sailing and

camping; they can play on shore or go sailing with you.

You can sleep aboard or camp on land. You'll be able to drive right up to the campsite on the water's edge. Though we will be camping right on the water's edge in the "unimproved camping area", there are showers and regular toilets available nearby and chemical toilets right next to the campsite. There is a small general store and snack bar right on the lake.

It's sometimes hot at Woodward, but this year we're going to try to send a few members out early on Friday to grab (hopefully) #20 on Pelican Cove like last year, which has plenty of trees for shade and enough water to accomodate P19's. (The water levels are down at Woodward, so the

(Continued on page 4)

Hard Aground P-15 03-09-2002

It was a late winter sail, temperature was in the upper 50's to low 60's, the forecast was for a storm to move in by late afternoon and winds varied from less than 5 knots to probably not over 15 knots. Due to the storm front moving through, the wind was very shifty and came from various directions throughout the day. The tide was receding quickly and two tugs were in the channel preparing to move a large ship out to the bay.

After a fun sail on the bay, we de-

ecided to return to the dock for lunch. The freighter was lumbering towards us with a tug on each side. We were heading up the channel, staying to one side to make our intentions clear to the freighter when a large powerboat came along throwing a pretty good sized wake. I took the wake on the bow and my buddy boater took it on the stern. I rocked a bit but it seemed to send him onto a mud bank. I could tell he was aground, but I was not concerned, I figured he would retract the centerboard, float

(Continued on page 3)

Salt & Pepper Sail and Kame Richards Lecture Richmond Marina April 27-28

The Potter Yachters will spend the weekend at Marina Bay, in Richmond, a favorite launching spot. We'll spend the night at the marina. If you can't come for the weekend, join us for a daysail

Saturday, April 27th: Annual "Salt and Pepper" Sail

The Potter Yachter's Annual "Salt and Pepper Sail" is Saturday, April 27th. It's an event specially planned for prospective owners of Potters.

Volunteer Potter Skippers Needed

We're looking for some friendly "Old Salts" who are willing to take a guest for a sail. If you're a "Salt" (skipper) planning to attend, and would like to

take a "Pepper" (passenger) for a sail, please let me know, along with

how much room you'll have on your boat. Arrive early and be ready to launch by 10 am.

"Salts" and "Peppers" must RSVP no later than Sunday, April 21st to Commodore@potter-yachters.org. Please state whether you're a "Salt" or a "Pepper" and give your email and phone contact. We'll be in touch with you to match you up with your "Salt" or "Pepper"

Sunday, April 28th: "Heavy Air Sailing": a Lecture by Kame

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Informal Races Sat. 13 April 1pm.at Foster City - P-15 only

I checked with Mike Westfield and there are no Potter sails that weekend (tax preparation...). Our Fleet Captain blessed it so here it is:

To keep it compact and short for those of us who still have to finish their tax returns, we will meet at 1pm planning to be in the water by 2pm.

First race to start around 2pm., last race two hours after the first race.

If you can, please use the standard jib so that the boats are closely matched (but of course if you cannot you are welcome anyway)

No gasoline engines are permitted (nor needed).

Only P-15's can fit under the bridges so this is a P-15 only sail.

We will try to reserve the trailer parking spots, but since our last sails here there has been a dog park built and we might have to scramble for spaces.

Directions:
From Freeway 92 (San Mateo Bridge is Highway 92) exit at Foster City Blvd direction SE (this is the first exit in San Mateo after the bridge). Follow Foster City Blvd SE to make a RIGHT on Bounty Dr. and immediate left on Boat Park (you are there!)

Hope you can make it. Please e-mail me if you are planning on coming so we have an idea how many people will be there.

Oscar Koechlin
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Hard Aground (cont'd)

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off and sail away, so I continued on my tack away from him. I could tell he had started his motor and I could see muddy water churning up off his stern, but I was still not concerned with much more than staying away from the freighter.

I thought I would tack back in case the situation was worse than I perceived. I was about 5 minutes away, I could now hear the outboard and the muddy water churning off his stern while the skipper was trying to rock the boat free. When I arrived on scene, my biggest concern was that I did not run aground also. My centerboard was occasionally touching bottom so I knew it was possible. The freighter was continuing towards us and the tide was receding at a pretty quick pace. As the freighter passed, the water rushed off the shoal like rain off a tin roof. I knew water would return after the ship passed, but in the mean time the grounded boat really got pasted into the sticky mud. We quickly determined we needed to pass a line between the boats so I could attempt to pull him free. It was getting pretty clear that if we did not get the grounded boat free quickly, he was going to be there until the tide returned and the storm arrived.

Several attempts were made at heaving a line, and I was failing. I had dropped my jib and had my outboard idling while my lightly grounded centerboard kept me stationary. I went to the bow to heave the line, but it was just not making it. During my best throw, the line fouled. I grabbed an additional piece of line about 20 feet long, made it fast to my boat and tied a square knot to join it to the heaving line. Now I wound up like a Yankee pitcher and let it fly - hurrah! Contact! After the line was made fast to

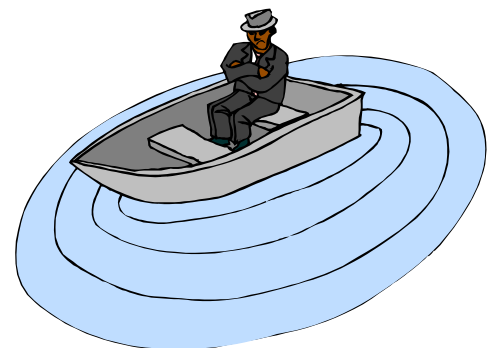
the grounded boat I reversed thrust slowly to take up the slack and took caution to not foul the line in my prop. Both boats in full reverse and the grounded boat was not budging. I turned 180° and tried to pull with my boat going forward and still no success. The mud suction created when the freighter passed was really strong and I was beginning to wonder if we were going to be successful. I could see an awful lot of bottom paint on the grounded boat so I knew he was almost more on land than water at this point. The grounded skipper had moved to his bow so he could try to rock the boat free, still no success. I throttled back and changed course. I took up the slack in the tow line again and now was heading off his beam at 90°. I hoped this would spin the grounded boat on its keel and break the suction. Success, it worked. With the grounded boat floating again, the tow line was retrieved and we headed back to the dock for lunch. On the way back we saw a Hobie Cat run aground twice! They were wearing wetsuits and when they got off the boat to push it free, they sank in the muck past their knees. Bay mud is not something you want to get in if you can help it.

What would I do differently if I had to do this again? Throw the heaving line harder and tie the extension on earlier. I think you are better to over-throw than under throw your target. We spent over 5 minutes just getting a line passed between the boats. I also would return to the grounded boat earlier. The 5 minutes away and 5 minutes back meant a lot in terms of the receding tide and the amount of water we had to work with. I would also pull at a different direction than directly astern since that was the final solution to breaking the suction. Those four things would

mean 20 minutes and a lot more water under the grounded boat.

What went right- two experienced skippers, no panic, no gear failures, and safety was in mind at all times, and we successfully freed the boat with no serious incident. If you sense someone needs assistance, even a comforting word, head there quickly - minutes matter. Keep a heaving line available. Like an anchor, it can be a piece of safety equipment. Mine is stored below my cockpit hatches by the first aid kit, fire extinguisher, and flares. Wear your PFD. I had mine on and with the urgency to act quickly, walking to the bow, passing boats, etc. I was glad I had it on. The chance of a slip on deck or an unseen wave can increase during an event like this. I was glad we were buddy boating. I had a learning experience and the other skipper didn't have to spend 6 hours waiting for a tide and a storm.

Richard McDevitt
P-15 #2531 "Minnow"



**April 17 - 21
Drop by the Potter
Exhibit at the Pacific
Sail Expo 2002
Jack London Square,
Oakland CA**

International Marine is showing the brand new Potter 15 and Potter 19 at the Pacific Sail Expo this year.

Dave Dressler, the owner of International Marine, has once again generously offered to let the club use a corner of his exhibit to display our Sailing Calendar and our "slide show" on a lap top.

Drop by the booth and say hi. It's the best place to rendezvous with other club members!

**Salt & Pepper Sail and Kame Richards Lecture
(cont'd)**

(Continued from page 2)

Richards

On Sunday, April 28th at 10 am, Kame Richards, owner of Pineapple Sails and well known lecturer, will talk about Heavy Air Sailing Techniques. His topics will include sail trim, steering, and rig tuning for sailing safely and in control on windy ole' San Francisco Bay. There is no charge for the lecture.

Attention Weekenders:

Sunday, April 28th, is Opening Day on the Bay, and things will be crowded at the Marina and on the Bay. ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST RSVP! If you want a berth for the weekend, you must RSVP to Commo-

dore Judy!

Fair breezes, Judy B, Commodore
Commodore@potter-yachters.org

Directions: To Marina Bay Yacht Harbor, 1340 Marina Way S, Richmond, CA 94604.

Phone 510-236-1013. Coming from Berkeley, take the I-580 WEST ramp towards Richmond. Merge onto I-580 W, travel approximately 3 miles. Take the Marina Bay Pkwy/S 23rd St exit. Turn right onto 23rd Street. Turn left onto Cutting Blvd. Turn left onto Marina Way South; you'll see Richmond Marina on your left-hand side.

Woodward (cont'd)

old site at Sailboat Cove will not accommodate P19's) Bring your bathing suit to cool off in the water and don't forget your sunglasses and suntan oil!

We'll be having a Pot-luck on Saturday night. Bring a main dish for yourself, and a side dish or hor d'oeuvre to share.

Woodward only happens once a year -- don't miss it!

See you there!

Judy B, Commodore

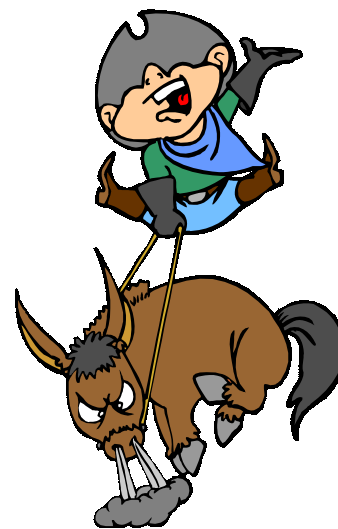
(Directions on Page 5)

Potter Sailboat Rodeo at Woodward (or Don't Scratch My Topsides With Your Spurs)

At the Woodward sail May 4-5 we will be having a sailboat rodeo. Several fun events are planned so bring your boats. Short races of a different kind, such as a "headless" skipper race (you will need a crew member for this so start training them), Fastest Crew Overboard Retrieval race, knot tying, mooring, and others.

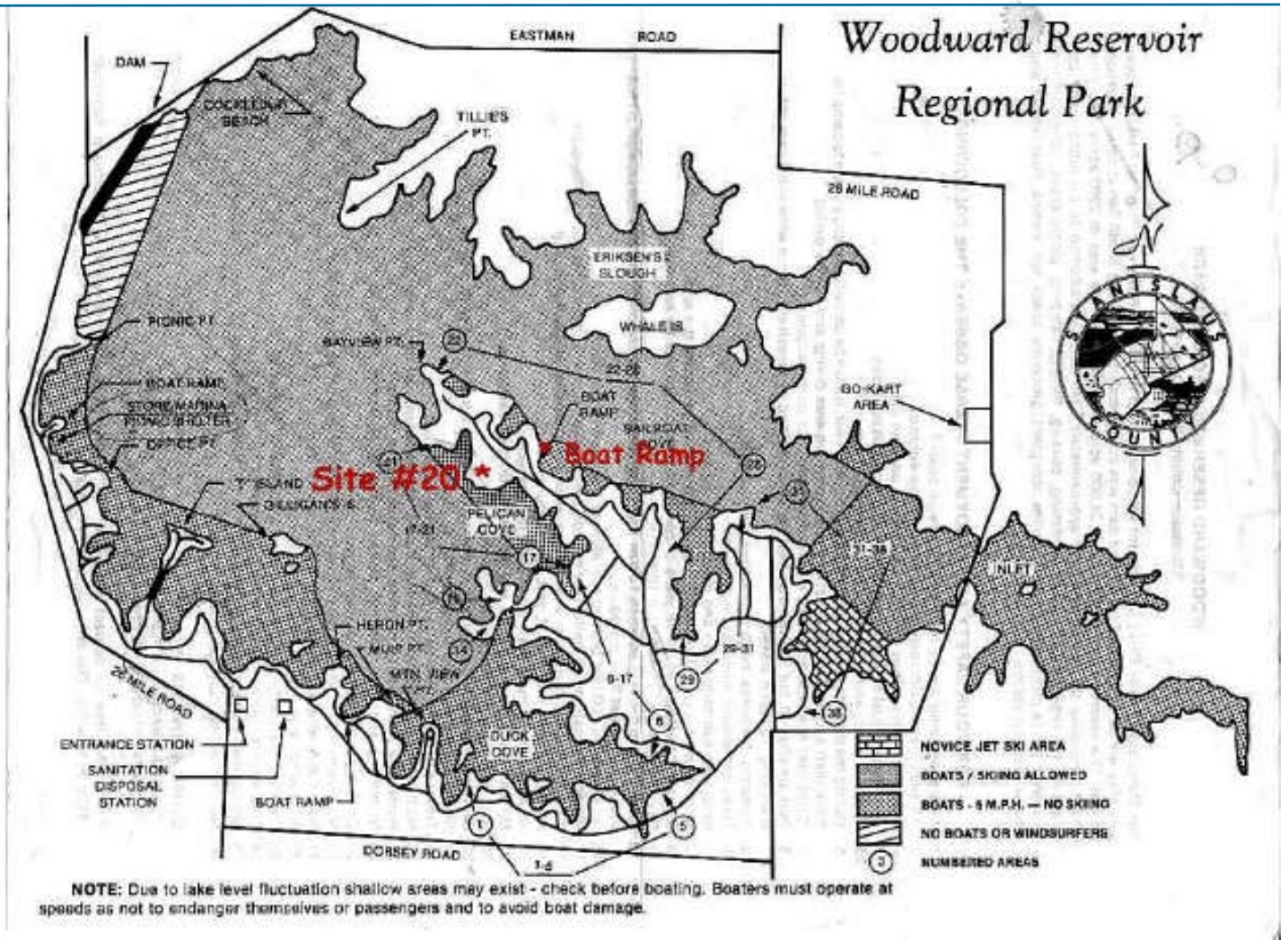
If you would like to practice, bone up on your knots, train your crew, practice your crew overboard skills, and tie off your tiller and steer with your sails.

Several events are planned, and if you have any fun "boat games" to suggest, get in touch with Rich McDevitt @ 925-829-7792 or email to cadcotsm@aol.com.



See you there "Pardner."

Rich McDevitt



Directions to Woodward Reservoir

Your boat must be properly registered to be admitted to Woodward Reservoir.

Woodward Reservoir is east of Manteca on 120. Watch for a sign to take a left turn off 120, about a mile before you reach the town of Oakdale.

When you get to the lake, tell the folks at the entrance that you will be using the "primitive camping" facilities. They will charge you accordingly. I think its about \$10 a night to camp, and about \$10 to launch a boat.

Once you go thru the entrance booth,

turn right. Look for paper "Potter" signs with directions. We will be camping in the primitive area. It is perhaps a mile or so around the backside of the lake and you will leave the paved road at some point to get to the water's edge/camping area.

With luck, we'll get the best sailing spot on the lake, Site #20 on Pelican Cove. Its got trees for shade, and it's a reach on and off the beach.

There's a map of the camp ground at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PotterYachters/files/Woodward%20Map2.jpg>

Quick Takes

Quinn's Lunch Run Review

On March 24, a few of us launched from Alameda and sailed to Quinn's Lighthouse for lunch.

Despite the dire weather predictions, which certainly dampened the turnout, we had wonderful weather. Good breezes in the morning made for great sailing on the Estuary.

When we approached Quinn's, we were all treated to a sailing performance by Jerry in Sunshine and Judy in Redwing as they sailed their boats into the guest dock. The fairway by the guest dock was narrow, and the approach downwind, requiring them to sail in and spin their boats on a dime onto the dock.

We had about 15 people gathered for lunch on the outside deck at Quinn's, and enjoyed good food, good beer, good company. And, of course, a few good salty tales were told.

The afternoon saw increased winds and made for more great sailing, as about 6 boats tacked their way up the Estuary in a solid 10-15 knots of breeze.

Brooks Island—The Circumnavigation that wasn't

According to our P15 Fleet Captain, Mike Westfield, the circumnavigation of Brook's Island scheduled for March 15 didn't happen as planned. The weather didn't cooperate, and the few boats that did show up played around in the Richmond Marina area.

Kame Richards Lecture at OCSC

On Thursday, March 14, Kame Richards of Pineapple Sails gave a lecture on Tides and Current in San Francisco Bay. The lecture was held at Olympic Circle Sailing Club in Berkeley, and we had a decent representation of Potter Yachters.

I think we all learned some interesting facts about working with the tricky currents in Bay waters. Kame used satellite photos of the Bay during different tides to teach us what happens in the Bay as it floods and ebbs.

Some interesting facts from the lecture:

-At the Gate, the new tide starts on the south side and works it's way north. So, at slack, the North half is still flowing the direction of the old tide, while the south is flowing the other

way. Not really slack at all!

-The tide and current charts aren't always right. They can't predict the strength of flow from the Delta during spring snowmelt. They also don't show the little back-currents behind peninsula points (such as Blunt on Angel Island). So, observation while you're on the water is crucial.

-While the chart may show a tide you can't sail against, if you know where the back currents and other effects are, you might be able to catch the right "conveyor belt" to get you where you're going. Commercial fishermen seem to excel at this, so follow their lead.

Kame does this lecture occasionally, so if you want to learn more, watch for his next lecture at OCSC.

David Blumhorst
Editor, Potter Yachters



Potters at Woodward, 2000



The Potter Yachter

APRIL 2002

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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*