



# The Potter Yachter

Newsletter of the Northern California West Wight Potter Club

September 2005

## Tomales Bay Weekend Sept. 10-11



This was the scene at Tomales Bay in 1993, as the Potter Yachters gathered on a sunny beautiful day. The following year, 1994, a howling storm came in that drenched everyone... This year we will hope for 1993 Weather! This is the site of the famous "Potter

### Sail Calendar:

**Sept. 10th, 11th, Tomales Bay weekend**

**October 1, 2nd, Monterey Bay Overnighter**

**October 8th fleet week, Estuary to Treasure Island Cove**

**October 29th, Buckley Cove to Windmill Cove**

The Potter Yachter Tomales Bay Sail is coming up Sept. 10th and 11th. Launch is from Miller County Park Ramp, just 3 miles North of the little town of Marshall on Hwy. 1. We will meet for a pot luck and Tomales (oyster) barbeque at about 5:00 P.M. at Tomales Beach (same locale as last year). Launching and parking is \$10. This is basically a camping trip. Group leader Eric Zilbert will bring wood for a fire. Note that you must have a porta potty to overnight on Tomales Bay. Tides are great for launching, there should be plenty of water during daylight hours. There will be a very low tide around 1:00 a.m., but if your boat is floating at 8:00 p.m., you should be O.K. in the morning. See you there!

## Commodore's Corner



On the Oakland Estuary, we have had some very light air with morning fog, and then around noon, we have had sunshine and moderate winds to enjoy for the rest of the day during the past week or two. Leaving the dock at Quinn's Lighthouse, Pat Brennan and I enjoyed watching Dave Bacon scull his P-15 expertly away from the dock and back out into the channel, and I remarked "isn't that a great way to deal with getting the boat clear without starting the motor...". Dave has fabricated a notched oarlock atop the swimming ladder on the back of his boat, and he can propel the boat with considerable skill, using a single oar back over the transom. About that time I realized that I couldn't even remember if I had a paddle or two on board my boat.. So I promptly dove into my rather messy cabin storage spaces, and to my relief, found I still had a paddle aboard. A minute later my little Honda 2HP motor started on the first pull, so any need to begin paddling evaporated. I guess my point in this, is to emphasize how important it can be to have contingency plans for those normal (or major) emergencies that crop up, such as a motor that won't start... and to occasionally inventory your safety equipment and test its use and check where it is located from time to time.. Paddles, anchors, fenders, tow ropes, bailers, are all basic items and yet are sometimes overlooked. As Pat and I enjoyed the rest of another great day of sailing, we had some further talk about safety things.. Pat and I both have waist belt inflatables PFD's.. But Pat has tested his, and I have never gotten around to testing mine! I also have a foam filled fishing vest type PFD that doesn't depend on any thing mechanical to work, and often wear it because on a chilly morning it keeps me warm, and the foam is a comfortable back pad against the cockpit railing.. Plus the pockets of the vest are handy for all sorts of small boat stuff.. ( like a P-15 bilge plug cork, etc.). I have some flares.. But they probably are out of date,etc. Pat also noticed that my hand held VHF's internal speaker can cause my bulkhead compass to start reading incorrectly when installed recently in a new bracket, when it is allowed to get too close to the compass, and after fixing that, I also "unburied" some fresh double-A batteries and replenished the old ones in the GPS, and in my Pocket flashlight, and then put the remaining fresh ones where they will be easier to reach. I also made a mental note to get a fresh pack or two for any other just in case scenarios.. In General it was clear that it is time to check things over on the boat.. Many days of care-free sailing this summer may be the causing me to get a little too complacent! Time to get out the old check lists and spend a day or two getting things back in good (and safer )order!

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## Tomales Bay Sail Sept. 10th-11th 2005: Directions



**Launching:** The Tomales Bay Potter Yachter trip is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, September 10th, and 11th. We will be launching from the ramp at Miller County State Park, near Nick's Cove, located on the East side of Tomales Bay, off Highway 1, North of the town of Marshall. Launch fee is \$5.00 to launch, plus \$5.00 for overnight parking. We will be launching in the morning on Saturday, and those interested in getting together for a pot-luck dinner should plan to meet on the beach one cove North of Marshall Beach at about 5:30pm ( same location as last year ). Eric Zilbert our cruise leader will bring wood for a fire. We plan to anchor out just off the beach . There are pit-toilets available at the camping beaches, however it would be advisable to have a Porta-Potti on board for overnight stays, as they are required on the bay. For more information you can call Eric at 530 757 6783, Evenings. For information about Miller County Park call 415 499 6387. Located on Highway 1 alongside the East side of Tomales Bay and three miles north of Marshall, CA, this six acre park provides parking, a two lane ramp for boat launching and excellent fishing opportunities. Tomales Bay is fairly shallow south of Marshall. The West side of the Bay is deeper, and with the Tides you should be able to get all the way to Inverness at any time other than during the evening lows. Stay to the Western side of the Bay south of Marshall. The entrance to Tomales Bay is a legendary hazard, subject to large sleeper waves that may break in the entrance.

## ***A Special Day on S.F. Bay... From Encinal Ramp. Alameda***



*At left, Past Commodore Rich McDevitt and at right Mitch Carnes, head out from Encinal Ramp on the outer western shore of Alameda Island for a mellow day on S.F. Bay. Mitch sailed across to Candlestick Park on this Saturday sail, and there were plans afoot for some more Potter sailors to launch on Sunday and sail over to the famous ball park. On this Saturday bright sunshine and light air prevailed for hours of relaxing sailing. In the light winds both skippers put their weight on the “low side” for best sail shape and progress to windward.*

*Pat Malone sails “Festina Lente” his P-15, wing and wing, in tandem with Rich McDevitt, toward the Ballena Bay breakwater. By launching on the outside of Alameda at the Encinal Ramp the boats are immediately in the Bay, whereas launching at Grand St. in the Oakland Estuary requires a long series of tacks in an enclosed channel to get out to the Bay’ The area of the Encinal ramp is quite shallow and can require waiting for the tide to rise a bit for an easy launch.*



*Another Beautiful Day on the Bay*

story and photos by Don Person



*At Left: Pat Malone and Rich McDevitt sail their P-15's toward the Legendary Aircraft Carrier "Hornet".*

*The Potter Yachters had a very pleasant sail in light air and bright sunshine on the south Bay. The Hornet is now a museum, and can be visited.*

If your idea of a good time is gliding along on a gentle sea in perfect weather you should have been with us today. Not a day for thrill seekers. Relaxing hardly says it. Temperature 75 deg F. Breeze was between four and six knots all day. Ripples but no chop. And no lulls. Mitch Carnes, Rich McDevitt, Pat Malone and Don Person with spice Judy and grandson Duncan for crew sailed the light fantastic. We launched at the Encinal, Alameda ramp and starboard tacked to the middle of the channel where Mitch headed for Candlestick Park. The rest of us port tacked into the basin where the retired aircraft carrier Hornet is tied up and gave her a looking over. Then out thru the break in the jetty and a downwind run to Ballena Bay. Two tacks in two hours sailing. There was no traffic as we motored to the guest dock at Ballena Bay Yacht Harbor. Pat radioed ahead and recieved permission for us to dock for lunch. Steve Potter did the same last week at Loch Lomond, what a concept. As usual the sandwiches at the Ballena Deli were fine and filling. There were actually three boats in the channel as we left the marina. As we left the Ballena Yacht Harbor basin, it looked like all the slips were full., with no one heading out on

this bright and sun filled day.

I and Commodore Bruce often have wondered why, on such a perfect day, aren't all those beautiful big boats out sailing? Bruce thinks some owners buy a boat for its beauty as an art object. Instead of an expensive painting over the mantle they get a beautiful big boat so when the spirit moves they can go down and look at it, sit on deck with friends and enjoy it .. Kind of like having a sculpture in your garden.. ( or your sculpture *becoming* your garden. ) Still, it seems they would want to sail them more often. Again we take a starboard tack out to the bay channel and port tack for the return into the dock. Except that Granddad Don misjudged the current, was carried down past the ramp cove and had to make two more tacks to get to the ramp. Such hard work.! At the dock a motor boater couldn't get his truck up the ramp so we did lazy eights for thirty minutes until two stout fishermen jumped on his rear bumper. Their weight gave him enough traction, finally, to make it up the ramp. Mitch pulled in from his cross bay trip just after we did ,so we all got our boats put away about the same time. A very well rested group then took



# The Potter Yachter

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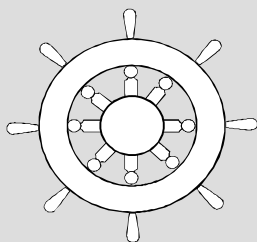
## Inside the Potter Yachter

**Page 1 Tomales Bay coming up.**

**Page 2 It May be time to check your "stuff"**

**Page 3 Launching at Tomales.**

**Page 4, 5, Ballena Bay sail**



## 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*

