



FOOT, TACK & CLEW

East Coast Sailing Association

P.O. Box 372054 • Satellite Beach, FL 32937-0054

<http://www.ecsasail.com>

BOAT/US number GA81299B

March 2005



THE OFFICIAL LOG OF THE EAST COAST SAILING ASSOCIATION

Board of Governors

Flag Officers *z*

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David Merchberger 321 - 779 - 0438

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Chip Worster 321 - 773 - 5851

Sherry Beckett 321 - 779 - 3024

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Cruising

Ron Vanderveer 321 - 255 - 3854

River Racing

Jim Yates 321 - 777 - 2663

Women's Racing

Sherry Beckett 321 - 779 - 0324

Newsletter Editor

Brenda Merchberger 321 - 779 - 0438

Program Chairman

Open

Membership Chairman

Brenda Merchberger 321 - 779 - 0438

Rating Chairman

Jim Miller 321 - 777 - 7011

Advertising

Open

Hospitality

Brenda Merchberger 321 - 779 - 0438

Publicity

Open

General Membership Meeting

Wednesday ~ 9 March 2005 ~ 7:00 p.m.

Satellite Beach Civic Center (565 Cassia Blvd)

Latitude 28° 09' North, Longitude 80° 36' West

March Program

SailTime East Florida is here! Join us as we discuss maximizing sailing time while minimizing cost and hassle

Presented by: Jerry Butz

MARCH Calendar of EVENTS

6	IRYC	Winter Series #5
6	MYC	Small Boat Racing
13	MYC	Spring Rum Race #3
13	TSC	Spring Series #3
19	ECSA	Spring River Race #2
19-20	ECSA	Downtown Melbourne St. Pat's Cruise
20	ECSA	Spring Women's Race #3
20	MYC	Small Boat Racing
26	IRYC	Winter Series #6
27	MYC	Spring Rum Race #4

APRIL Calendar of EVENTS

2-3	CBYC	Hurricane Regatta
3	MYC	Small Boat Racing
8	MYC	Spring Rum Race #5
9	ECSA	Spring River Race #3
10	ECSA	Spring Women's Race #4
10	IRYC	Spring Series #1
10	TSC	Spring Series #4
16-17	ECSA	Boy Scout Island Cruise
17	MYC	Small Boat Racing
17	TSC	Spring Series #5
22	MYC	Spring Rum Race #6
23-24	MYC	Spring Regatta small boats
24	IRYC	Spring Series #2
29-1	MYC	Spring Regatta big boats

Foot, Tack & Clew is the official newsletter of the East Coast Sailing Association and is mailed to the membership each month or available at <http://www.ecsasail.com>.

The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the East Coast Sailing Association.



**THOUGHTS FROM
YOUR
COMMODORE...
David Merchberger**

Our cruising schedule has gotten off to a great start already this year. We've re-instated some of the old destinations, dropped some of the less popular ones and added new cruises. Some of the cruises still need hosts, so please get with our Cruising Fleet Captain and volunteer to help out. Consider pairing up with another member to host a cruise. Its eases what little burden there is and adds to the fun! Watch for details in the FT&C and on the web site.

As those of you who have been paying attention are aware, I decided to enter Thirsty Whale in this year's River Racing Series. An Island Packet 35 is not exactly a 'around the marks' race boat. With her full keel, cutter rig and over 20,000 pound displacement when she's loaded, she does wonderful in the open sea and is very comfortable on the river, but fast..... she ain't!

I'll let you read the gory details of our first race outing in Ron Vanderveer's article elsewhere in this newsletter. There are a couple items that Ron takes some liberty with in his article, but for the most part he paints an accurate and fun picture of our experience. Don't miss it. Thanks to Joe Luthman, Chris Forte and Ron for being brave enough to accept my invitation to come crew on 'the Whale'.

It would be wonderful if more of you would come out and join us to race in the cruising class. It really is very low pressure racing and for the most part the rules are simple. Don't let your lack of knowledge of the racing rules be a reason not to come out and race. I'm sure that we can arrange a rules clinic at a time and place convenient for all those that are interested.

Racing is very much like being out of a day sail with two important exceptions. First, you don't sail willy-nilly around the river, but rather between specific points on the course and second, you try to maximize the performance of your boat and crew. Both skills are great to improve upon and can serve to maximize your sailing enjoyment whenever you're on the water.

Now, the best part of coming out to race.....Its another reason to spend a day on the water. What more motivation do you need? You might as well volunteer now to come out and race, because I'm not going to stop pestering you until we see some new faces on the river.



**VIEW FROM THE
VICE...
by
VICE COMMODORE
Joe Luthman**

Well another month has gone by and it's time to write a story for the newsletter. I could write about getting stuck in the mud at the Frostbite cruise but I am sure Joe Coleman will do that. I could write about racing in the first Spring series river race aboard Thirsty Whale (and we came in second), but I am sure Dave will tell you all about it in his article. Well, I guess I'll have to come up with my own idea.

We did have a wonderful turn out for the February general membership meeting. Mike Hill from Cruising Outfitters did a great job on educating the club members about anchors and anchoring techniques and I thank him for his time. He promised to join the club after the boat show madness dies down. Our March program will be on fractional sailing. Jerry Butz from Boaters Exchange will be presenting the program. I hope we get a good turn out again. It was nice to see a lot of new members at the February meeting and I hope to see them at the weekend events.

Lastly, we still have a few committees that need volunteer support. Please let me know if you would like to help out.

Well, I still don't have any ideas of what I should write about —maybe next month.

Your Vice Commodore - Joe Luthman

Commodore's Article - continued...

Finally, it is with great sadness that I mark the recent passing of one of our members. As many of you are now aware, Sterling Walker passed away on February 13, 2005. Brenda and I first met Sterling and his wife Pat many years ago while we were on a mooring in Hope Town, Bahamas. They happened to be out in their dinghy, saw the port of call on Thirsty Whale and came by for a chat. We were impressed then, and many times afterward, by Sterling's gentle and friendly nature and the genuine care with which he seemed to treat everyone that he had contact with. Sterling loved sailing and if I may be so bold, I think that he would encourage each and every one of us to take advantage of whatever opportunity we have and enjoy our wonderful sport with our family as often as possible. Please keep Sterling, Pat and their family in your prayers.

See you on the water
Dave



A VIEW FROM THE REAR... by Joe Coleman

I have never been a great bargain hunter. As a matter of fact, you could say I stink at it. Karen has always been the great shopper in the family. When Karen bought her car, she researched until she found the exact vehicle she wanted. Then she studied prices and options, went into the showroom, and pointed to the care she wanted. She told them the price she would pay and then sat down, folded her arms, and waited for them to agree. I, on the other hand, walked into the showroom, asked how much the car cost, and then paid too much for it. It has always been that way with us.

Well I think some of Karen's shopping ability finally wore off on me. As you all know, the Miami Boat Show as last month. Karen and I, well actually just I, had decided to purchase air conditioning for the boat to replace our carry-on unit. I had done some research on the subject. First of all I talked with all my buddies about what type of unit to get. As usual, each had his own preference of which unit to purchase. And of course, their personal choice was the best.

Then I looked through all the marine catalogs, comparing prices, BTUs and physical size. I quickly found out that I wasn't comparing apples to apples. Even though they all look like apples, they are all different in some significant way, (or so the salesmen tell me). One catalog had a 9,000 BTU unit, which was said to be ideal for a thirty-foot boat. The next recommended a 10,000 BTU unit for the same boat. Some came with an installation kit and others did not. Then there was the issue of whether to get a self-contained or split unit. Just as my brain was about to explode, I had to decide if I want reverse cycle heat and air or just air. Oh, don't forget, you probably should have a stainless drip pan.

At this point I could not let on to Karen that I was not exactly sure just what I was looking for. After all she is the super shopper. But by the time the boat show came around, I did have some idea of what I wanted. I did have limited space, but many units could be accommodated within it. The issue of heat or not was quickly decided. We both figured that since we live in Florida, if it ever gets that cold, we will just stay at home. The question of size was also quickly made.

The bottom line was that we wanted to get the highest number of BTUs for our money. Ah, that's the key word, money.

On the bus to Miami, I had the privilege of sitting in front of Tom and Barb Schrader. With Tom's hectic work schedule, I don't get to poke much fun of him at the monthly meetings. Saturday I had three hours down and three hours back to annoy him as much as I wanted. During this quality time, I also took the opportunity to talk to Tom about air conditioners. Tom recommended Marine Air. He had just purchased a replacement unit for his boat and was impressed with the easy installation and efficiency of the unit. I wondered, is Tom telling me the truth or is he just trying to get back at me for irritating him so much?

As the bus pulled up to the show, I had pretty well decided what I was going to buy. Now the only question was, at what price? Normally Karen will spend the first part of the show looking at shoes, cooking gadgets and mops, while I get my years supply of Corrosion Block and look at engines and charts. This year we decided to shop together. Just what I needed, more pressure. Once we received our catalog of vendors we quickly looked for air conditioners, especially those selling Marine Air. There were several dealers with displays, all in about the same general area. Now I won't mention dealer names except the one we purchased from, Helms Marine, which happened to be the last dealer we spoke to. The first dealer gave us the old sales pitch and a price of over twenty three hundred dollars, which was way over our price range. The second was a little lower but still too high. One dealer, once he found out we had a "small sailboat", turned and started talking to someone else. Finally we ended up at Helms Marine. As I talked with the salesman, Scott, Karen sat there patiently talking to some other guy at the booth (later I found out that he was one of the Helmses). Now the pressure was really on. With Karen watching my every move, I had to make the right decision at the right price. Scott spent a lot of time with me discussing the different size units, the installation kits, and the ease of installation. We pieced the unit out and came up with a price which was almost exactly what we had budgeted. At last I am a hero! I felt so good about my purchase that I bought Karen a Polish sausage (actually after buying the air conditioner we could only afford one, but I shared).

I paid full price for the sausage.

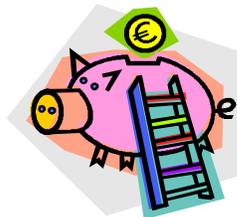


TREASURER'S REPORT

by
Tom Schrader

Income Statement		Fiscal Year
REVENUE	Feb-05	Sep 04 - Feb 05
Activities Income	1,293.00	4,245.00
Membership Dues	175.00	6,159.00
Merchandise Income	65.00	135.00
Miscellaneous Income	<u>0.00</u>	<u>164.00</u>
Total Revenue	2,614.00	9,170.00
EXPENSES		
Activities Expense	1,190.74	5,185.78
Bank Service Charge	-	-
Dues & Subscriptions	109.40	109.40
Insurance	-	1,551.00
Miscellaneous	-	254.97
Office Supplies	-	121.90
Postage/Delivery	125.54	475.01
Printing/Repro	321.74	519.01
Rent	-	110.40
Sales Tax	<u>0.00</u>	<u>2.89</u>
Total Expense	1,747.42	8,331.06
Net Income	(214.42)	2,371.94

Note: The Balance Sheet and/or Checking Account Balance will be reported when our new treasurer, Tom Schrader, reconciles the checking account statements from last year's treasurer.



Welcome New Members

John & Susan Ashmore
4607 Four Lakes Drive
Melbourne, FL 32940
321-253-8420
Hunter 25 - *Wrinkled Sheets*

Gregg & Dania Billman
690 Jackson Ct
Satellite Beach, FL 32932
321-777-3371
Bombay Clipper 31 - *Windsong*

Gerald & Kelly Butz
11 River Ridge Drive
Rockledge, FL 32955
321-632-9605
Catalina 250

Don & Wendy Daube
801 S. Ramona Avenue
Indialantic, FL 32903
321-951-2260
Catalina 22 - *Sea Bel*

James & Mary-Ann Edwards
4550 Sweet Bay
Melbourne, FL 32930
321-752-7211
Seafarer 34 - *Trident III*

Member's Classifieds

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Cruisair carry on air conditioner. \$250.00 or best offer. Interested? Call Joe or Karen Coleman at 773-3265 or 223-6871.

Place your sailing classified ad here...
Just contact the Newsletter Editor or send an e-mail to editor@ecsasail.com



SECRETARY'S REPORT

By

Phyllis Paradies

EAST COAST SAILING ASSOCIATION
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
February 9, 2005

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. by Commodore Dave Merchberger. Dave introduced the new Board Vice Commodore - Joe Luthman, Rear Commodore - Joe Coleman, Secretary - Phyllis Paradies (Donna Oyer substituting for Phyllis for this meeting), Treasurer - Tom Schrader (absent due to work) and the elected Governors - Wes Whitley, Chip Worster, and Sherry Beckett.

Next, Dave introduced the Fleet Captains for the year, Ron Vanderveer - Cruising, Jim Yates - River Racing, Sherry Beckett - Women's Racing. Also introduced were Jim Miller - Rating Chairman, Brenda Merchberger - Newsletter Editor, Membership Chairman, and Hospitality Coordinator. Vice Commodore, Joe Luthman, will be doing Programs and Advertising. Joe could use some help with the advertising and if anyone can help he would appreciate it.

Dave welcomed all guests present and first time attending new members. He thanked John Lynn for bringing in the most new members this year.

OFFICER & COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept into membership the following applications: Gerald and Kelly Butz, Gregg and Diana Billman, John and Susan Ashmore, and Jim and Mary-Ann Edwards. Dave welcomed them into membership with ECSA.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the Secretary's minutes of the January General Meeting as published in the February Foot, Tack and Clew (FT&C).

A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the January Treasurer's report as published in the February FT&C.

It was brought up at the January Board of Governor's meeting that the Satellite Beach Recreation Department was in need of an LCD projector to educate the public about environmental and safety issues, etc. The Board voted to donate \$100.00

toward the fund and has received a letter of thanks from them.

On Monday, the 28th of February, Mitch Needleman, State Representative, will be at the Melbourne Yacht Club to take questions and discuss the situation with the marinas in the area and the live aboard situation. This would be a good opportunity for us to discuss anything that concerns us about boating in the area. The event begins 6:30 p.m. with coffee and the discussion will begin at 7 p.m.

Web Site – Dave added a 2005 calendar to the website, accessible from the left side of the home page. There is also a new photo gallery.

Vice Commodore - Joe Luthman

Joe asked members to sign up to bring refreshments one month of the year. Joe said we are still in need of a publicity chairman and an advertising person. He said one program this year would be a hands-on type program on various subjects using some of our club members and others.

Rear Commodore - Joe Coleman

Racing

Sherry gave a run down of the River Races, in Jim Yates' absence, and also an update on Women's Races. She said Jim held sign-ups for the Spring river racing series with 10 boats signed up so far. The first race of the Women's Series was scheduled a couple of weeks ago; however with 25 knots winds, they cancelled the race. The next race is February 27th.

Cruising

Ron Vanderveer said we can go by the calendar on the website for the cruising schedule, but there are a few changes that need to be made.

????Feb. 19 - Miami Boat Show Bus Trip- this is full.

????Feb. 26 - 27 - Cocoa Village Mardi Gras - need tickets for this, no limit. The Merchberger's are hosting.

????March 19 - 20 - St. Patrick's Day Cruise to Melbourne Harbor. Maurice Rieff hosting. Sherry obtained permission for ECSA to use the Melbourne Yacht Club dinghy docks.

????April 16 - 17 is an open weekend right now, possibly a cruise to Boy Scout Island..

????May 28 - 30 - Sebastian Inlet Cruise. We'll sail straight down there this year bypassing Marker 21 for the first night. Kay Sparrow is hosting and has reserved a pavilion for two nights.

????June 11 - 12 - Captain Katanna's is still not open, so this is questionable.

????July 4th Cruise - July 2- 4 to Melbourne Harbor.

(Continued on page 6)

Secretary's Report continued

(Continued from page 5)

July 4th is a Monday, so the fireworks will be on a Monday night. A host is needed for this cruise.

?????July 16 - 17 - Cruise to Yellow Dog Café - hosted by Joanne and Don Theriault

?????Aug. 13 -14 - Conchy Joe's Cruise- hosted by Joe and Karen Coleman

?????Oct. 15 - 16 - Marker 21 Fish Fry Cruise - Charlie and Karen Mann and Ron and Pam Vanderveer co-hosting.

Ron is working on getting the racing and cruising activities to overlap, so it's not so exclusive. A cruise to St Augustine this year is questionable. Ron is also working on getting some aerial photos of our boats on one of the cruises, possibly the Sebastian Inlet Cruise.

Bahamas Cruising- Gil Paradies has a sign up sheet for anyone interested in going to the Bahamas this April or May. Or, you can call or E-mail him.

The Frostbite Cruise was last weekend. There were 14 boats and 55 people. The weather was good, and they had a lot of fun. Joe Coleman thanked all who helped put it together.

Brenda said the January Progressive Dinner Cruise was fun and 70 people attended. Little Jacob won the first prize in the Poker Rally and spent his money at Toy's R Us. Brianna Luthman won second prize. A few brave souls anchored out at Lake Shepherd and the highlight of the evening was a 4 a.m. anchoring party. Thanks to hosts of the various courses: Merchbergers, Joanne Jacobs, Whitley's, and the Mann's.

Cocoa Village Mardi Gras Cruise Feb. 26 - 27 – Brenda provided the details of the upcoming February cruise.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Bob White said the Seven Seas Cruising Association has a campaign on for new members. This is an organization that has

people who sail all around the world. Their annual meeting is in Nov. at the Eau Gallie Civic Center and ECSA will be helping them this year.

The new directories for 2005 are available at tonight's meeting. Brenda asked members present to take one for an absent neighbor or friend to help reduce postage costs. Dave produced the directory and the club passed on their thanks for his efforts.

Chip Worster brought up the question of non-support of the private marinas. Gil Paradies said he attended the first meeting at Cocoa Village that had both local people and state representatives present. This meeting was overwhelmingly opposed to the Whitley Marina going private. Frank McTernan said that the state recommended that they not go private. Part of the bill about the marinas also has to do with loosening up restrictions for cities to build more marinas if these marinas do go private. Mr. Needleman will probably discuss this on Feb. 28. at MYC. Dave said he would try to be there to speak on behalf of our club.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m. followed by a program by Mike Hill from Cruising Outfitters, on anchoring and ground tackle.

Respectively submitted,

Phyllis Paradies, Secretary

Upcoming Cruise...

St. Patty's Weekend Celebration

On March 19th, please join us to celebrate St. Patrick's Day in downtown Melbourne. Anchor east of the Front Street Park—dinghy in to the Melbourne Yacht Club. We will gather to watch the afternoon parade and then enjoy the festivities that the event has to offer—Irish songs, some of the finest corned beef and cabbage you have ever tasted and dancing ladies! We'll rendezvous at Front Street park for a potluck breakfast at 0800 the following morning. Contact Maurice Rieff at 321-733-0402 or Dave Merchberger at 321-917-3719 (cell) for additional information.





CRUISE QUARTERS

Frostbite Cruise by Joseph Coleman

The *frostbite* cruise to Ballard Park turned out to be another oxymoron. In Florida, frostbite and cruise don't go together. It was another great weather weekend and a nice return to a favorite anchorage. Thirteen boats made the cruise with five stuck in the mud and the rest anchored on the outside. We ended up with a total of 56 men, women and children attending. It is always nice to see more children attending our cruises. It keeps Kay Sparrow on his best behavior. All that arrived enjoyed a sunny warm afternoon with hors d'oeuvres, refreshments and camaraderie. After an enjoyable dinner, we all sat around the tables swapping sea stories and, in some cases, just plain lies. The winds were light from the east and north during the day and evening, but switched to the southwest by Sunday morning. Those of us stuck in the mud found ourselves a bit closer to our neighbors than when we went to sleep. Simon Koumjian slid a bit closer to Kay Sparrow's boat. Joe Luthman felt left out so he swung close to Simon to see what he and Kay were up to. There were plenty of fenders out and lines tied to the trees, which kept everyone safe and protected. After our potluck breakfast on Sunday morning we went to the basin to watch the untangling begin. After a few hectic moments, we were safely off and on our way back home.

Arriving by boat were Joe Coleman and Josh Savage aboard Alibi, Bill and Carla Jones on Starbird, John and Susan Lynn on Tuit, Wanda, Joe and Briana Luthman on Playtime, Kay and Jacob Sparrow on K's Fantasy, Simon Koumjian on Ginny II, Dave and Brenda Merchberger on Thirsty Whale, Bob White on Carina, Chip and Louise Worster on Chip-Ahoy, Johan Neve on Vida's Figment, Don and Joanne Theriault on Impulse, Lisa and Dan Gemmill by dinghy, and Maurice Rieff and Johnathan Frakes by powerboat. Arriving by car were Ruth and Heie Simonsen, Barbara Sparrow, George and Emalyn Utting, Carey and Allison Savage, Bud and Helen Dolber, Gerhard Pietsch, RL and CJ Johnson with Lisa and Lili D'Arpa, Deanne Hansen and Charlie Millsaps, Joyce and Bill Clautice, Linda Dawson, Don and Rhoda Bosley, John and Loretta Schnitzius, Chaeli and Chase and Danielle Norwood, and Jim and Donna Oyer with Hartley.

5th Annual—Miami Boat Show Bus Trip by Brenda Merchberger

Although this year's annual trek to South Florida for the Miami Boat Show started out with a bang (or should I say the sound of splintering wood), it was overall a successful trip. The first bus pick-up was at 6 a.m. for those central Brevard attendees and 6:30 a.m. for those of us in south Brevard. The bus driver turned too sharply onto US 1 to avoid an oncoming car and slid along a wooden power pole, resulting in minor damage to the pole and bus. So, onward to Miami we went, enjoying breakfast and beverages on the trip down. When we arrived, the group scattered enjoying the various facets of the show. We were picked up at 5:30 p.m. at the Sail Expo location for our trip home after many enjoyed dinner at the various restaurants in the Bayside Mall.

Those ECSA'rs enjoying the day were: Sherry Beckett, Vicki Boukalis, Joe & Karen Coleman, Clyde & Judy Crouch, Dan & Lisa Gemmil, Elizabeth Hall, Ed & Jackie Harrison, Eric Horton, Doug Huffman, Bill & Carla Jones, Simon Koumjian, Don & Dorothy Lea, Joe & Wanda Luthman, Frank McTernan, Dave & Brenda Merchberger, Chuck & Myrtle Meyer, Hasty Miller, Johan & Dee Neve, Chuck Noles, Randy & Donna Ostrander, Jim & Donna Oyer, Gil Paradies, George & Terry Schorn, Kay & Jacob Sparrow, Charlie Stuart, George & Emalyn Utting, Wes & Sandy Whitley, and Chip & Louise Worster.

I would like to especially thank those that helped Dave and I serve the refreshments along the way, including Sandy Whitley, Dee Neve, and our newest bus stewardess, aka Roxy – Joe Coleman. Bill Jones, a virgin bus trip attendee, also pitched in to help collect garbage. Thanks again to all that helped make this trip another great event.

P.S. A special note to Kay Sparrow – they looked for hours but just could not find Jacob's toy!

BAHAMAS BASH....

Several members have indicated an interest in making a combined effort Bahamas cruise. If anyone else is interested please, be sure to sign up at the next meeting or call Gil at 779-9816. Based on the response and interest there will be a planning trip scheduled at the Paradies' house for those who want to join the Big Bahamas Bash (BBB).

Racing the Whale

By Ron Vanderveer

Say what you will about our intrepid ECSA commodore, but you can never accuse Dave Merchberger of being “all talk.” After discussing amongst the board members and fleet captains our desire to try and get the ECSA racers and cruisers to “do more stuff together,” Dave Merchberger put his boat where his mouth was and signed up the Island Packet 35 for the Spring Race series. Dave then proceeded to coerce Joe Luthman, myself, and Chris Forte into crewing for him during the series. Full speed ahead, damn the torpedoes!

So we show up at Dave’s house on Saturday morning, and Brenda has already stocked the boat’s refrigerator with sandwiches, chips, and drinks. Brenda is not joining us in our foray into racing, but doesn’t seem too awfully distraught about the prospect of getting a Saturday afternoon to herself. Cody, the dog, wants to go, but alas, he is not allowed. It’s chilly but sunny, a very pretty day overall. The wind is blowing pretty good out of the north, and we’re kind of stoked that it might be a real barn-burner out there.

Dave has “prepared” the boat by taking the dinghy off of the davits, even though he leaves the dinghy’s engine on the stern pulpit. His explanation: the engine is too heavy to remove! But Dave covers himself by complaining that his sails are a bit raggedy, and may not give us our best performance. Never mind the 100 lb Honda 4-stroke hanging off the back, and the 50 lb of food in the fridge! The sails are shot! This is definitely not hard-core racing. So off we go down the canal and through Mather’s to the Dragon point race area. This is gonna be fun.

We are quickly assigned positions on the crew. Mine is in the back next to Dave with two cushions behind me so I can stretch out my legs, Chris takes the port cockpit seat and a single seat cushion, and Joe the starboard with no cushions at all. Oh, and we figured out who should do what when we’re tacking too. My duty ends up being “furler”. Because Thirsty Whale has a cutter rig, the inside stay can be a problem for the big jib to get around when tacking. So my job was to furl the big jib almost all the way in as we begin the tack, and let it unfurl as we finish the tack. This will keep it from fouling on the staysail rigging. After a couple of practice runs,

we’re ready to race!

The first start is a bit late in going off, which is good because we were a little bit late getting to the race course due to the heavily fouled prop on Thirsty Whale that prevented Dave from “putting the hammer down” coming up the Banana River. But as it turns out, being late is going to be the rule for the day. The wind dies down, and the big ole Island Packet is not exactly tearing it up. Dave mentions that his goal is simple: get a couple of real cruising boats out to do a race series, just for fun. No pressure, no crazy dreams of winning anything. Just get the racers and cruisers to hang out with each other a bit more.

True to our low impact goals, Dave blows the first start and we just cross the starting line as the Melges are already tacking around the first mark. No worries, we have a refrigerator on board! It’s time for a sandwich and a soda. No beer or rum yet though, Captain’s rules. The wind is fluky, and as we near the first windward mark, we are alone on the course, in dead last. As we get closer to Merritt Island, what little wind there dies down even more. Then, as we round the mark, we nudge it a bit. I am looking around, not a boat in sight, the Melges have actually finished the race as far as we can tell, and I figure we just say “Oh well” and move on. But our honorable Commodore and Captain will have none of it. We hit the mark, and in the rule book that’s a round-the-mark penalty. So, we tack around the barnacle-encrusted buoy to pay our penalty, and 20 minutes later we head down wind to the next mark! After a couple more roundings and even less wind, the race committee asks if we will just bag it, so they can start the next race. We agree, and abandon the first race in third place. Sea Turtle and Chasing Rainbows are in our cruising class, but there’s no contest: in this wind, we are not gonna beat them unless they sink!

For the second race, Dave decides to up the ante a bit at the start, and with two minutes to go we find ourselves right in the middle of about 20 small and large boats going in all directions and yelling at each other to get out of the way. If you have never been in the thick of a racing start, you gotta try it! It’s quite a rush, and I admired Dave for even being willing to get in there with his beloved Island Packet. I think he just wanted

(Continued on page 9)



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his crew to have some fun so we would come back next month. And we did indeed have some fun!

In fact, during the craziness at the start we realized that we actually had a huge advantage over the other boats. We couldn't tack as quickly, or sail as close to the wind as they could, but at the start of a race there's another important consideration: right of way. If you can block another boat from getting to the starting line, you can gain a significant advantage over them. Of course there are rules in racing about who can block whom, and who has to give way, and in what situations. But we realized that at 22,000 lbs displacement and with two 100 lb anchors hanging off the huge bowsprit, we always had the right of way! Instead of yelling "starboard" or "right of way" we started yelling "22 K, 22 K." That became our way of reminding the other flimsy and fast racing boats that we could crush them like an aluminum can if they didn't get out of the way!

With our new found confidence, Dave had a much better second start, and we had a lot more fun alternately dodging and preparing to ram the other boats. Unfortunately, by the time we rounded the first mark, we were again in dead last. So we tacked around the mark and broke out the crackers and cheese. I bet they didn't do that on Sea Turtle! The wind let us down again, and although we did finally finish the race, the only boats out there when we crossed the line were us and the poor guys on the race committee boat, who were by this time I'm sure, very cold and tired. I honor them for sticking it out and letting us actually finish that race, even if it was twilight when we finally crossed the line.

- So as we headed back home and had a chance to reflect on the day's events, we came to a few conclusions.
- 1) Cruising boats will never beat racing boats in a race unless they sink them at the start.
 - 2) Racers have a lot of fun during the start.
 - 3) Any sailboat flying a spinnaker is a beautiful sight.
 - 4) We can't wait to try it again next month!



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ECSA NEWSLETTER AD RATES

SIZE	1MO	3MOS	6MOS	12MOS
1/8 page	10.00	28.50	54.00	90.00
1/4 page	18.00	51.00	90.00	144.00
1/2 page	30.00	84.00	144.00	228.00
Full page	50.00	135.00	240.00	360.00

ECSA 2005 Race & Cruise Schedule

Date	Event	Contact
Mar 19 - 20	St. Patty's Day Cruise to Downtown Melbourne	Host Needed
Mar 19/20	Spring River Race #2/Spring Women's #3	Yates/Beckett
Apr 9/10	Spring River Race #3/Spring Women's #4	Yates/Beckett
Apr 15 -16	Boy Scout Island Cruise	Jones
May 22	Spring Women's Race #5	Beckett
May 28 -30	Sebastian Inlet Memorial Weekend Cruise	Sparrow

Check out <http://www.sail-race.com/ecsa> for the most up-to-date information on the ECSA race schedule



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