



THE LIGHT LAGUNA MADRE YACHT CLUB

September 2008



Hurricane Season Is Here (Still)²

Quite honestly, this is getting old. Ike just hit Houston and there is another storm forming off of Cuba and Florida. I feel terribly sorry for the poor people of the islands surrounding that area of the world and our sailing friends from the Keys in Florida. Hurricane tracks over the last two months show the area destroyed by hit after hit of Category 2 and 3 storms.

I've seen dozens of photos on-line that show boats tossed about in their own slips with little to no regard for proper tie-off or pre-hurricane preparations. Take the time to check your vessel, the age of the lines and the overall security of the knots.

One other note - check the boats around you as well. Flying debris from the abandoned boat one slip down could quickly become part of your well secured beauty.

Seeing the Wind Brian Mikiten

I've been sitting on a pile of new electronics for my boat for almost a year. When I had purchased Due North, I knew that I needed to buy some new instrumentation. The wind speed indicator was old and questionable, the knot meter would turn on and off at times and the apparent wind indicator was stuck in a position about 45 degrees off the starboard bow. The biggest problem was the depth display - especially when I was getting out of the bay. The depth displayed was never correct and varied by one and twenty feet often based on speed.

I had spent months and months researching the different options for navionics and debating the age old question of less or more when it comes to electronics. Because I'm in a highly technical field, I knew I would tend towards the technically heavy side of things but I had also realized that over the years of sailing and not sailing that I had lost the ability to see the wind.



This inability became very obvious when sailing with a very seasoned captain who made fun of me for watching meters instead of the sea. It was after his third prodding that he pulled the instrument covers from their storage below and proceeded to cover the deck instruments that I realized how serious he was about his convictions.

I found myself luffing the sails, getting off course and generally not sailing well for the first 10 minutes of the exercise. I then remembered to watch the tell-tails, the surface of the waves for wind direction and changes from

puffs. One other thing happened - I paid more attention to the joy of sailing than to the technology, numbers and worries about getting maximum VMG, sail trim and speed. It was fun. I remembered the feeling I had when I first went sailing in a small boat and could feel the wind on my face and could sense the changes of the currents without thinking. It was truly wonderful.

In the end, I've decided to put on the navionics along with toys like a hand held computer on deck but my reliance on the equipment will change - it will be secondary and not primary. Which ever direction you choose, make sure that you don't forget the basics. Without power, we all need those skills in the end!



A few guidelines for selecting navionics

- 1) Survey your existing instruments. If the thru-hull sensors are still operational, consider staying with the same brand. This is especially true if you have a networked system. Installing new thru-hulls is an expensive proposition.
- 2) Consider your technical aptitude. Software based systems are difficult to learn even for the computer savvy.
- 3) Remember that the return on your instrument investment is often zero after three years. Most marine surveyors don't consider the equipment after this period.
- 4) Do not over buy for the boat. A common factor used for budgets is 5-10% of the boat value for older boats.
- 5) If your budget won't allow a full retrofit, consider starting at the top of the mast and working down.
- 6) Select equipment that has local support. Magazine ads are tempting but without local (or US based) support, you will be taking a tremendous risk.

Finally, have a plan that allows you to sail without power to the instruments. Learn to see the wind.



~ Fleet Captain's Report ~

September 2008

Sunset/Moonrise Cruise

On August 16th the sun set and the moon rose at the same time -- a perfect night for our traditional sunset/moonlight cruise. Unfortunately the weather was not too cooperative and we had quite a few clouds to block our view but we saw the sun for a few moments just before it set and the moon peaked through soon after. Two boats joined the cruise (*Wanda & Summerwind*) which were crewed by a total of four LMYC families. It was a pleasant evening despite the clouds.

Racing Season Starts

Get your boats ready, the fall racing series is about to start. This is always a pleasant time to be on the water so join us even if you are not a serious racer! It's a great chance to learn to sail your boat better.

First race will be a Gulf Race starting on Saturday, September 20th at 1330. Skippers meeting will be at 1030 Saturday morning at the club house. Last minute details will be discussed and we'll try to match those needing crew with members available to crew. This race usually lasts about 2-3 hours and takes us from Barracuda Cove out to the sea buoy and return.

Bay races will start on Sunday, September 21st at 1330. We will conduct 2 races around the buoys in west bay. Each race should be less than an hour long assuming normal winds. Again the skippers meeting will be at 1030 the morning of the race. Those looking to crew should attend and we'll try to find you a berth.

Trophies will be awarded to the winner of every race. Because they are so vital to our racing program, we also award a trophy to the committee boat for each day they serve.

Other races in the fall series will be conducted on the following dates (weather & hurricanes permitting):

Gulf Races	Oct 18 th Nov 15 th
Bay Races	Oct 19 th Nov 16 th

Each series will award a 1st and 2nd place trophy based on points accumulated during the series. A Club Champion trophy will be awarded to the sailor having the best total score in both the spring and fall series races. The Club Champion's name will also be placed on the Flagship perpetual plaque kept at the club house.

Committee Boats

Committee boats are vital for a successful racing program. They do a great service for the racers and for the club. While it is common to have a power boat as the committee boat, there is no reason why a sailboat cannot serve this vital function. It's not difficult and it's fun. You can help out the club while having a great day on the water. It's also a great opportunity to take some great pictures of the racers. Please, please consider acting as a committee boat for any one of the races. We always have an extremely difficult time finding a committee boat and any help you can give us will be greatly appreciated. Besides, serving as a committee boat allows you to accumulate a set of the coveted LMYC cocktail glasses -- we award one for each day you serve!

Please contact Jim Godfrey (956) 943-4718 if you can help us out with any of the races.

Arroyo Colorado Cruise and Dinner

Mark your calendars for our next Arroyo Colorado Cruise and Dinner. We'll sail/power up to the arroyo on October 25th and return on October 26th. Members not wanting to make the trip can meet us at the restaurant in Arroyo City. More details will follow in the October Light.



Please welcome Bill and Debbie Schwer to the Club. We hope to be seeing them out on the water and at the club socials and races.

You may want to add their names and information to your directory.

Bill and Debbie Schwer
P.O. Box 235
1109 Pompano
Port Isabel, TX 78578

Bill's Cell: 281-757-1863
Deb's Cell: 281-414-7275
debschwer@Huhes.net

Shallow Sport



**Calling All Members
Wishing to Hold Office!**

**Several positions are available
on the board for those who have
served in the past or wishing to
enjoy helping out at the club for
the first time. Please contact
any Flag Officer for information.**



2008 Flag Officers

- COMMODORE..... Wes Thom 956-233-7628
- VICE COMMODORE..... Rocky Poovey 956-943-1540
- REAR COMMODORE..... Brian Mikiten 210-863-5245
- SECRETARY..... JoAnne Lesieutre 956-761-3169
- TREASURER..... Tom Gossman 956-371-9299
- FLEET CAPTAIN..... Jim Godfrey 956-943-4718
- STEWARD..... Peggy Godfrey 956-943-6427
- FLEET SURGEON..... Bob Christenson 956-486-7360
- FLEET BARRISTER..... John Pinkerman 956-943-1082

Social announcements will now be made via email to ensure that they are timely. If you are not getting them, please contact Peggy.

Thanks to Jim for his regular contributions.
Brian Mikiten - Editor and Rear Commodore

For changes or comments email bmikiten@idworld.net

Port Isabel, Laguna Madre, Texas

September 2008

