



THE LIGHT



Why we Race

The Spring racing series is over in what will be remembered as one of the windiest Springs in years. To recap some of the highlights lets start with the Annual Dottie & Mac McMillian Race to Port Mansfield. The race took place on the last day of April with winds gusting in the 40 knot range. All 4 boats arrived in Port Mansfield within 30 minutes of each other in little more than 4 hours in a screaming off the wind reach. Able and Frank in their O'day 25 were the first to arrive in Mansfield and would have arrived much sooner had they not broached several times and gotten stuck in the mudd for 15 minutes. Chris sailed single handed in his Ericson 26' "Pocket Change" with a sandwich in one hand and a drink in the other, unconcerned about the 40 knot winds the rest of us were struggling with. Everyone moored up at El jeffe's and spent the rest of the afternoon and night on the patio eating and drinking with good music and great company. The next day Sunday May 1 had the wind howling once more out of the south and no one was looking forward to motoring with 40 knot winds right on the nose so everyone waited a day or two for the predicted North wind. Monday morning our Lucky Strike left Port Mansfield with light eastly winds, within 20 minutes we had strong winds on the stern and blasted back to the Island in a little over 4hrs.

The second and third Gulf & Bay races were dominated by Wes with his 27' cal "Paper Dragon". He missed the first race of the series as his boat was on the hard where he was making his boat super slick,

reducing drag below the water line. Now comes the lessons in "Why we Race". On the second gulf series we had ideal conditions with 15-20 kts out of the south-east. We had about 6 boats competing and 2 of those are supposedly faster (Lucky Strike and Ciclon) than Wes's Paper Dragon. At the start of the race Lucky Strike was well positioned and first across the line, as we began beating to the mark I could hear Paper Dragon close behind and slowly passed us up wind. You know that sinking feeling when you realize "this isn't going to work" Wes was faster and pointing higher, we



were doomed to finish behind him. The conditions were perfect for my boat and I couldn't understand how he finished ahead of us not even considering the handicap. Later I expressed those thoughts to Wes and he simply said, "when was the last time you cleaned below the water line?" Well I hadn't since I put her in the water almost 2 years ago. Shortly there after I put my mask and snorkel on and went for a look below the waterline at the Sea Ranch Marina with its lousy visibility. I was shocked at the build up of barnacles on my folding propeller which could not fold, the 3/4" shaft had grown to 1 1/2" and the bottom 12" of the keel was now an oyster reef. And I thought I just had a little slim that was maybe slowing me down a little.

The last race of the spring Gulf series was predicted to be strong southeast winds, which did not materialize. The Gulf race had very light winds with a big surf advisory. Most of the boats competing had a very difficult time just trying to get across the start line at the end of the jetties. I saw Wes's Paper Dragon slowly sail away to the northeast and attempted in vain to follow his course. I just couldn't do it, the sails just hung and it didn't seem to be the slightest breeze. Many of the boats were actually going backwards. Once again I said to Wes after being beaten with my clean bottom "how did you sail away in such light winds when no one else could?". Wes said he got all of his crew on the lee side to make his boat heel a little to help the sails get their proper shape. Another lesson! I don't think I would have ever figured that one out by myself, I wonder who told Wes.



Last race of the spring series was a Bay Race and the predicted 20-30 kts wind proved true. Only 3 boats showed up to race and Frank and Able's main sail was damaged on their O'Day 26. That left only 2 boats racing, Paper Dragon and Lucky Strike. I had the feeling I was getting a private lesson, what a deal Wes Thom and Fritz Correy teaching me for free! I must say it was an extremely exciting 2 races, both races were very close. Wes won both races but the first one we finished ahead of him but not winning when handicaps were added.

These two bay races involved strategy and racing rules something which I know nothing about but I think I'm gonna need more than one lesson. My wife Valerie had to be ordered below to stand on the companion way for excessive screaming during the second race as it was unnerving the crew. myself and Gene Haus. When we both tacked under the causeway we were less than 10 feet apart, about this time our main sheet line began to part, stretching to half its original diameter and balling up on the blocks so we couldn't sheet in. There wasn't much we could do except hope it didn't break completely and allow us to at least finish the race. We made it to the mark but were not as competitive as we had been and started to catch up with Paper Dragon once more on the downwind leg finishing about 5 seconds behind Wes. Later when I brought my damaged line to Wes to see if he had new line he remarked that he and his crew wondered what had happened to us on that last leg, smiling he said, proper maintenance. As we motored back to our slip after the race Gene remarked that anytime you can give Wes that close of a race you can feel you raced pretty well. I'm getting that feeling that the more I learn the less I know. And that's why we race!

Fleet Captain, Rick Ekstrom



A NEW BOAT JOINS THE FLEET

At long last "Boatless Bill" Rushfeldt is no longer boatless! He has purchased the beautiful "Southern Dream", a 1989 Catalina 42, out of Melbourne, Florida. The challenge was to bring the boat back to Port Isabel in one piece and with all her paint. For this Bill recruited Larry Zamponi, Jim & Aaron Godfrey as crew. Bill's brother Tom also joined us for the early part of the trip. The adventure began on Monday, May 2nd with a beautiful trip down the Indian River to Fort Pierce where we had to lay up for a couple of days for repairs. As luck would have it, both heads failed shortly after leaving Melbourne and Bill didn't think it wise to plan a gulf crossing depending only on a plastic bucket for the crew's necessary functions!

By Thursday we were on our way again heading for Palm Beach to pick up another passenger, Bill's cousin Paul, for the ride to Key West. After an evening in Palm Beach the intrepid crew, now numbering 6 people, left the Intercoastal and went into the Atlantic for a sail down toward Mimi. As luck would have it, another failure put us into an unplanned port - Fort Lauderdale. We were looking for a replacement part for the autopilot. West Marine thought they might have it but then they didn't. We were told the part was available in Key Largo so after a great dinner ashore we put to sea again. We sailed past Miami and into the Hawk Channel between the outer "reefs" and the coastline of the Keys. This channel protects west bound travelers from the ravages of the Gulf Stream currents but is not for the faint of heart at night without GPS. It's shallow and filled with obstacles harder than fiberglass. But with a good GPS and accurate waypoints the trip was not too arduous and we found ourselves anchored off Key Largo well before sunrise. After sunrise we entered the Key Largo canal system looking for the fuel dock and a place to tie up for awhile. Radio terms like approaching "Crash Corner" took on a whole new meaning after navigating those channels. I suspect that fiberglass repair is a booming business in Key Largo!

After picking up the almost right part for the Autopilot we set sail for Key West, another all night run, arriving just after sunrise. We spent the day and night at Sunset Marina provisioning the boat for the trip across the gulf. Here Tom and Paul jumped ship leaving four of us as crew. On Monday morning, May 9th we left this beautiful marina for our gulf crossing.



The Gulf was kind to us with reasonable seas and winds. About half way across the autopilot packed up for good and we were reduced to the tedium of manual steering for the rest of the trip. Except for minor mechanical problems and one exciting encounter with a freighter dead set on occupying the same spot on earth that we were occupying, the trip was uneventful yet incredibly satisfying (at least for me). It's hard to describe the

tranquility and beauty of the open ocean or the satisfaction of plotting your noon position and seeing your progress, or the feeling of being completely on your own in the middle of a very big ocean.

On Monday morning, May 16th the intrepid crew of Southern Dream made landfall and the voyage was over. 14 days out of Melbourne and 7 days out of Key West the new boat was home.

Jim Godfrey

TRAINING UPDATE

John Pinkerman's Galley at Sea training program conducted on May 7th was a great success and rewarded those who attended with delicious food prepared using sea going techniques. Galley safety was a prime element of John's course and some really good ideas were presented. The word from those who attended was it was well worth the Saturday morning spent in the Galley.

On Saturday, June 25th Larry Lewis and Jim Godfrey will present ideas on Emergency Tactics and what you should do to handle common emergencies which can occur while boating. The training program will start at 10:00 at the club house and the classroom part should be done by noon. In the afternoon those who are interested will have a chance to practice what they have learned on the water. It should be a fun Saturday. Mark your calendars and attend the Laguna Madre Yacht Club Emergency Tactics training program.

Stewards Corner

Our social will be a couple of days after the Race to The Border, so our theme will be South of the Border. I am having it catered so the full menu is not available yet; it won't be hot!

Great News – Port Isabel has a new marine store!

A couple of weeks ago a new store opened in Port Isabel – Anglers Marine Center at 121 Queen Isabella (Highway 100). The bright blue building across from NAPA is a very complete marine store with a product mix much like the much missed Boaters World of Brownsville. The store handles a wide variety of maintenance supplies, fishing equipment, and general boating supplies. If you don't see it on the shelves, they will be glad to order it for you. While it is not a West Marine, it sure is a big step up from what we had before. Give 'em a try. I think you will like what you see.

Anglers Marine Center
121 Queen Isabella
Port Isabel, TX 78578
Phone 956-433-5425

An Update from John Pinkerman

We arrived at 5.35 a.m. on Thursday, making the transit in under forty eight hours with the help of the engine for twelve due to negligible wind. Aaron, Bobby Acosta and I start the race at 4:10 p.m. Thanks to help from LMYC members we plan to do our best. Our starting flag is pink so I think that is a good omen!!

Last night I met an ASA class and instructor several slips away. They were finishing Bare Boat Chartering but had to motor sail all yesterday with the unfavorable winds. The fishing tournament is going on and big fish are out at sea trying to catch other fish. Wow, big boats and mucho dinero.

We are provisioned and looking fit. Our last minute wind and current strategy information will be provided by Jim Godfrey. We appreciate your support and thought/prayers for our safety and best finish. I really want to enjoy the SPI festivities.

Thanks,

John Pinkerman

Commodores Corner

What a whirlwind month this has been, with the accomplishments of the LMYC stacking up during the latter part of the month. The dedication of the City's Pompano Marina project that has been long in coming, a project dedicated to re-furbish the Port Isabel public marina to provide extensive docking facilities both for transient and local boats- large and small- sail and motor was the most attended event completed.

The marina was publicly declared "Open," by Mayor Joe Vega and city representatives after the majority of the group arrived and docked at the marina, aboard Captain Skip Maggard's Yacht, the Nancy G. followed by USCG, homeland security boats and other government vessels. This is a project that many-many LMYC members, behind the scene, and the Boating and Water Ways Committee Officers have been working with the city on for quite a while. Jim Godfrey has been involved in the project for a long time, as liaison represented the LMYC official group along with Peggy Godfrey, Skip and Nancy Maggard and several other members. Thanks to all of them.

Topping the scale was the official completion of the dredging project opening, by the Mayor, the waterway to the Fingers boaters and re-establishing the "Safe Haven," for large vessels, that has been un-accessible by large vessels and security vessels, seeking refuge during storms - just two more events that with the involvement and interest of the LMYC members has resulted in organized accomplishments. All of you who have worked hard along with the City making these happen should feel proud of the results.

Just example's of how, when we the LMYC members step forward can ensure the proper completion of well planned projects by becoming involved. Thank you to all who have made these long needed and long awaited projects to be completed.

The Race to the Border (RTTB) is ongoing as I write this memo. Our Race to the Border group made up of many volunteers, is busy on the docks and the finish line for the race, right now--assisting the organizers from Galveston in their over two hundred

mile Gulf race. Although this year the racing vessels have been slow arriving due to the low winds. However the boats have been arriving every hour through the night with very tired but excited crews. All of them organized and tributes to their clubs as they were met by our volunteers led by Skip Maggard and his team at the South Point docking facility and Chris Hughston and his team at the finish line. The Skippers and crews were then escorted to the LMYC for a welcoming party set up by our steward Peggy Godfrey and Kathy Rodgers of the RTTB advance/logistics team. At mid-night last night we still had 8 boats who were still plugging along, expected to arrive thru-out the day. A large J-Boat not only sailed the whole way, as many resorted to motoring, but it touched based at the Jetties and started the sail back to Galveston. Compliments to our two Skippers and their LMYC crews. Mike Myers and John Pinkerman of the Sweet Pea and Sea Gal who were part of the race. We all watched Mike as he and his crew, looking tired but excited finished and headed for the Sweet Pea's slip.

John and the Sea Gal experienced some engine problem and had to drop in at Freeport, however John and crew in true LMYC spirit, sped overland by vehicle and were happy and smiling big at the welcome reception. John's comment to me was, "wait until the next one."

The RTTB group will be hosted by the City of Port Isabel at a brunch and other activities during the rest of their stay. As you can see the operational planning and culmination of all these activities, just do not happen. It is through a combined serious effort from the LMYC Flag Officers and all members in some way. Working as a team and for the combined interest's - these great accomplishments will continue. Thank you to all and God Bless you...

Col Bill Maples
Commodore

For changes or comments email bmikiten@idworld.net

Your 2011 Flag Officers

Commodore

Col. Wm. "Bill" Maples
H 956 421 3168 C 979 244 3144

Vice Commodore

Robert "Bob" Fisher C 956 299 1259

Rear Commodore

Brian Mikiten C 210 863 5245

Steward

Peggy Godfrey C 956-832-3930

Fleet Captain

Rick Ekstrom C 956 535 2224

Treasurer

Chris Hughston C 956 454 4443

Secretary

Marylin Myers C 956-533-4551

Barrister

Bill Schwer C 713 882 0976

Fleet Surgeon

Wes Thom C 956 778 7628

Membership information

membership@lagunamadreyachtclub.org

Port Isabel, Laguna Madre, Texas

June 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12:02 AM -0.4 9:52 AM 1.5	12:47 AM -0.3 10:01 AM 1.4	1:34 AM -0.1 10:04 AM 1.2	2:21 AM 0.2 5:18 PM 0.6 10:05 AM 1.1 9:42 PM 0.7	3:15 AM 0.5 5:32 PM 0.3 10:05 AM 1.1	4:46 AM 0.9 9:57 AM 1.1 4:31 AM 0.8 6:08 PM -0.0	5:50 AM 1.2 9:25 AM 1.1 6:52 PM -0.3
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
4:58 AM 1.4 7:39 PM -0.5	5:51 AM 1.6 8:28 PM -0.7	6:44 AM 1.6 9:17 PM -0.7	7:33 AM 1.6 10:06 PM -0.7	8:20 AM 1.6 10:51 PM -0.6	9:01 AM 1.5 11:36 PM -0.5	9:28 AM 1.4
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
12:19 AM -0.3 9:41 AM 1.2	12:58 AM -0.1 9:38 AM 1.1	1:37 AM 0.1 9:35 AM 1.0	2:14 AM 0.3 4:57 PM 0.5 9:32 AM 1.0 10:21 PM 0.6	2:50 AM 0.5 5:15 PM 0.3 9:32 AM 1.0 10:21 PM 0.6	3:20 AM 0.8 5:45 PM 0.1 9:28 AM 0.9 4:13 AM 0.9	3:50 AM 0.9 6:23 PM -0.0 4:13 AM 0.9 9:04 AM 1.0
26	27	28	29	30		
4:47 AM 1.1 7:02 PM -0.2	5:26 AM 1.2 7:43 PM -0.3	6:07 AM 1.3 8:24 PM -0.5	6:48 AM 1.4 9:07 PM -0.5	7:27 AM 1.4 9:48 PM -0.6		