



GREETINGS FROM THE PREZ



Happy Spring! Happy Passover and Easter to those celebrating. It wasn't until I moved to Virginia for grad school that I truly experienced what Spring can be. I remember coming back from Spring Break in March and flowers were blooming – in March! While the lows have dipped below the freezing mark the last few nights, we are officially two weeks into Spring with only eight short weeks until first gun - and the much anticipated RTTC Week 1!

While we no longer host the Registration Party, Fleet 5 registration is officially open. You may register by clicking the following link: [Fleet 5 registration](#) or going go under Memberships on the main Regattaman page. MRA registration is not open yet, but we expect it will be soon, so keep your eyes open for an email about that and while you are at it, you might as well go ahead and register for Nationals as well: [2021 Rhodes Nationals registration](#). The Nationals regatta committee is back in planning mode and really looking forward to putting on a great event for all of us and several out-of-town boats who have already reached out about their plans to come join in on the fun.

Having raced only one weekend last summer I know that I am really looking forward to getting back out there. I thought a good way to get us all back in the racing mindset would be to have some of our top sailors walk us around the racecourse. A good place to start, pun intended, would be with **Evan Cooke** and **Joe Fava's** article on starting strategies [It's All About the Start](#) on page 5 of April 2016 newsletter. On page 5 of this newsletter you can find **Nat Taylor's** article on How to Sail a Great First Beat. More on the rest of the racecourse coming in May. Please do check out the article **Larry Ehrhardt** wrote for us reviewing some of the rules changes in the 2021-2024 Racing Rules of Sailing as well as an update from **Jocelyn Cook** on the Marblehead Community Boating Center. Last but certainly not least, you can find **Christina Pandapas's** Fleet Profile of our National Class Secretary and Nationals Committee Social Chair **Timmy Dittrich**.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Spring Clinic – May 6th Save the date for this one! Fleet 5 will host a discussion with **Jud Smith and Tomas Hornos** on how to win a regatta. The discussion will be moderated by **Kim Pandapas**. The event will run from **7-8:30pm** via zoom. A link will be sent out

Measurement Days – With Nationals coming we have tentatively scheduled two measurement days: *May 22nd-23rd* and another date TBD

Twilights Commence – *May 27th* The Twilight Series will start on May 27th, the Thursday before Memorial Day.

Spring Series – *May 29th-30th* Spring Series will kick off on the Saturday & Sunday of Memorial Day weekend.

East Coasts - *June 4th-6th* At Manchester Sailing Association. Mark your calendars for this great local event.

Marblehead NOODs – *July 22nd-25th* Hosted by EYC.

Nationals – *August 18th-20th* at CYC.

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SHORT TACKS

Measurement Days

While we are pretty close to all being eligible for the Covid-19 vaccine, we are not there yet. For the time being we are going to put the tentatively planned April 23-24th dates on hold and plan for measurement on May 22-23rd with another date TBD. If you have had work done and need to be measured, please reach out to Stefan at sjthibodeaux@gmail.com and let him know and set up a time.

Spring Clinic

How Do You Win the Big One?

Everyone wins a race now and then, and a few of us are lucky enough to occasionally win the day. But winning regattas is a whole different animal. Putting together 3-4 days of consistently top five finishes, which is usually what it takes, requires preparation, planning, practice, solid execution, good decision-making and importantly, having your head screwed on straight. This year's speakers are uniquely qualified to help us with that. Between them, **Jud Smith** and **Tomas Hornos** have won a bunch of Worlds, a gaggle of nationals and countless regionals, not to mention several Race Weeks (and both have won Rhodes 19 Nationals). Our 2021 season will include East Coasts in Manchester and both Race Week and Nationals in Marblehead, so you'll definitely want to make time for this. Details are below. More to come.

Date: Thursday May 6th

Time: 7-8:30PM

Forum: Zoom

Speakers: Jud Smith & Tomas Hornos

Moderator: Kim Pandapas

FLEET 5 TRIVIA

Last month we asked "How many Fleet 5 Members have been Commodores at one of the local clubs?"



Not surprisingly, it's quite a few.

Annie Aspinall - BYC

Ken Adam - CYC

Timmy Dittrich - CYC

Kent Hallawell - CYC

John Fisher - CYC

Peter Frisch – current EYC Vice Commodore

Jim Raisides – current CYC Vice Commodore

Jay Watt – current BYC Rear Commodore

We think this is the complete list, apologies to anyone we may have missed.



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www.r19fleet5.org / www.rhodes19.org / www.facebook.com/r19fleet5

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Marblehead Community Boating Center Update

by Jocelyn Cook



James and I wanted to provide a quick update as we continue to refine and move forward the floated idea of a Community Boating Center in Marblehead.

In early February, we closed a survey that collected feedback for 2 weeks on the idea of a public center and proposed offerings. In the end, over 600 people participated and the average participation time was 9 minutes, which demonstrates high user engagement.

In the middle of February James and I met with Gary Gregory, chair of the Harbor and Waters Board, to review the submitted proposal (attached) and gather his personal feedback for next steps.

In short:

- We have now been asked to gather data for what capital improvements are needed to the property and define what the center would take on and contribute toward
- Uncertainty remains around the need / desire for such a proposed space and curiosity as to whether or not the center could scale and reach the modest full subscription proposed
- The stage was set that at best case, the proposed center could see buds of life next summer or take as long as several years, if even approved
- The Town of MHD (Town Administrator, planner, board of selectmen) are putting together a working group to develop a new "harbor plan" and the vision for a center as proposed may "fit nicely" in to that plan, but what isn't clear is where HWB approval for use of Parker's and Town needs/wants for overall harbor goals collide
- We were invited to the Disability Commission Committee call last month and again recently to hear about the work they are doing town wide with regard to access and brainstorm ways, Parker's, if revitalized can be enhanced to support access for all and collaborate ways the center, if created, can contribute toward that end

Next steps:

- James and I will be meeting again with the Harbormaster to work on the requested task of identifying capital outlays and what the proposed center would be responsible for to build in to the financials to then assess financial viability
- Work with the HWB to better understand next steps around the RFP process in order to identify at what point, if any, James and I move forward with the formal legal creation of an entity which then responds to an RFP to support the seasonal use proposed in the attached
- With this, I have connected with Ralph Anderson at Marblehead Trading and have received the thumbs up once again to coordinate dry sailing for the 13 boats (3, R19 - 1, J70 - 4, Vipers - 5, 2.4meters) out of Trading and have heard that the public Park and Rec storage options for paddlers remains full and there are no known options

More updates as we have them. Best regards and well wishes – Jocelyn



Changes to the 2021 – 2024 Rules of Sailing and a Thought on Room to Tack

by Larry Ehrhardt

*Always at the top of the pack in both the Rhodes and Tech Dinghy Fleets, Social Chair **Larry Ehrhardt** explains some updates to the 2021-2024 Racing Rules of Sailing. While not necessarily one of the most interesting topics, certainly an important one.*



The Racing Rules of Sailing receive an update and edit every four years to help clarify situations and make the rules easier to understand. For this cycle (2021 – 2024) there are only a few small changes that might impact the way we race Rhodes

19s here in Marblehead. There was one change that allows different methods to hail room to tack that got me looking at that rule and that it was worth a short discussion on the tactics around that rule that we often see.

First here are the rule changes that we should be aware of:

- Starting and finishing is now determined when the **HULL** of your boat crosses the line – not a spinnaker or other piece of equipment. This has no impact on our typical starts but, could change your strategy as you approach a downwind finish in a breeze when it is possible to float the spinnaker out in front of the boat. There is now no advantage to that move. Note well that spinnakers and other boat parts are still used to determine overlap at marks and obstructions.
- A change we fortunately have not had to deal with in our fleet, is that now a disqualification for breaking Rule 2 (Fair Sailing) cannot be discarded (DNE). Let's keep it that way!
- The Race Committee now has a new flag (the V flag which has a red X on a white background) which signals that all competitors should monitor the VHF communication channel for safety instructions. This seems like a great idea and continues the move towards more communication between the race committee and the competitors.

In addition to these three changes, there are quite a few numbering updates and small wording adjustments for clarity. The other change that caught my eye was the way boats may be able to request room to tack (in situations like the America's Cup where boats are going 40 plus knots – not our worry!) without having to make a verbal hail which got me thinking about a very typical situation we see all the time.

Very often there will be two boats near the port lay line converging with a starboard tack boat slightly above its lay line (the safe and smart place to be when R19 tacks are so expensive). The port tacked leeward boat can request "Room to Tack" - one of the two required and specifically worded hails in the rules - which obligates the windward boat to respond by tacking or returning the hail with "You Tack" and then staying clear by ducking. In most situations on 2435, we usually respond by tacking but recalling the expense of tacks the power of footing, perhaps a "You Tack" response would be better. By ducking the tacking and starboard tack boat, we might be able to make a better tack and avoid the dreaded high mode after a rushed tack and sail around a clump of boats at the weather mark.

The "You Tack" response is even more important when the above scenario is in the three boat length zone as the two tacking boats will probably foul the starboard boat by forcing them above close hauled. We all know in our hearts we should never be in that situation in the first place (e.g., tacking in the circle), but it happens!

In any case, really looking forward to testing the above scenario in our next crowded top of the beat situation. See you soon!



How to sail a great first beat

by Nat Taylor

Easily recognizable on the racecourse donning his **Fred Taylor Patriots** jersey, National Champion **Nat Taylor**, of the father-son team **Team Taylor**, shares his thoughts on how to sail a great first beat.



To sail a great first beat, it helps to think about what makes a terrible first beat. If you are finding out which side of the course is better, doing boat speed tuning, sailing in bad air, or took a huge risk and lost, then you are having a terrible first beat. The good news is you can prevent all three of those problems with preparation.

We use several tools for reading the course. The first three we accomplish before leaving the dock: looking up the tides, looking up the hourly weather prior and having a printed chart of the course with current arrows drawn on it. Once we're out on the course, we observe the current by watching a sponge move relative to lobster pots at several points on the course. At the same time, we watch how bow up/down, how tipped over and how hobby-horse the other boats are while they're tuning up on their respective parts of the course. We also try to time the shifts as we tune up. We compile all these data points in our plan, which (of course) tries to include:

1. Pick the side with more velocity (based on tippiness/hobby-horse-ness observations)
2. Pick the side with favorable current (based on lobster pot / chart observations & high/low tide times)
3. Sail the lifted tack first (based on the forecast, bow/up down and timing observations)

We always try to tune up with a partner and if we can't officially get a partner we just take the transom of someone who is tuning up and tack onto their hip. When we tune up, we're mostly testing grooves. Can we hang with them? Can we find a pinching mode? Can we find a low fast mode? As we do this, we're: moving the jib leads; playing with the jib haly fine tune; playing with backstay; playing with the outflaker. If we're way out of touch, we might adjust our lower shroud

tension. Then, we make sure to repeat on the next tack in case there exists asymmetry from the wave or current direction, necessitating a different lead position or something. We try to pay attention to the timing of shifts and puffs too, and in rare moments of inspiration write down the heads and timings with a grease pencil.

From all that we have a plan, and the final part of that plan is deciding beforehand what to do if s%*t goes bad. (Hopefully you just win the start and get the first shift.) If the plan is to go left at all costs, we have to coach ourselves ahead of time that we will live in bad air for a while. But if the plan is only to prefer the left, then we put a threshold on how long we'll live in bad air and how far we'll sail on port after bailing before tacking back to starboard. This is crucially important because sailing in bad air in Rhodes 19 is a death wish, but so is getting bounced around trying to find clear air (e.g. bailing and then being too anxious to get back onto starboard.) The gains that can be made by finding a clear escape lane out of a bad start are astonishing, [as illustrated in these photos](#).

Hopefully then, with all the preparation, you can sail your first beat in a relaxed mode that facilitates communication, which is the final step. If things go badly without a plan in place, then Team Taylor clams up and things go from bad to worse, because we thrive on communication. I need to hear things like: "even with Evan," "Hooks is going like a rocket," "good speed on the boat to leeward," "right side boats look hobby-horse," "puff coming in 30 seconds." That information creates a feedback loop with the plan. Maybe we'll switch into the low-fast groove we found while tuning-- or vice-a-versa into pinch mode, which depends on good communication too: "let's rumble" or "blade it up." Or maybe we'll foot off to create just enough space to tack and bail since our plan was only to favor the left and the boat on our hip seems dead set on banging the corner. On the last point, risk, the worst case scenario is to have already sailed yourself out the race by the top mark; it's much better to relinquish first place but be in the hunt, then deep.



Fleet 5 Profile: Timmy Dittrich

By Christina Pandapas



*It may not have been the ideal year to start racing a new boat, but then again, maybe it was. **Timmy Dittrich** jumped into #1217 in early 2020 and sailed it in pandemic solo mode all season. He raced just about every race and seemed to be out pleasure cruising every other day. We couldn't be happier to have Timmy in the fleet and the infamous 1217 back in the fold. (We caught **Jim Raisides** looking at her a little wistfully.) Timmy has clocked a whole lot of time on the water, so we wanted to know what brought him to the Rhodes and learn a little more about the former Corinthian YC commodore. What we got was a little Hardy Boys, a bit*

of Caddyshack, and a whole lot of Chicago Mac.

What was the first boat you ever sailed? Flying Scott

How long have you been sailing Rhodes? One season

Why did you start sailing Rhodes? I hopped into the Rhodes 19 mentally years ago while I was still racing my IOD. The reasons I wanted to get into the R19 was that there is a very strong fleet here in Marblehead; the boat is extremely manageable - on and off the water - which affords me more sailing time; and the fleet members were people I wanted to hang with onshore.

Where did the name "Hijinx" come from? One of the best times in my life was reading "The Hardy Boys" books to our little boys at bedtime. A word that came up often and made me chuckle was "Hijinx". I wanted a name that wasn't too serious and that made me smile, so... "Hijinx" it is.

What is your favorite non-sailing activity? Gardening - flowers for cutting and Roma tomatoes for sauce.

What did you do for work? I had a very exciting and fulfilling career as a Biz Dev guy in advertising but then positioned myself for the advent and rise of the Internet. (Yes youngsters', at one time there wasn't

an Internet.) What a ride through the Wild Wild West (www). Talk about "it isn't work if you love what you do." I was very fortunate.

What is your most memorable sailing moment? There are just too many to be able to identify one. Talk about being blessed...!

What is the biggest bonehead thing a crew of yours has ever done during a race? Realized during the middle of the afternoon that they gave up their Saturday to go sailing with me!

What is the biggest bonehead thing you've done during a race? Packed an asym spinnaker incorrectly and up it went lookin' like an IOR Blooper. Happened to be at 1am. That was not fun...and very embarrassing.

What's the best tip you could give someone who is sailing a Rhodes for the first time? "Be the ball, Danny."

What book are you reading? The Bitcoin Standard: The Decentralized Alternative to Central Banking

Name one thing about yourself that fellow Fleet 5 members might be surprised to know. I have sailed 35 Chicago Mackinac Races and counting. ([Chicago Mac](#))



SCUTTLEBUTT



How do you spend your Saturdays nights? While for many of us, it may be sitting down on our butts relaxing, that's not the case for Fleet 5's **Evan Cooke**. As pictured above Evan and sister **Kelly Cooke** traveled to Erie, PA to referee the NCAA Women's Frozen Four National Championship Finals game between No. 1 Northeastern and No. 2 Wisconsin. In an intense game that was tied going into 3rd period, Wisconsin beat Northeastern in overtime with a goal banked off a defenseman from behind the net. *Don't the rest of us all feel a little bit lame now...*

Got News? Let's hear from you. Send your gossip, rumors and embarrassing tidbits to: elise.mazareas@gmail.com

MAIL BAG

Not a whole lot in this month's Mail Bag but we do have some sailors looking for gently used sails as well as someone looking for a spare rig. Please take a look at the Notice Board below and if you can contribute, reach out and do so.

RACER'S RESOURCE BOARD

Dave Whittier of **Stuart Marine** in Rockland Maine is the exclusive builder of Rhodes 19s. Call Dave at 207-594-5515 for pricing on new boats, used boats, repairs and parts.

Doyle Sails at (978) 740-5950 for new sails and repairs.

Chris Small – Full restorations and glass work- csmall9021@yahoo.com, (978) 500-9021.

Seacoast Specialty Marine Call **Greg Dolan** at 978-255-2769, click on seacoastsspecialtymarine.com, or visit on Facebook [@seacoastsspecialtymarine](https://www.facebook.com/seacoastsspecialtymarine).

Neal Lewanda – Repairs, fiberglass/gel coat, rudders, keel work, etc. - neal@lewandamarine.com, 978-525-2700

Benjamin Parker of Aequoris Yachts and does glass work and boat repair. Contact Ben at 58 Gregory Street, Marblehead (207) 319-3583 or benjamin.parker@aequorisyachts.com.

Waterline Systems provides a complete range of services. Call at (401) 682-1661.

Cape Cod Shipbuilding makes Zephyr extrusions and a full range of mast and boom hardware and fittings. Call **Dick Landis** at (508) 295-2240.

The Trailer Shop – Located on 87 High St. in Danvers for any trailer repairs. Call **Dan Sullivan** at (978) 750-6799

Sailor's Tailor www.sailortailors.com for boat covers, rudder bags and marine stitching.



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NOTICE BOARD

Please mail postings and updates to elise.mazareas@gmail.com

Clear Out Those Old Sails – Reclaim all that space in your garage, attic or sail locker. Please consider a tax deductible donation of your old sails to either Sail Salem at www.sailsalem.org or Courageous at www.courageoussailing.org.

Nahant Fleet Needs Sails – The Nahant Sailing Program (NSP) has 6 Rhodes 19s that are used to teach kids and a twilight program for adults. The majority of funding comes from an annual fund raiser by The Friends of Nahant Sailing. The Rhodes sails need replacement, so if you have or are purchasing new sails, please consider donating your old ones to “The Friends of Nahant Sailing.” Not only will it help the program grow, but the donation is tax deductible. Please contact **Bob Cusack** at (781) 581-1159 or rjcusack@verizon.net if you are interested.

Savannah Fleet Looking for Sails - Our Savannah Fleet is interested purchasing used sails. Our boats are not looking to compete at a national level but our club racing is very competitive and we want to refresh the sail inventory. If you know of any of your members that are looking to purchase new sails and looking for a partner to reduce their overall cost, we would be very interested in sails that are in good shape. Please contact **Doug Powelson, Captain, Fleet 49** at dpwlsn@gmail.com or 912-665-5485

Looking for Sails – **Chad Atwood** writes: Where can a person find a nice set of recreational sails for my Rhodes 19. Thanks, Chad Atwood: 443-995-6773 or chadattwood@gmail.com

Looking for a spare mast – **John Springer** writes: My O’Day Rhodes 19 was dismasted in a storm at the end of last season. We’re still somewhat new to the boat, and to racing, so I’m hesitant to commit to investing in a new mast. As such, I’m hoping to find someone who may be parting out a Rhodes, or perhaps upgraded to a new mast. Any suggestions, recommendations would be most appreciated. Best regards, John Springer
jmspringer@me.com

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*The next Fleet 5 Newsletter will be published in May. Newsletters are distributed by email. To request being added to (or removed from) Fleet 5’s distribution list, please contact **Martha Martini** at martini1466@gmail.com. To respond with comments, suggestions, and/or news, email **Elise Nash** at elise.mazareas@gmail.com*