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### KEEPING FLEET 5 STRONG

In January, I opined that Fleet 5 has thrived because it has enjoyed the advantages of a great boat, great parties, and the hard work of great people. While this has been true for decades, these are not boom times for sailboat racing, and it will require creativity, focus, and hard work to keep Fleet 5 equally strong going forward.

The first step in this effort to ‘lean in’ on Fleet 5’s future is to understand and accept that some attrition in fleet membership is inevitable. Some people move away, others turn to other interests (as hard as this is to fathom!), and some simply ‘age out’. Our own **Jud Smith**, who has made us all proud by winning the J-70 Worlds and being named Rolex Yachtsman of the Year (again!), has said that at age 62 the physical part of his game is much harder than it once was. I am no Jud Smith, but having just turned 70 (much to my shock and amazement!) I can say with certainty that boat racing does NOT get easier as the odometer continues to spin. Since some attrition is a certainty, whatever its causes, replacing some people that move on with others who can ‘move in’ is a necessity. This mandates the need for a continual recruitment effort, and this is a responsibility that has to be embraced and shared by the entire fleet, not just by its leadership. This suggests that we all need to take it upon ourselves to be salesmen, both for sailing in general and for Fleet 5 in particular, and as sales reps, “you gotta know the territory!” If we are going to be successful, we need to know what we are selling, why what we offer is better than what the competition can, and how to best close the sale. What we offer is the boat, the parties, and the people, and the advantages of each can’t be repeated often enough.

The Rhodes 19 was designed over 60 years ago, and while its sex appeal may not make anyone swoon, its more enduring virtues are a perfect fit for the cost and leisure time realities facing sailboat racing today. A competitive R19 can be purchased for about \$7,500, which can be close to just the annual fuel cost for a mid-sized center console power boat, not far from one two week rental on a Cape Cod beach, and about 20% of the price of a good E22 or J-70. For this modest up-front cost, you can have a boat that is uniquely suited to both relaxed family day sailing and to very competitive and challenging racing. Typically sailed just 2-up in local racing, this makes it ideal for

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Spring Clinic** - Fleet 5 will host a clinic on crew skills and priorities : Wed May 8, 7pm at CYC

**MRA - \*\* New This Year\*\***  
The MRA Season Kick-off Party will be Thursday, May 9, 2019, at 7pm in the EYC Sailing Center

**MRA Racing** - Debuts with Spring One Design Regatta, May 25-26

**Twilights** - Start May 31

**Sundays** - Start June 23

**Fleet party** - June 1: **Rebecca and Larry Ehrhardt** will host at their home on Ballast Lane

**MRA 1st Series**: Four race days, June 1, 8, 15 & 22

**MRA 2nd Series**: Four race days, June 29, & July 6, 13 & 20

**Race Week**: Our toughest event of any year; Thurs July 25 - Sunday July 28

**Race Week Party** :Thursday July 25: **Jennifer and Steve Uhl** will host at their home on Front Street

**MRA 3rd Series**: Three race days, Aug 3, 10 & 17

**MRA 4th Series**: (Labor Day Regatta) Aug 31-Sept 1

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(Cont'd, page 2)

partnerships and/or couples, easy to get the right number of people aboard on race day and always interesting because there is more than plenty for both for both sailors to do all the way around the course. You don't have to hike a Rhodes 19 hard in typical 8-12 knot Marblehead wind conditions, and perhaps best of all, the size of the boat, the sails, and the sheet loads are all nicely suited to both kids (see **Larry Ehrhardt's** great piece on sailing with kids later in this issue on Page 5!) and to women. Fleet 5 includes a number of boats with women and kids as regular crew, and a growing group of females as owner/skippers. No other fleet in the harbor can boast an equally attractive combination of family friendly advantages.

Like all successful racing/sailing associations that are successful, Fleet 5 makes a priority of keeping its social connections strong, in part via its longstanding tradition of parties held throughout the year, always enhanced via the travelling (thank you, Larry!) **Fleet Bar**. But the most effective deal closer in convincing new members to join has to be the group of people who are already members. Fleet 5 sailors genuinely enjoy competing with each other, despite an occasional and soon forgotten 'incident' at a leeward mark. Further, they are very free in sharing their knowledge and experience, as evidenced by spring clinics, this year head manned by Elise Nash, and to be focused on crew priorities and skills via a member panel discussion. Anyone who gets a candidate 'fish on the line' should be sure have them added to our contact list, and to get them out in the boat. Some might be ready to step in as a crew on an MRA race, while others might be ready for just a Sunday afternoon day sail. Whatever their most appropriate starting point, be sure to have them join us, on the water or on the porch. Recruiting new members is absolutely critical to Fleet 5's future.

## **PREPARING FOR THE 2019 SEASON**

I have rung this bell before, but our Marblehead sailing season is short, so it is vital to make the most of the time that we have. Here is this year's list of things to plan for in making the most of another great summer:

### **I. Mark up your calendars:**

The 2019 MRA schedule is out. We accept that otherwise well-intentioned sailors sometimes choose to sail other events in boats other than Rhodes 19's, but those other events can obscure the important ones that involve Fleet 5. These are cherry picked below:

**Away Events:** More advance planning (housing, trailers, etc.) required, so start on it now!

**R-19 East Coasts;** (Prospects for a 2019 event are now dim)

**R-19 Nationals;** Wednesday, August 21 – Saturday, August 24, hosted jointly by the Hingham and Hull Yacht Clubs.



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**March 2019**

[www.r19fleet5.org](http://www.r19fleet5.org) / [www.rhodes19.org](http://www.rhodes19.org) / [www.facebook.com/r19fleet5](http://www.facebook.com/r19fleet5)

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**Home Events:** Keep in mind that when it comes to 'Road to the Cup' scores, the old adage '90% of success is just showing up' could not be more apt.

**MRA Spring Series;** Lasers only, April 4 – May 19

**Spring One-Design Regatta;** Memorial Day weekend, May 25-26

**Twilight Series;** Starts Thursday, May 30

**MRA 1<sup>st</sup> Series;** Four race days, June 1, 8, 15 & 22

**Sunday Morning Series;** Starts June 23

**MRA 2nd Series;** Four race days, June 29, & July 6, 13 & 20

**Race Week,** Our toughest event of any year; Thurs July 25- Sunday July 28

**MRA 3rd Series;** Three race days, August 3, 10 & 17

**MRA 4th Series** (Labor Day Regatta); Aug 31-Sept 1

**MRA Fall Series;** (Reports of its demise may be exaggerated; stay tuned)

## **II. Start Negotiating Hall Passes:**

It's never too early to start trying out excuses for missing things like family weddings that are unfathomably scheduled during sailing season.

**Full Season Hall Passes;** Those with significant others that are mystified by this boat racing thing can try pointing out that while we are admittedly otherwise engaged on Saturday afternoon for three short months in the summer, we do try hard to

behave ourselves the rest of the year. NB that for those who actually race *with* their significant others, hall passes are not needed, but counseling can be.

**Individual Weekend Hall Passes;** Management (both business and home) may forget or not fully understand that two weekdays off in July (Race Week), and three in August may be vital for maintaining your mental health. In addition, it might (might not) be helpful to mention to your boss or partner that you are only asking for the extra days because you feel a responsibility to at your best for the benefit of the rest of the group.

## **III. Prepare Boat:**

All but the more anal among us tend to forget the list of maintenance, repair, and improvement issues that we didn't bother to write down last fall because there was no way we could possibly forget them. To help us out, **David Reynolds** plans an article for our April issue this year that will help fill in those memory lapses, and lay out some priorities for those items that you may still have time to attend to.

## **IV. Register!:**

Registration will require two separate steps, as MRA plans to route registration through Toolbox, while as Fleet 5 will continue with fleet and national Rhodes 19 Class Association membership routed through via Regattaman, at the following site:

[www.regattaman.com](http://www.regattaman.com)

The Toolbox details have not yet been announced, but stay tuned, and be sure to avoid the early May rush, not to mention the \$75 'after May 5' late fee!





### Short Tacks:

What have your fleet-mates been doing over the winter to up their game for this coming season? While many head north to the slopes, turns out quite a few of us just can't stay off the water.

The **Pandapas family** headed down to the BVI where they were happy to report that the reconstruction of the beloved Bitter End is underway, albeit on island time..



In addition to some winter sailing word has it that **Kim** has been taking the Dave Dellenbaugh Rules Course on line and also plans to do the Umpiring Seminar at CYC later this spring. On top of that he will be sailing the Jackson Cup with **Christina, Elise Nash, Evan Cooke**, and likely a few other fleet 5 members this April. Seems as though Kim doesn't really have an off- season...



Also down in the islands, **Nat Taylor** reports that he had privilege to trim main aboard Blackfish at the 2019 Saint Thomas International Regatta. " I was struck by the similarities to dinghies and one-design, especially how crucial communication is. There is a stark contrast between being in

the cockpit and having the ear of the skipper and tactician, versus being on the rail, and it was enlightening to be the in-between guy announcing upcoming maneuvers, wind conditions and more. It was also fun to think about how much I've learned from **Jim Taylor** over the years! ...is it sailing season in New England yet?"

In less tropical waters, several fleet members passed the winter frostbiting on Sunday afternoons at BYC. With much thanks **Mike and Robin Michaud** for running races, **Jocelyn and Adam Cook, Matt Hooks, Beanie Eissner, Tomas Hornos, Joe Fava and Elise Nash**, (who was happy to get one day on the books for 2018) where just a few of diehards who seem to think sailing in the winter in New England is a perfectly normal thing to do. Shout out to Beanie Eissner and crew for winning the 2018-2019 Frostbiting Season



Last but not least, International Man of Mystery **Josh Wheeler** was celebrating Holi festival in Hyderabad, India, though he's planning a trip back Marblehead in July. If you look really closely, you can see that he's wearing his Fleet 5 hat.





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**March 2019**

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## **2019 FLEET SOCIAL SCHEDULE:**

**Saturday June 1; Rebecca and Larry Ehrhardt** have generously offered to host again this year, at their home right up Ballast Lane from the EYC.

**Porch Socials:** July 13 @ CYC, July 20 @ EYC

**Thursday, July 25; Race Week Party. Jennifer and Steve Uhl** will host yet again. The view of the harbor from their Front Street home in summer evening light is not to be missed.

**Saturday September 1; Labor Day Party.**  
Another collaboration w/J-70's at the home of **Sloan and Charlie Pendleton**

**Saturday, November 1; Awards Party. TBA.**

## **MEASUREMENT SCHEDULE:**

Measurement sessions planned for May 19 (before season) and June 9

## **FAMILY SAILING IN FLEET 5**

Part of what makes Fleet 5 so well suited to sailing with kids and family is the boat. The Rhodes 19 is comfortable and easy to sail, big enough to be stable, but not so big as to be intimidating for kids used to Opti's and 420's. However, an equally important part is that family sailing is built into the Fleet 5 culture, so much so that the '**Hallowell Family Award**' is one of our important perpetual trophies, awarded annually to the boat that contributes the most to furthering this family sailing tradition. The younger and more talented half of Team Taylor started his R19 racing as a 3<sup>rd</sup> between Ken (friend, but no relation) Taylor and I as a +/- 10 year old, and was a 3<sup>rd</sup> for **Norm Cressey** in a Hingham Nationals at about the same age. He crewed for me as a young teen, then we alternated for a while, (you got to keep the tiller if you won), and now **Nat** is patient with the old, fat, slow guy on his foredeck. After more than two decades of sailing together, we still have more than our share of belly laughs, we get on the podium, and we have a great time. Sailing is a lifetime sport, and being able to enjoy it with your kids is its own reward. The **Colsmen, Hogue** and **Ehrhardt** families are all well down that road already, and Larry's take on the subject with his son **Allen** follows:



## TEAM EHRHARDT: LARRY & SON

Winning the first day of Marblehead Race Week 2018 with my 14-year-old son, Allen, was a real thrill - as was staying competitive during the remainder of another great regatta with the Rhodes fleet. That weekend was the culmination of a four-year progression of sailing with Allen (my second born) on Rallie, which began in 2015 when he was only 11.

On a late summer MRA day in 2015, I lured Allen onto the boat with the promise of cookies and chips (in addition to a healthy sandwich) and had the goal of making one start, rounding the top mark and then heading home. Between the hour sail out and back in (could we be any further from the mouth of the harbor!?!?) and the 20 minutes of racing, that seemed like the right amount of time. Turned out Allen liked to hike, and we were in the mix for part of the race, which kept the upwind leg exciting. For a first outing, the mission was accomplished – good lunch and easy time on the water.

The next year, we headed out for a second MRA day. This time it was a breezy fall series day where the race committee set up right at the mouth of the harbor (nice move RC!). Given the conditions, the day seemed like great opportunity to go around the track a couple of times (with no spinnaker) and just work on tacking and hiking. We had a great time going upwind and didn't seem to lose too much downwind without the chute. So that, combined with an epic match racing battle between **Steve Uhl** and **Mike Lane**, led to some decent finishes for the day. Allen was hooked.

In 2017, Allen switched to the keelboat program and Pleon. His experience sail handling on a Sonar translated nicely to the Rhodes. Since **Callie Naughton** and I were practicing for the Nationals later that summer, most MRA days were dedicated to our preparation; however, Allen and I did sail a few MRA days with perfectly fine boat handling. Allen was learning with every set, gybe and tack down. Plus, he could also rig the boat on his own now, which made the morning launching much easier.

So finally, 2018 opens with my decision to only sail with family. Allen and I did most of the MRA series plus MRW. We've built to the point where boat handling is nearly perfect (the notable exception being the time I almost threw Allen off the bow with a top mark gybe set) and we are starting to work on the tactics (wind, positioning, current etc.) together which, as we all know, is a never-ending learning cycle! We had a fabulous time on the boat and Allen is already looking forward to 2019 on the line.

The Rhodes is definitely a terrific family racing boat (as evidenced by the number of family-based teams) and a great way to race with your kids. The technical challenge of getting the boat around the course, plus the physical requirements of hopping around the boat and keeping it flat while at the same time staying “in the mix,” is a winning combination. In addition to the other resources in the harbor (Pleon, weekday evening events etc.) the Rhodes 19 fleet has made getting our kids into our sport a true pleasure.





## 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](mailto:csmall9021@yahoo.com) (978) 500-9021.

**Seacoast Specialty Marine** Restorations, rigging and all variety of go fast work. Located in 5000 sq ft facility at 14 Graf Road, Newburyport. Call **Greg Dolan** at 978-255-2769 or Email [info@seacoastspecialtymarine.com](mailto:info@seacoastspecialtymarine.com),

**Neal Lewanda** – Repairs, fiberglass/gel coat, rudders, keel work, etc. - [neal@lewandamarine.com](mailto:neal@lewandamarine.com), 978-525-2700

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

"**Phil's Foils**" builds Rhodes 19 rudders under the "Phil's Foils" brand name. Go to [www.fastcomposites.ca](http://www.fastcomposites.ca) or contact Phil Locker at (613) 599-6951.

**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](http://www.sailortailors.com) for boat covers, rudder bags and marine stitching.

## NOTICE BOARD

**Donate Your 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](mailto:rjcusack@verizon.net) if you are interested.

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*The next Fleet 5 publication will be the April Newsletter. All of our publications are distributed by email. To request being added to (or removed from) Fleet 5's distribution list, please contact Jeff Shoreman at [jshoreman@gmail.com](mailto:jshoreman@gmail.com). To respond with comments, suggestions, news, and/or complaints, email Ed at [ajtaylor8@verizon.net](mailto:ajtaylor8@verizon.net)*