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## Fleet 5 Newsletter

## January 2026

### GREETINGS FROM THE PREZ



Happy new year, and welcome to the 2026 season. I know, I'm jumping the gun a little, but hey, I'm excited.

Any reasonable person might rightly question how a guy is still excited after doing this for 30-something years. You'd think it'd be getting old by now, but it isn't. Maybe I've lost a few marbles (Christina's theory). Maybe it's that I'm hitting the age where I can count on one hand the years I expect to keep doing this. Or maybe it's just plain fun. The fun quotient remains high for me, even though I can't get around on that fastball quite like I used to. But crossing swords with all of you every Saturday remains a centerpiece of my life, and I'm counting the days 'till I get to do it again. I love the morning rigging, the banter at the float, the sail out, the starts, the tight roundings, the between-race post-mortems, the race to the crane, the porch time – I love it all. Honestly, I can think of no better way to spend a Saturday, or frankly, a better group to spend it with. So have I lost a few marbles? Probably, but as the song goes, *"if there's a cure for this, I don't want it."*

So, as I do this time every new year, I'm thinking resolutions. What can I do better? Of course, my wife would happily volunteer several things. In fact, she'd likely come up with a bunch of lists - cross-indexed, organized by categories and force-ranked. But I'm thinking more about Fleet 5. What can I and the leadership team do to up our game? Our ranks remain strong (and growing), but our participation has been increasingly spotty. Of course, there are reasons aplenty why folks can't make it out every Saturday, as we all are living increasingly full and demanding lives. Competition for your racing hall pass has never been higher, with racing events every day of the week except Mondays (and sometimes Monday too).

I put that question to the 2026 leadership team at our fall meeting, and it produced a lively discussion that focused on finding more ways to strengthen our community. Well, we'll certainly work on that, perhaps by better leveraging social media. But what else? MRA is laser-focused on this and working hard to find ways to refresh the experience, which **Joe Fava** summarizes below. The last big change they made was to include short courses, and that was a winner. Hopefully they'll come up with more stuff like that. But what do you think? I put it to

you. My goal is no fewer than 20 boats on the line every Saturday. How do we do that? *How many days can you commit to this season and how can we help you make that happen?*

Congratulations again to last season's winners. A final recap of those results and the perpetual award winners is included below, allowing us to now turn the page. First gun is in five months!! Stay warm. Go Pats.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Below is an abbreviated and incomplete 2026 calendar of events. We'll provide updated drafts in the March and April newsletter and hopefully the final in May. The first near-term event you should know about is the spring meeting.

***Spring Meeting - Thursday April 16<sup>th</sup>*** This year's spring meeting will be held on Thursday April 16<sup>th</sup> at the home of **Christina & Kim Pandapas**. We'll discuss racing, scoring and social details of the upcoming season, all while enjoying hors d'oeuvres, the fleet bar and each other's company. We'll also have a laptop to help you register, courtesy of **Jim Gabriel**

Fleet 5 - Abbreviated 2026 Schedule of Events		
<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>
Thursday April 16	Spring Meeting	Home of Christina & Kim Pandapas
Friday May 1	MRA Kickoff Party	CYC
TBD	June Party	TBD
Saturday-Sunday, June 27-28	East Coast Championships	Padanaram
Thursday - Sunday, July 23-26	Race Week	CYC
Thursday July 23rd	Race Week Party	TBD
Wednesday-Sunday, August 19-21	Nationals	Chicago
September 5th	Labor Day Party	TBD
TBD	Awards Party	Home of Christina & Kim Pandapas

## 2026 FLEET 5 LEADERSHIP TEAM

The fleet voted in the slate of folks below who have generously stepped up to lead Fleet 5 in 2026. We welcome **Jeff Shoreman** and **Jim Gabriel** to the team. Be sure and thank them when you see them.

Fleet Captain	Kim Pandapas
VP	Jeff Shoreman
Secretary	Jim Gabriel
Treasurer	Dave Reynolds
Social	Rich & Rosie Denton
Scorer	Kim Pandapas
Webmaster	Nat Taylor
Measurer	Stefan Thibodeaux

## 2025 LEADERSHIP MEETING

Your Fleet 5 leadership team held its Fall meeting on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Here is a short summary.

*Fleet Finances* – We effectively broke even for the year, finishing with a modest \$153 gain. As always, our single largest expense line item was the fleet bar. Our balance sheet remains strong, with assets totaling about \$14k.

*Dues* – 2026 dues will remain at \$80 for the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year.

*Communications* – There will be no changes to the newsletter or RTTC schedules. **Jim Gabriel** has volunteered to write an article for the April newsletter, and we identified a few likely suspects for upcoming fleet profiles. We'll continue refreshing the web site and augment the photo gallery. We plan to more actively leverage Facebook and Instagram, and to more proactively encourage and support the use of What'sApp.

*Social* – We're planning five social events, including the spring meeting, June post-race party, Race Week party, Labor Day Party and Fall Awards Party.

*Performance Electronics* – MRA is considering introducing performance sailing electronics into our racing, and **Jeff Shoreman** led a discussion to discuss the pros and cons. [Velocitek](#) and [Vakaros](#) are both systems that both provide GPS-based instruments for race management, training, and performance tracking. One strong benefit is they tell you if you're OCS. Nothing is expected to happen in 2026.

## SHORT TACKS

*Fleet Feedback* – What did you like last year? What did you hate? What can we do better? What's on your mind? Let's hear from you. We've set up a [brief survey](#) and hope you'll take a minute to complete it. Or simply email [kpandapas@comcast.net](mailto:kpandapas@comcast.net).

*East Coasts Headed Back to Padanaram* – The 2026 East Coast Championships will be hosted by the New Bedford Yacht Club in Padanaram next June 27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>. Circle the dates.

*Nationals In Chicago* – The 2026 Nationals will be hosted by the Chicago Corinthian Yacht Club from Wednesday through Friday, August 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>. Circle those dates too.

*Rhodes Invited to 2026 Newport Regatta* – The Rhodes have been offered a start at the 2026 Newport Regatta, which will be held July 11-12 in Narragansett Bay. Organized by Sail Newport, the Newport Regatta is a mainstay of the Newport One Design calendar, typically averaging 14 one design classes across four lines. Circle the dates and stay tuned for more info.

*Helly Hansen - Sailing World Regatta Schedule* The [HH regatta schedule](#) is set, and as usual, includes Race Week, which will be held July 23-26.

## MRA FALL TOWN HALL

MRA held its Fall 'Town Hall' in December, both to present survey results and solicit feedback. As they did last year, MRA assembled a representative panel of sailors and RC members who shared their views on various subjects. Here is a summary from **Joe Fava**.

*"MRA's annual Town Hall was held earlier this month. While attendance was lower than prior years, the level of discussion and engagement was higher. Here are the highlights:*

- **Jack Cochrane** presented the annual survey results.

*What you need to know: Jack does a great job asking consistent questions year over year allowing themes and trends to be identified. There is clearly a shift in the fleets looking for diversity in their racing. Interest in crew races and final races back to the dock have grown. Sailors are no doubt united in their support of efficiency - not waiting for perfect conditions- and don't seem to mind a 3-minute starting sequence or combining fleets on the line when numbers are small.*

- *A hearty discussion was held on the topic of technology on the water including robotic marks and electronic starting systems.*

*What you need to know: Sailors love the flexibility and efficiency that the marks bring - especially in how line length can be adjusted without delay between fleets. EYC has clearly invested in technology and is on the leading edge. Corinthian and Boston need to catch up for consistency and to keep Marblehead sailing out front.*

*Race sense starting systems were then discussed at length. There are positives and negatives to the systems - negatives include cost, complexity which could be a barrier to participation for some along with a break from the traditions of our sport. Positives include efficiency (no general recalls ever, 100pc accuracy on OCS calls), needed support for understaffed race committees, keeping Marblehead on the leading edge of race management, and low cost of adoption on the race committee side. Sailors looking to know more about the systems should discuss them with those who have used them including: **Joe Fava, Tim Wadlow, Andrew Kingston and Patrick Andreason**. There are a number of different modes and features in the technology that can be turned on or off based on class preferences. While it's unlikely that the tech will be used every sailing day, racers should expect the clubs to be ready to implement this for marquee events this year such as Race Week.*

- *The evening closed with a discussion on a few things to look out for in the 2026 season.*

*What you need to know: There will be one day events held in conjunction with MRA racing - June 6 and July 11 - which will have awards and a post-race social at the Corinthian. There is no incremental cost to MRA dues - just more of a reason to get your butt on the line those days.*

- Lastly, MRA is working through some ideas to change the year and awards event moving it significantly up in the calendar and incorporating a MRA sailing event to the year-end celebration.

Here are a few of the key survey response slides, courtesy of **Jack Cochran**.



## FLEET 5 2025 AWARDS RECAP

Fleet 5's 2025 awards party was held at **Christina & Kim Pandapas'** house with about 40 in attendance. KP presided over the festivities, which included a recap of our series winners. The presentation closed with the spirited selection of the 2025 Hacker Award, a ceremony presided over by **Elise Nash**. All 2025 results are listed below, including a recap to celebrate the winners of our perpetuals.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2025 WINNERS

### MRA 1 - *Final*

Name	Boat #	Points	Finish
Team Uhl / Lane	2585	10.00	1
Team Lane	2623	17.00	2
Team Gabriel	1137	21.00	3

### MRA 2 - *Final*

Name	Boat #	Points	Finish
Team Lane	2623	10.00	1
Team Pandapas	982	25.00	2
Team Denton	2003	27.00	3

### MRA 3 - *Final*

Name	Boat #	Points	Finish
Team Lane	2623	13.00	1
Team Pandapas	982	20.00	2
Team Hooks / Pascal	1683	28.00	3

### MRA Overall - *Final*

Name	Boat #	Points	Finish
Team Lane / Heffernan	2623	40.00	1
Team Pandapas	982	73.00	2
Team Uhl / Lane	2585	87.00	3
Team Gabriel	1137	102.00	4
Team Cooke / Kaznoski	2648	107.00	5

### Raceweek - *Final*

Name	Boat #	Points	Finish
Team Taylor	1926	48.00	1
Larry Ehrhardt	2435	49.00	2
Adam Roberts / Dan Rabin	1782	52.00	3
Shoreman / Reynolds	722	71.00	4
Team Cooke / Kaznoski	2648	73.00	5

**Twilight Series 1 - Final**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Boat #</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Finish</b>
Team Uhl	2585	5.00	1
Team Martini	1466	16.00	2
Team Lane	2623	17.00	3

**Twilight Series 2 - Final**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Boat #</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Finish</b>
Team Uhl	2585	6.00	1
Team Martini	1466	9.00	2
John Casler	1775	9.00	3

**Twilight Series - Overall**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Boat #</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Finish</b>
Team Uhl	2585	11.00	1
Team Martini	1466	25.00	2
John Casler	1775	28.00	3

**Season Overall (Cup) - Final**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Boat #</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Finish</b>
Team Lane / Heffernan	2623	146.00	1
Team Pandapas	982	197.00	2
Team Taylor	1926	204.00	3
Team Uhl / Lane	2585	218.00	4
Team Cooke / Kaznoski	2648	218.00	5
Team Gabriel	1137	224.00	6
Larry Ehrhardt	2435	228.00	7
Shoreman / Reynolds	722	229.00	8
Debbie Noble / Adam Roberts	1782	230.00	9
Doug Morgan & Bill Rothwell	1210	291.00	10

***Hallawell Family Trophy – Martha & David Martini***

The Family Trophy was donated by **Barbara & Kent Hallawell** in 2000 to celebrate their family's then 20, now 40+ year association with Fleet 5 and its strong family tradition. The trophy is awarded annually to a family for significant contributions to the class, to our fleet or to the sport of sailboat racing. The Martinis have been members of Fleet 5 for something like 15 years. They are a husband-wife team who have been core members ever since the day joined. They are regulars on the starting line, both Twilight and MRA. They sail pretty much everything, showing up week after week, and we don't recall a party or clinic that they missed. They have contributed in tangible ways, including serving on fleet leadership and helping out on regattas. They personify Fleet 5's strong family tradition the Hallawell trophy is intended to recognize.

### ***Rookie of the Year – Bill Colehower***

This is awarded annually to that rookie skipper with an impressive showing, typically based on overall scores, though also based on an outstanding showing, or importantly, overall enthusiasm and commitment. Bill is anything but a rookie, having sailed for years in Etchells and God knows what other classes. But with respect to Rhodes 19s and Fleet 5, he's a rookie. He was new to the fleet in 2024 when he reached out looking for help buying a boat. He eventually bought one but didn't sail much, sailing just a few Twilights and race week. He scored in a bullet in one of those twilights and finished 22<sup>nd</sup> overall in RW. But this year, he sailed RW and nationals, finishing 11<sup>th</sup> in a field of 23 boats in Race Week, and 12<sup>th</sup> of 29 boats in Nationals.

### ***Most Improved Skipper – Jim Gabriel***

Most Improved is among the least subjective of our perpetuals. It's awarded each year to that skipper who demonstrates the most improvement from the previous season or two. Selection is based primarily on a year-to-year comparison of series and overall scores. Jim sailed most of our events, and his finishes improved across the board. The most notable improvement was MRA Overall, in which he improved from 9<sup>th</sup> in 2024 to 4<sup>th</sup> in 2025. Finishes aside, Team Gabriel was far more in the mix. If these guys improve as much this coming year as they did last year, we all need to watch out.

### ***Richie Santos Outstanding Crew – Dan Gabriel***

This is awarded each season to that individual who most distinguishes him or herself as crew. Selection is based on long-term contribution, overall performance during a single season or regatta, or even a single compelling event. This nomination was compelling for several reasons. First, it came from a crew instead of a skipper. Second, it highlighted positive team impact, and third, it emphasized character and the importance of playing the game with grace. Here is some of the nomination letter written by **Elise Nash**.

*"I am nominating this person for the Crew Award, though I'm not their skipper. In fact, I have never sailed with him. But I know that when drivers sail with him, they do better. So much better in fact that after this year's East Coast Championships, several people reached out to congratulate me on "an outstanding performance," to which I had to say, thank you very much, but that was not me.*

*And this is not just a one-time thing. In addition to taking second at this year's East Coasts by a single point, Joe and Dan also placed second at Race Week in 2022 in a fleet of '24. Mind you – these guys don't sail together regularly, but when Dan hops in the boat, they sail well.*

*Aside from just results, Dan is a gracious competitor. I first met Dan in 2016 at the Resolute Cup when he was living in Chicago.. Just off the water, I told my teammates I had to run to Team One closes to get a new watch, to which Dan said, "here, take mine. We have 4 watches on our boat, and we don't need that many." This is not necessarily something you would expect from a competitor, but it's a gesture that I think speaks a lot to Dan's character.*



### ***President's Trophy – Jeff Shoreman***

The President's Trophy is awarded annually at the Fleet Captain's discretion to that person who has been of most help or generally contributed above and beyond the call. So, it's part acknowledgement of outstanding contribution, and part thank you. In this case, it's very much both.

There are usually several deserving contributors, which frankly can make the decision that much harder - one trophy and so many candidates. But this year's decision was a slam dunk. Jeff wasn't officially part of this year's leadership team but has been in the past and is now again. In this case, the ask was for one thing - will you take on Nationals? His answer was an immediate and resounding yes, and he never looked back. Chairing nationals is a big job, and a hard job. I know because I've done it a few times. But chairing nationals and doing it really well is damn near impossible. It's inconceivable that a regatta could be designed, planned and executed any better than the 2025 nationals. Jeff put together an excellent team, was collaborative, was communicative, and got the job done. I can think of no person more deserving for the 2025 President's Trophy.

### ***Hacker Award – Jim Taylor***

This year's Hacker competition included three strong contenders, including **Jim Taylor** who as nationals sail measurer, mistakenly measured every jib short, **Stefan Thibodeaux** for forgetting the fleet scale on the EYC crane pier for a few weeks, and **Jay Wager** who as the sole R19 participant in the Around Misery Island Race, rounded Misery the wrong way. Quite a lineup. It was a tough competition, but in the end, **Jim Taylor** prevailed – losing the fight and winning the award. Kudos.

## **SCUTTLEBUTT**

***Bill Colehower Receives Award in Absentia*** – Rookie of the Year winner **Bill Colehower** was forced to miss our Fall awards because he was otherwise occupied helping **Katie & Jeremy Bloxham** deliver their boat Persephone to Antigua. Thanks to the wonders of Starlink, we were able to enlist Jeremy and Katie's assistance in making sure Bill got his award the same evening as the party. Here is a shot of former Fleet Captain **Jeremy Bloxham** presenting Bill with a proxy award (an egg cup) in a ceremony somewhere around 29° 10' N 16° 19' W.



***Coast Guard Abandons Bad Idea*** – In case you hadn't heard, the United States Coast Guard backed off their ill-conceived plan to eliminate 350 aids to navigation across northeast waterways, including the North Shore, Cape and the islands. You'll find their statement [here](#) and can read more about it [here](#).

## NOTICES

***Crew Wanted*** – Reigning Rookie of the Year **Bill Colehower** is looking for crew for the 2026 season. You can reach Bill at [whcolehower@gmail.com](mailto:whcolehower@gmail.com).

## MAIL BAG

Pretty quiet on the mail front – just a couple of emails about the Holiday Edition of RTTC. Old friend **David Rubin** wrote in with this good-natured body slam. *“Kim: Great poetry. Who is the author, you, or Christina?”*

And we got this from the star of the piece, our very own **Pete Kaznoski**. *“Excellent! Merry Christmas to you.”*

## RACERS RESOURCE BOARD

**Alcole Marine** – **Luke Andrews** (978-500-1505) and **Renato Qarri** (781-470-4550) do high quality fiberglass repair, gelcoat & Awlgrip and boat detailing. Email [alcole.marine@gmail.com](mailto:alcole.marine@gmail.com).

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

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

**Doyle Sails** - Call (978) 740-5950 for new sails, sail repairs and all variety of canvas work, including boat covers, rudder bags and marine stitching.

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

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

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

**Stuart Marine** - **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.

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

## NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE

Fleet 5 newsletters are distributed on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, March, April, May and November. The Road to the Cup mailings are distributed weekly starting one week before the season with the 'Week 0' edition, and continuing through the end of the season, typically on Sunday mornings, unless there is racing on Sunday, in which case Monday mornings.

## COMPLAINTS DEPARTMENT

***Got Gripes?*** Don't be shy. Unload at [kpandapas@comcast.net](mailto:kpandapas@comcast.net). The buck stops here.

