

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SHIELDS CLASS NATIONAL SAILING ASSOCIATION | FALL 2010

# MASTHEAD



SHIELDS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP  
REGATTA HIGHLIGHTS

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE  
SHIELDS CLASS NATIONAL SAILING ASSOCIATION

# MASTHEAD

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We are offering a special bulk order base price of \$50,500. That's almost a 20 percent savings from the current list price! To offer this price break, we must receive at least three new boat orders by January 14, 2010. All boats are built to order, so you can choose the colors and options that suit your needs. Trade in opportunities available. This is your chance to convert crew to skippers or bring in new competitors to your fleet – please spread the word. Contact Cape Cod Shipbuilding at (508) 295-3550 for more details!

Congratulations to everyone who competed in the Shields Nationals last month! Getting a boat plus crew to and from an event or organizing the event, as well as participating are big accomplishments. The competition was fantastic – it was nice to see boats changing positions so much. Thanks to Bailey Pryor for providing a wonderful view of the race course! Job well done to all of the award winners: Robin Monk and crew, Kyle Martin, Paul Sollitto, Richard and Ethan Robbins, UC Irvine, and the Newport Fleet. The Masons Island Yacht Club did a wonderful job hosting the event, and we look forward to future regattas at that fantastic location!

TOM AND KYLE, #254,  
"WINNING THE BOAT" END.  
RC CHAIR, BUTCH ULMER,  
SIGHTING LINE.



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What a delight! My wife, Tobie, and myself, but most importantly, Shields sailors from California to the Chesapeake, were welcomed by what seemed to be the entire Mason's Island YC membership. Wonderful club dinners included a BBQ and a Lobsterfest with an après racing menu of chowder & 'free pour.' Mix the hospitality with beautiful scenery and five days of sunny wonderful New England weather and you get one of the most pleasant Nationals I've attended. Each visiting crew was hosted by an island family. There's not enough paper space to properly thank the YC people who provided those beds, cottages, and company, but a special shout-out goes to Bob Banas' gift of time and effort.

It was a tough decision to leave my boat at home, but not always getting what you want is a lesson every sailor receives. Instead of racing, I got some schooling at the Regatta in tide and current from three days with Butch Ulmer, Mike Carr, Val Burnett and skipper Jack Ormer on Race Committee duty. Thanks to pin boat jockey, Howie McMichael, and a fleet of MIYC volunteers on the water. Nothing beats Shields racing, but the view down the line of the 28 boat fleet was an almost equal thrill.

Also, our thanks to the Oxford fleet who showed up with five boats and a bid for the 2013 Nationals. Unfortunately for everyone else, Newport with nine entries took the top four places and the new Kap-Dun trophy home as well. Kudos to Newport newcomers, Tom Hirsh and Kyle Martin, who won both the Jr. Skipper and Gordon Benjamin Awards.



NATIONAL PRESIDENT, MIKE SCHWARTZ, WITH MIYC COMMODORE, CHRIS WICK

Impressive as the competition was, I've been overwhelmed with the fleet members who took the time and had the talent to create the articles which follow. I hope you enjoy our feature piece from Regatta winner Robin Monk. I quote him here: "Every time we show up at a new marina, someone walks by and says, 'what a beautiful boat – what is it?' I tell them proudly, 'It's called a Shields, and thank you.'"

The 2010 Shields National Regatta, once again, had demonstrated that Corny Shields' one-design vision has continued to foster superior competition among gentlemen sailors. Shields Yachts remain beautiful, timeless and still perhaps the best platform ever for even racing. Our wars on the racecourse are still won by brilliant sailing and fine sailors.

SCENIC FISHER'S ISLAND SOUND WHERE THE MASON'S ISLAND YC NATIONALS WERE SAILED. THE LEADING BOAT IS "GRINCH," SKIPPED BY SHANE WELLES AND JASON VAN INWEGAN.



FEATURE  
STORY



IT'S ALL ABOUT

**THE TEAM!**



ROBIN MONK AND CREW,  
#160, LEADING THE PACK.

The team of "Diversion" #160 consists of Mark Salih (tactician, concentration coach, throttle, backstay, etc), Paul Foley (jib trim, race course Intel, rig tuning and standing rig repair), Kris Zillman (spin trim, race course Intel, downwind speed coordinator), and Steve St. Onge (foredeck, race course Intel, emergency mast repair)... And myself: tillerperson, hull preparation and paperwork.

The magic started many years ago for the team, probably 40 years ago for me. With my father being a founding member of Shields Fleet 9, I had an early start and actually sailed with my dad on every Shields race for about 35 years. He had many successful seasons sailing #143.

The magic of the 2010 team of #160 started about 30 years ago when I asked Paul if he would be interested in teaching sailing with me at the Watch Hill Yacht Club in Rhode Island. It was a great experience, and with students the likes of H.L. Devore, we created many memories that summer. Before what would have been my third season there, I moved on to Rush Creek Yacht Club in Heath, TX, leaving Paul in charge. While there, I met Mark Salih. Paul joined us the following summer, this time as part of our team of sailing instructors at Chandler's Landing Yacht Club in Rockwall, TX where more stories were indelibly forged.

The years went by and we moved in different directions but in 1985 Mark and I took Rick Tear's place as representatives of Rush Creek YC and we headed to our first Shields National Championship, hosted in Marblehead, MA. Those Nationals were won by Earle Stubbs from Newport, but we had an encouraging 5th. We never lost sight of future possibilities.

Since my dad continued to be the force behind my interest (as he always had and still has an intense love for these boats), I knew it was the best way for us to continue to share time together. I then purchased #160 in 1989, naming her "Diversion". I sold half of #160 to my dad, which cemented our future together in Shields sailing. With the help of the very talented Dan Holloway, we logged more than 20 years of racing together.

Again the years went by. Kris joined our team in 2005, and along with Mark and Paul we had a pretty good series at the Nationals hosted by Larchmont Yacht Club in New York. Kris turned out to be a fine complement to the team and has been with us ever since.

We know it requires certain talent to win at a high level, but talent alone isn't enough to make it happen. Racing is about the chemistry that happens when certain people work together, and it's about having fun together. If it's not fun, it's not worth the time or effort.

For us, it's difficult to get everyone together at the same time, and I'll admit it's difficult for me to drive 100 miles to get in a Wednesday Fleet 9 race. But we get in what racing we can, and it seems the combined level we hit when we're all together makes it all worthwhile.

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# THE TEAM

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Steve is a college buddy of Paul's and mine, and we'd had many a good time while racing in college. Our 2010 adventure and success would never have happened without him.

## 2010: A CHAMPIONSHIP WE WILL DEFINITELY REMEMBER

It's Thursday afternoon... 2nd race of the series... and we've just pulled off a nice clear pin end start. We're about 100 yards after the start, and about when a consolidation tack appeared we could cross most of the fleet, we hear a huge BANG! followed by a ruffle-ruffle-ruffle... the sound of the mainsail being lowered without our consent.

We looked above and could see the culprit: attached to the headboard was a 6-inch piece of V-12 with every strand exploded. There was a silence amongst the team followed by a "...We could have crossed the fleet..." and a "Let's get the sail down."

Within a few minutes, the main and jib were down and Steve began his hunt for spare line. We retrieved what was left of main halyard via a pull at the mast base. Paul emptied the tool bag on the floor, looking for some magical solution to appear. When no such solution presented itself, he began looking around at the deck hardware: parts piracy was about to begin.

Steve figured if he didn't go up the mast our entire series was over. With 3 races scheduled for the day and with one throw out for the series, it was pretty easy to see missing race #2 and race #3 spelled major disappointment for #160.

I felt like Ron Howard directing the Apollo 13 movie, when the box of parts was emptied on the table and the crew chief said, "This is all they have to work with." And as I'm coming up with no immediate solution, I see Steve cutting our dock lines and using our sail ties to build a harness that would hopefully be safe for his planned ascent. In the meantime, Paul put out an APB for any type of wire that could be used to make a small hook. Kris noticed a track block stand-up spring that might work, and Paul went at it, fashioning one into the needed tool. He began testing the hook on an exit sheave at the base of the mast knowing if we couldn't get it to work down here on Earth, we would not be sending it to space (or rather, the top of the mast) with Steve. Finally, thanks to the Leatherman, Paul got just the right curvature in the spring and everything was tied off to the light air spin sheets, which were then tied to Steve for his free-hand climb at sea in his newly crafted harness.

The jib halyard and spin halyard were tied to Steve for safety but we knew this safety wouldn't extend beyond the upper hounds. The mast was slippery and skinny above the hounds, and with no main halyard he could only rely on a pair of Prusik hitches (his

fancy tree climbing knots) to inch his way up to the top. A third line was used to secure his harness to the mast and although it would keep him close to the mast, it wouldn't prevent him from sliding down.

By now, #160 is adrift, heading toward Groton. The waves are making for a ridiculous rolling condition at mast top.

We ended up taking a towline for a while and heading upwind, but it made conditions much worse. Steve did several spins around the top of the mast, fortunately stopped by reaching out to the backstay. We watched as he sweated bullets up there.

Eventually Steve made it to the top, tied himself off with another one of his fancy knots, and was somehow able to free a hand and use the tools Paul made, which we hoisted up to him. He rigged an external halyard configuration that allowed us to bring the main up almost all the way... and, more importantly, allowed us to return to the race course with just enough time to start (and even finish well in) race #3. Yes, our spacecraft made it back to Earth and we were more than greatly relieved that Steve made it out alive. With no throw out race remaining we were now pumped up for Friday and Saturday.

## SATURDAY MORNING

On Saturday morning, we looked at the scores. With our throw out we considered we were possibly in contention, but John Burnham had sailed an outstanding series and was in 1st place. We knew we had to win a race.

We started out to the racecourse about two hours before the first gun. Twenty minutes after heading out into the stiff westerly (just past Ram Island Reef) we heard a terrible sounding "BOOOOM," followed by Kris calling "Down, down!!" The entire forestay and jib had disappeared from the foredeck. The forestay was swinging loose, the jib was swinging loose and, well... our thoughts of the series vaporized. All we could do was head downwind, try not to break the mast, and, with a little luck, make it back to Mystic Shipyard.

But first things first: the wind was up in the mid to high teens and we were headed downwind in big wind with opposing current waves. Every once in a while the bow would dip under water. In the absence of a forestay, there is nothing to hold onto at the bow. This meant that if we send someone to the bow and they are swept off, there is no way for us to turn the boat and head up wind to retrieve them. Houston – we have another problem.

Paul decided to suit up with the life jacket and bravely ventured forward in an attempt to run the spin halyard to the bow chock. Then, after pulling the jib, its halyard, and the forestay back in the boat, he went forward to attach the jib halyard to the bow chock as well. On our way downwind we pass Jamie Hilton (#217) and John and Reid (#107) on their way out. Describing our crew as "disappointed" would be an understatement after having risked life and limb once already during this event.

Then Paul piped up. "Hey Rob," he said. "I think I see a few threads left in this eye nut and I think we can try to reattach it. . . The threaded bolt is still coming up through the deck. If you have an Allen wrench we can loosen the set screw on the threaded eye nut, thread it back on all the way, and maybe get a bite on a few of the threads that look okay." Some of the threads were completely stripped out along with the major failure of the part, but he continued, "The only problem is that we'll need to go upwind to load test the reattachment. If it looks like its holding then we can load it up fully, but, of course, if it fails while fully loaded we break the mast. . . and can't sail back to the shipyard."

**RACING IS ABOUT THE CHEMISTRY THAT HAPPENS WHEN CERTAIN PEOPLE WORK TOGETHER, AND IT'S ABOUT HAVING FUN TOGETHER.**

Well, there wasn't much time to decide, but the answer of course was: go for it. As you may have guessed, what with our luck, there were no Allen wrenches aboard, so the Apollo 13 tool bag was once again emptied on the floor while many minds tried to think of a solution.

Paul decided to try threading it on anyway. On went the life jacket and Paul headed for the bow. We watched intently, since we were now considerably downwind of Mason's Island and many miles from the rendezvous location for that day's racing.

We watched nervously as the bow dipped below many waves, yet Paul (with Steve's help holding up the threads using the tip of a rigging knife) pulled off the nearly impossible, threading the assembly back over the bolt. When they returned from the bow, Paul said that, judging by feel, he may have cross-threaded the remaining threads. . . in which case there wouldn't be much hope of holding.

He gave the call and we slowly began to turn toward the wind. Watching with bated breath as we loaded up the forestay. . . It held!!! We sailed upwind for a while, heading toward Ram Island. Finally, we decided it was time to fly the jib and try going fully loaded.

We waited anxiously for it to blow up, but it held. Thankfully, the wind began to ease off a bit, and sailing in full race mode we were able to get to the start area just in time to make race #6.

## **SO WHAT DID WE THINK ABOUT ON THE RACE COURSE?**

I debated writing this part because frankly the level of talent on the race course is considerably above any notes I can share. But some may find this of interest so here goes:

Our tactician Mark will tell you that during this series he practically never looked at the compass. The big discussions were pertaining to the specific effect of current on one side versus the other. Though the tide table said it was slack tide that was sometimes not the case. In race #5 the current was sweeping from the lower right to the upper left on the course. The port tack was the long tack. Mark will tell you we went from a 4 boat length lead on the left side of most of the fleet to a near 20 boat length lead in half of the upwind leg. Eventually several boats worked left of us but they were not as deeply pressed into the waves and/or current as we were and were not sailing the same angle as long as we did. Normally when you have a position inside the fleet you are looking for the opportunity to wind up. But Mark found the added speed of the deeper angle combined with the current sweeping us up (and the fact that this was happening on the left side of the course going upwind) that we were just rolling over the boats to the right of us (and, with Steve constantly aware of the relative bearing of the marks, we always knew which direction the current was setting us). Mark's angle choice worked great. It's possible the few boats to our left had over stood and that was a big help as well.

Mark is our concentration coach. Frankly, his constant calls for focus helped our (read: my) performance considerably.

Very often on the upwind leg, we found modest pressure (at best) set against strong current and enough wave and cross-wave action that stopping the boat was an all too easy thing to accomplish. Mark compared it to watching a drag race, where one boat would pull ahead and then slow down. If we pulled ahead, it was caused by the other boat either hitting a set of waves or simply doing less frequent retrim.

When the boat slows, steering becomes less effective. . . And as she slows you overseer to press away from the wind or wave, and by over steering you slow further. This all happens so quickly that this little sequence is enough to slow you down and let everyone else make their gains. The critical solution is finding the perfect angle for the condition; going against chop and current, we'll ease our jib out several inches (but not as far as our post tack build angle).

On the port tack close-hauled course there were hundreds of short-lived little lefties coming in. You couldn't possibly steer to take advantage so every single one had to be matched with a jib ease. If you forced a steering response, the boat slowed. . . And we know the result of that sequence. Of course, anything that lasts more than a moment may be enough time to take a bite. On this same port tack, we also found hundreds of momentary righties. It seemed that, given the conditions of the day, we had to maintain a jib trim position that allowed us to sheet in during the headed moments.

Sitting on our boat going upwind, the sound of jib ratchets never stopped. Constant jib retrim was key and Paul did a fabulous job keeping the boat rolling.

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# THE TEAM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

Everyone knows how it works downwind. Our tactician Mark is responsible for finding a clear lane and finding the greatest gain from current. Incidentally, finding a clean lane was not easy. As soon as the lane position was clear, Mark would hand off control of our angle to our spinnaker trimmer, Kris. She would determine our optimal downwind angle via sheet tug. Kris uses the common terms "heat" and "press", but the key is if we wait to sense our own boat speed it's just too late. Sheet tug is our guide and it determines our angle at every point of the leg other than during a tactical consideration.

If just one member of our team did not do what they did or did not give 110% as they did, then we would never have overcome the obstacles that came our way. We could never have reached the level of racing we accomplished with the combined efforts of the team.

Yes, it was fortunate for us that John (#107) covered #254 in the final race. John and Reid were having a great series and it was theirs to win, but there was much talent amongst the fleet and if you found yourself a bit back and on the unfavored side it was nearly impossible to come back.

The team of #160 had incredible tales of misfortune and a few tales of good fortune.

In the end, it was clearly a case of an incredible team effort and I am completely convinced that the whole team was greater than the sum of its individual talents. My great appreciation and respect goes out to them for their efforts. This win was theirs and they earned it.

Till next time, take care and enjoy your sailing.



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# SAVING GRACE: THE VIEW FROM 107

BY JOHN BURNHAM

## THE BACKGROUND

Local knowledge was supposed to be vital to doing well, but it didn't matter much at the 2010 Shields National Championship, hosted last September by Mason's Island Yacht Club and Fleet 19. I grew up sailing on nearby Fishers Island and wrote the local-knowledge article for the regatta program, but I can attest from personal experience that those of us who knew the racing area still found plenty of surprising potholes to fall into.

## THE USUAL FIRST PARAGRAPH

Sailing in the strong currents and choppy waters of Fishers Island Sound, 28 entries raced for three days in light to moderate wind conditions, and consistency was difficult to come by. In the end, Robin Monk's team on Diversion won the regatta, but Robin, Paul Foley, Mark Salih, Steve St. Onge and Kris Zillman had to overcome a couple of major breakdowns along the way, and going into the last race, had to beat three other boats to claim the title. After finishing the finale in second place, Robin still wasn't sure his team had pulled it off.

## DAY 1 - CHASING VIRGINIA

For our team on 107, this was our eighth nationals in the 10 years we've owned Grace, and for Peter Schott, Matthew Buechner, my wife Rachel Balaban and my co-skipper, Reed Baer, this was one of our best efforts. We brought the boat down early and sailed on the racecourse area for a few hours on the previous weekend. We're not sure if that helped, but we made a fast start on Day 1 and nearly came out ahead at the end. Virginia, 224, skippered by Brandon Flack, had tremendous upwind speed and looked like the boat to beat on Day 1. Brandon has sailed in Newport off and on for years aboard Virginia, but he lives in nearby Stonington and had a stellar crew of smart, local friends aboard. Fortunately for us, en route to the downwind finishes we found some lanes in which we made remarkable gains, leaving us with a slim lead in the regatta at the end of the day.

## DAY 2 - TUNING UP SOPHIE

Mason's Island standouts, Al Burnett, a founding member of the host fleet, is an old friend of mine, and with his co-skipper Andy Halsey, they had a crew that included brothers Sam and Jay Greenfield, and tactical wiz Carl Fast. We got together for some pre-race tuning on the second day, after which, in mostly light airs, Sophie turned on the jets and finished 4-2—one of the best performances of the day. Also cranking it up were fellow Newport Fleet 9 teams, Diversion (Robin Monk), Aeolus (Tom Hirsch and Kyle Martin), and Ultimate Pressure (Pete Denton). Along with Virginia, we struggled a bit; so after five races, Diversion held the lead, with us, Aeolus, and Ultimate Pressure close behind.



### DAY 3 – MORNING

Full foulies, failing forestays: The southwest breeze built early on Saturday morning and by the time the boats began the four-mile upwind sail to the course area, the waves were big, augmented by the west-flowing flood tide. On Diversion, the headstay suddenly let go. A quick bearaway saved the mast, but the team radioed the race committee that they were heading ashore to get hauled. Their regatta was over. Then, Paul Foley started examining the headstay toggle and said, "You know, there are still some good threads on this." As described elsewhere in this issue, they reattached the headstay and began to test it. Gaining confidence, they rehoisted the jib and headed upwind for the starting area again. By this time, the wind had done a major fade, although it picked up again so the fleet had a nice sailing breeze for the two final races.

### DAY 3 – AFTERNOON (GETTING THE GUNS)

On Grace, in the first race, we started at the committee boat; tacked seconds after the starting gun fired, and owned the right, where the last of the flood tide was stronger. We led for half the race, but went to the unfavored gate at the leeward mark so we could take the right side again and were passed by Jamie Hilton's 217, John Dory, who earned the finish gun. Aeolus was third, behind us, with Diversion in 10th and Ultimate Pressure well behind. If we could stay within a place of Aeolus, or drag them to 11th or worse, the regatta would be ours...unless Diversion was in the top four and John Dory won the race. Unfortunately, we had a poor start and followed Aeolus to the right, where I thought we would still find a current advantage. We didn't find it, and as we approached the top mark nearly in last place, I had to admit I had made the absolute-wrong call. To make matters worse, we saw John Dory's spinnaker go up first and then Diversion's. Jamie

never looked back and won his second race of the day to beat us on a tiebreaker for second; Robin finished the race in second and couldn't quite believe his change of fortune when he discovered he'd won the regatta.

### WHAT DID WE LEARN?

The Nationals is a hard regatta to win, and this was Robin Monk's second victory. While it didn't look good for him at times, Robin put Diversion in a position to win with a strong crew, well-developed boat speed, and a collective mindset that was ready to deal with the unexpected. And his team demonstrated the fundamental value of never giving up. The John Dory team had a bumpy start, made some wrong calls, but kept improving boat speed throughout the regatta and suddenly shot up through the fleet to finish a strong second. On Grace, finishing third, we knew that good preparation was vital, but we also learned in the fifth race (an 11th, in which we were 5th at one point) that we needed a longer headstay setting to get us through the light air and over-built chop. We also learned that when you are one of four boats in the final race that could win, your over-riding goal should be to remain in charge of your own destiny as long as possible.

What really mattered...Sure, I've filed away some painfully digested notes about the current on the west side of Fishers Island, even though I know that local knowledge may not matter next time either. Being bold set the winner apart from the rest in this regatta. "The worst that can happen," Robin said to his team, "is that the mast might come down." It was a calculated risk, and the result was a national championship title. Something to keep in mind if we get to contend again. Well done, Robin.

217, JAMIE HILTON,  
"FINDING A LANE"





## FLEET NO. 1

# CHECKS IN

BY COLLAMORE CROCKER

Four Fleet One boats made the trip to the far end of the Sound: 23 (Crocker/Macintyre), 41 (Sawyer/O'Shea/Leonard), 182 (McGuire), and 231 (DeVore). From the moment we pulled into Mystic Shipyard, it was clear we were going to be well cared for. The crew at the Shipyard was professional and efficient, and once we had splashed and rigged, several powerboats driven by volunteers from Mason's Island Yacht Club were ready to tow us out the river and to the Club. This was a theme throughout the regatta: MIYC is an all volunteer club, and the members really turned themselves out to make sure everything and everyone was taken care of. I would encourage everyone to make the trip down Rt. 95 the next time Fleet 19 hosts the nationals.

Joining Dual and me aboard Rascal were Peter (Igor) Bauer trimming main and spin, Andrew (AY) Young trimming jib, and Chris ("Hi there, Sweetheart") Foley doing bow and calling the breeze. It was the same team we had together for the NOOD two weekends prior.

All the visiting crews were housed on the island. Team Rascal enjoyed our stay at a guest cottage owned by the Whittemore family. Our hosts, Karin and Lisa Whittemore, went out of their way to make us feel at home. They even went so far as to temporarily

kick their other houseguest out so that he wouldn't disturb us as we rested up for the racing.

Tide, tide, and more tide - that was a general theme to the sailing. We raced just west of Seaflower Reef and Fishers Island Sound, and so there wasn't a lot of variation in the current across the course as best as we could determine. But it sure did serve to lengthen and shorten some of the legs, and to skew the laylines dramatically.

Day one saw a gentle 8 knot northeasterly shifting to the south-east over the course of the day. H.L. got to the inside of a nice right shift on the first beat of a 1.5 mile L4, and after fending off challenges from two different Marion boats, including two-time national champion Bill Berry, held on to win the first race. Hard for Team Mermaid to begin the defense of their title any better than that! Nicely done.

If there was a surprise to day one, it was the size of the shifts. While the mean direction eventually settled down to the southwest that just meant you had righties and lefties battling each other out as they curled around either side of Fishers Island. In the three races sailed the first day, only four boats managed all top 10 finishes (and two of those would eventually finish out of the top 10). Eventual champion Robin Monk saw his main halyard part shortly after the start of race two. While that race was clearly lost, his crew was able to climb to the top of the mast to rerun the halyard, allowing them to stay out and compete in the third and final race of the day, in which they finished second. H.L. can give you an in

depth description of how to tie the homemade harness the crew used to get from the hounds to the top of the mast.

After opening with a frustrating 8-15 in the first two races which we felt like we sailed better than our results showed, Peter announced that we were due for some good luck. Unfortunately, being due and actually getting some are two different things. We started the third race about a third of the way down the line, with half the fleet bunched up at the Committee Boat to windward of us and the rest of the fleet to leeward. With the current pushing us upwind and across the line and the I-Flag flying, boats had been growing more cautious, and there was huge line sag. Chris had a great line sight and was confident enough to pull the trigger well ahead of everyone else. We were absolutely punched and loving life, and planned to stay on top of the fleet below us toward better pressure on the left.

Unfortunately, however, they hailed our number on the radio. Is there any worse feeling? The only good thing was that we were so punched we actually had room to turn back without fouling boats on either side of us. But there was a pile of traffic between us and the Committee Boat making it nearly impossible to get to. It felt like the pin was miles away but we bore off and headed for it. When we were about halfway back we saw the pin boat approach the pin and begin pulling it up. What the? Clearly they weren't waiting for us to restart, and so we put the boat back on the breeze and took chase after the fleet. By this time the mess at the boat had cleared and we were able to get eyes on the flags to confirm there was no X-flag flying. The boats on the left were punched (I wanted to throw up at that point), but we sailed a good clean race, caught some shifts, and managed to just shoot the finishing pin inside of Bill Berry to grab 9th. It wasn't until we were getting picked up at the mooring, by the pin boat no less, that we learned what had happened. It seems the pin boat was supposed to be using a back channel to call Butch's attention to boats that might, in their opinion, be over. Butch had the line sighted and said we were fine, but unfortunately the pin boat hailed our number over the primary channel rather than the back one.

My sincerest apologies to Chris for anything I may or may not have said at the start of that race. Great job calling the line.

Butch was highly apologetic and went out of his way to argue our case for us in the redress hearing. The good news is we were granted redress. The bad news is that we were awarded average points for the day and thus were better off keeping our 9th instead. What we really wanted was for the chance to sail the race we had set up for ourselves with that start. But that's sailboat racing.

Day two saw a lumpy 8-10 knot southwesterly. We started to find our groove, with aggressive starts helping us to get and be able to defend lanes off the line. There was a lot of jockeying for position, and Peter and Andrew did a great job of trimming in and out throughout all of it. While our overall speed was pretty

good, there were a couple of boats that seemed to have the conditions figured out a little better than everyone else. One such boat was #254 driven by a young Kyle Martin with North Sails Newport's Chuck Allen aboard. They were max long on the headstay, pulled on a little extra jib halyard, and moved the cars forward, all standard adjustments, though they were perhaps more aggressive than most. But we were surprised to see them also sail with a very loose outhaul and deep main. While this makes some sense in an effort to increase power/drive in the chop, I'd always read in the Shields tuning guide that you never wanted to ease the outhaul too much as the increase in drag hurt you more than the power helped you. Live and learn as they scored an impressive 1-3 on the day.

One way we made nice gains all day was by gybing as quickly as possible after the offset buoy at the windward mark. It helped that the offset was a good four or five boat lengths from the mark, meaning that the gybe didn't throw us right into boats on the port tack layline or underneath a big cluster rounding the mark behind us. Dual was aggressive in calling for some prehoist of

the halyard, and Chris did his best impression of Ganesh (the four-armed Hindu god) on the bow, getting the kite up and jib down quickly before we threw in the gybe. We were able to get some separation from the fleet which kept us from having to worry about keeping our air clear from boats behind us. Also, particularly as the day wore on, there was some left-to-right current set (looking

downwind) which helped make port tack the long tack downwind. We were pleased with our 5-4 finishes on Friday.

Saturday saw similar conditions to Friday, though a little more wind, averaging perhaps 10-12 knots from the same southwest direction. On the sail out we had gusts into the 20s, but it suddenly died down as we reached the racing area. We won the pin at the first start and held on to win the left side, but lost half a dozen boats in a right shift in the top half of the beat. That was about the only time the right paid all day, however. We generally stuck with the left and did well, eventually finishing 4-7 in the two races that day. A highlight was finishing overlapped with Skip in the final race of the series.

Another highlight of the whole week was the sail to the boatyard (and the race to be first at the hoist). It was quite a sight seeing the fleet sailing up Mystic River under spinnaker, with the wind picking back up and the boats all surfing in the narrow channel. We couldn't catch him when it counted, but we managed to overtake regatta winner Robin Monk, gybing inside at a channel marker to reach the boatyard first.

Our consistent finishes were good enough for 5th overall, ten points out of 1st. We were pleased with our results as we felt that we sailed well in a very competitive fleet. Only two boats had a lower throw out than our 15th, and no one kept a better worst finish than our 9th (from that fateful 3rd race).

**IT WAS QUITE A SIGHT SEEING THE FLEET SAILING UP MYSTIC RIVER UNDER SPINNAKER, WITH THE WIND PICKING BACK UP AND THE BOATS ALL SURFING IN THE NARROW CHANNEL.**

# MYSTIC MEMORIES

BY ALLISON PERICONI

When asked to write an article for the Shields newsletter about the 2010 Nationals from a female prospective, I wondered what exactly that would be. How is what I experienced much different from what a male participant experienced? We are all sailors, and therefore I assume we all have the same basic mentality. We all love the feeling of surfing waves downwind. We all get anxious at the starts whether we are driving or not, especially when there are 25-plus boats on the line. We all dread drifting around while waiting for the breeze to fill in. We all love winning, hate losing and enjoy a good Dark 'n Stormy after the race whether we won or not. So how did this young female sailor feel about Shields Nationals 2010 at Masons Island Yacht Club? Probably a lot like you.

Making the trek up to Mystic, CT was something that the crew of Black Pearl (#73) had talked about, planned for and anticipated for many months. Having never been north of New York City myself, I was very much looking forward to heading up to New England and participating in my second National Championship. When Wednesday of race week finally arrived, all of us were anxious and excited to get out on the water! We heard a lot about the Fishers Island Sound currents and boy did we ever experience them first-hand, when we couldn't even make it to the starting line for the first two practice starts! I can see how learning to sail with currents would take some time. Thursday was a long but beautiful day of racing, and I was glad we got three races in while we had breeze. Friday brought two more races and a continued excellent job by Race Committee who updated the course as conditions changed. What a relief to not start a third race when the wind began to die! Saturday morning found us with full foul weather gear and out on the rail hard as there was quite a blow and big waves on the sail out to the race course. Since I do the fore deck, I was first to put on my PFD, but the others soon followed and we began having discussions concerning topics such as not using a spinnaker for the race. And then about two-thirds of the way out, as if a switch was flipped, the wind



ALLISON WITH CREW AND SKIPPER, JAY DAYTON

quickly moderated. PFDs and foulies were stowed away, and we got in two more races to wrap up the Nationals.

While we didn't place as well as we had hoped, I can't say enough about the wonderful experience that was Shields Nationals 2010. I loved that we were all on this little island together, meeting for coffee on the deck in the mornings and cocktails after races each night. The members of the Shields fleet as a whole could not be friendlier and I thoroughly enjoyed meeting sailors from many different areas of the country. It is such fun to share sailing stories and become friends with people who you hope to see again on the water the next year. I even got a few new Facebook friends! As well, I thoroughly enjoyed the time spent with my fellow crew members, as I am sure you did too. It took a few days for my sides to stop aching from all the laughs that we shared. I'm sure you will agree that the camaraderie among sailors is one of the best things about our sport!

So what was this female sailor's overall opinion of the 2010 Nationals? The trip to Mystic lived up to all my expectations and then some. The warm welcome that we all received from our hosts and other club members was amazing and the professionalism of the Mystic Shipyard was incredible. From the lobsters, chowder and bottomless Dark 'n Stormies to the Race Committee, tender service and racing venue, Masons Island Yacht Club was a wonderful, gorgeous place to host the Nationals. I am sure you all went home with as many fond memories as I did!

## A FINAL WORD FROM MYSTIC

Hosting a four-day regatta at first seemed like a daunting task for a small yacht club with minimal support facilities. No restaurant or bar, limited dock space, no ability to launch and haul on site, and a clubhouse miles away from suitable open water. Fortunately, what Mason's Island Yacht Club lacks in size or amenities, is more than made up by the energy and spirit of its members. That and the very generous donations from our major sponsors, Evolution Sails, the Mystic Branch of Merrill Lynch, Kipany Productions Ltd, Mystic Shipyard and Mystic Seaport along with financial support from friends and local businesses enabled us to make our dream of hosting the Nationals come true. On behalf of Fleet 19, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our volunteers and supporters for making the 2010 Shields National Championship Regatta a tremendous success and a very memorable event.

SINCERELY,  
ROBERT BANAS  
SHIELDS FLEET 19, MYSTIC

# MASON'S ISLAND YACHT CLUB MYSTIC, CT USA

## SHIELDS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP REGATTA SEPTEMBER 23-25, 2010

FINAL SCORES - 9/26/2010

Place	Sail #	Yacht	Skipper	Fleet	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total	Award
1	160	Diversion	Monk, Robin	9	4	(29)	2	8	1	10	2	27	1, 2, 8
2	217	John Dory	Hilton, James	9	10	7	1	9	(11)	1	1	29	8
3	107	Grace	Burnham, John & Baer, Reed	9	2	5	4	11	5	2	(15)	29	8
4	254	Aeolus	Martin, Kyle & Hirsh, Tom	9	6	6	12	1	3	3	(20)	31	3, 9
5	23	Rascal	Crocker, Com & Macintyre, Dual	1	8	(15)	9	5	4	4	7	37	
6	224	Virginia	Flack, Brandon	9	3	2	(11)	10	9	9	5	38	
7	226	Ultimate Pressure III	Denton, Peter & Welles, Will	9	14	1	7	2	10	(25)	16	50	
8	231	Mermaid	Devore, HI	1	1	19	(27)	3	8	11	11	53	
9	114	Sophie	Burnett, Al	19	12	11	14	4	2	(19)	12	55	
10	76	Abigail	Sollitto, Paul	9	9	14	5	(19)	17	5	6	56	4
11	255	Freedom	Peter, Bailey	21	13	12	15	6	(27)	8	3	57	
12	33	Maverick <sup>3</sup>	Slee, Ted & Alison, Betsy	9	11	(16)	8	14	6	12	9	60	
13	71	Old Paint	Shannahan, John	21	7	10	3	18	(20)	14	13	65	
14	239	Syrinx	Berry, Bill	10	5	4	10	15	(19)	15	17	66	
15	182	Lure	Mcguire, Skip	1	(21)	9	16	20	12	13	8	78	
16	245	Hawk	Shoemaker, Charles	9	23	3	13	(27)	13	24	4	80	
17	205	Lakota	Sulick, Peter	21	15	8	17	7	16	(22)	21	84	
18	248	Grinch	Wells, Shane & Van Inwegan, Jason	10	16	(21)	6	13	21	17	14	87	
19	88	Peanut	Schink, Skip & Martincic, Kristian	3	18	18	18	21	7	7	(29)	89	
20	238	White Rabbit	Robbins, Richard & Robbins, Ethan	10	(24)	17	22	24	18	6	10	97	5
21	79	Rebel	Wick, Chris & Reichart, Lee	19	20	13	21	(23)	15	18	18	105	
22	7	Rip	Van Winkle, Dan	19	19	(26)	23	12	26	16	22	118	
23	170	Chaste	Parry, W. Scott	19	17	20	20	22	(23)	21	23	123	
24	73	Black Pearl	Dayton, Jay	21	28	22	19	17	14	(29)	24	124	
25	41	Havoc	Leonard, Patrick & Sawyer, Tim	1	22	25	(29)	16	24	20	19	126	
26	225	Sensation	Seemans, Harry	21	26	23	24	25	22	(26)	25	145	
27	210	Skean Dhu	Saluk, Barry	19	25	24	26	26	25	23	(29)	149	
28	204	Prudence	Green, Berkeley	6	27	27	25	(28)	28	27	26	160	6, 7

### SPECIAL AWARDS

- 1. Shields National Championship Trophy
- 2. Take A Bow Trophy
- 3. Junior Skipper Award (Moore Trophy)
- 4. Senior Skipper Award (Moore Trophy)
- 5. Cornelius Shields Memorial Prize
- 6. Shields Class National Championship Institutional Trophy
- 7. Golden Stern Award
- 8. Kap-Dun Fleet Trophy
- 9. Gordon L Benjamin Memorial Newcomer Award

# FLEET UPDATES

## FLEET 1 LARCHMONT YC, LARCHMONT, NY BY COLLAMORE CROCKER

Fleet One in Larchmont enjoyed another successful season in 2010, with 15 beautiful Shields gracing our harbor. Ten boats have qualified for the season, which consisted of 40 races (and counting). Larchmont Race Week was a highlight as always, with 14 boats making it out to the line for a 9-race series over 2 weekends in July. We wrap up things up with the last regatta of the year on Columbus Day weekend. Eight boats made the trip to Seawanhaka for our District Championships in June, and four boats traveled out to the opposite end of Long Island Sound, for the National Championships in Mystic.

The strength and enthusiasm of the Fleet was evident during our annual barbeque following the crew race in August, with well over a hundred Shields sailors of all ages gathering for a raucous affair hosted by Dual and Kara Macintyre. Several members of our Race Committee joined us; and one, a former Etchells sailor, was overheard saying, "It's been a long time since the Etchells fleet has thrown a party like this!"

Those of us that made the trip to Mystic had an outstanding time, and we were humbled by the tremendous effort of our hosts at MIYC. They threw a wonderful event and we look forward to returning to race in more National Championships in Fishers Island Sound in the future. While Fleet One was unable to repeat the success that H.L. DeVore and crew enjoyed last year, we were pleased that Dual Macintyre and Com Crocker aboard #23 managed to nab fifth place and break up Fleet 9's lock on the podium. Congratulations to winner, Robin Monk and crew, for overcoming several mishaps on the way to their inspirational win. One highlight of the event was the final race to the hoist, which featured a gusty sleigh ride under spinnaker up Mystic River.

While it is still four years away, Fleet One and Larchmont Yacht Club are looking very much forward to hosting the 50th Shields National Championship in 2014.

## FLEET 9 IDA LEWIS YC, NEWPORT, RI BY PETER CLARK

The following is an excerpt taken from Shields Fleet 9 "Bullet Blog." Race 5 started off at the mooring putting the 224 back together after great storm that has come to be known as the Dupe of Earl. On the craft this evening was Mark Kroening on brains, Henry Maxwell on the blue sail, Peter Clark on the throttle, Briar Macky on the Jib + entertainment, and rounding out the 5 was Brandon Flack driving the bus. Robin and his RC staff had to relocate due to our racetrack being occupied by the Intergalactic Yacht Club Clash of the Titans qualifier, so the 25 or so ships headed back to the friendly waters north of the bridge. Conditions found were a strong flooding tide and an 8-12 knot breeze at 235. The forecast was calling for the breeze to shift right as the front passes through later on that evening. The course was set for special race mark 3p and back down to Xp (twice around). This shaped our game plan to start at the boat third and remain on starboard tack for a bit to get the tail end of the current relief from the Rose cone. At the gun we had Stubby (59) on our windward hip with Sollitto (76) pacing us to leeward. About 5 minutes into the beat we were able to tack onto port in clear breeze 2 lengths below Dirk on the Helen and send it back to the right side of the course and pass under the bridge at approximately the mid section of the right center span. The 217 was a threat from the right who appeared to be sailing in less current but as we neared the top end of the beat the right side pressure began to fade and we were able to tack on the leeward hip and shift the 224 into 5th gear point mode and round the mark in lead. The majority of the downwind leg (sponsored by Narragansett Lager) was pretty tame until we neared the bottom third of the run. Kyle had the 254 hard charging on our starboard hip in the fading breeze leading us to jibe out to port to protect the inside. We ended up rounding several boat lengths ahead of the 254 and 217 with our game plan to continue on port until there was a threat of boats tacking onto to starboard. About 200 yards into the leg, the

knocks started to become pretty evident and we tacked... onto layline from about 2 miles out. The forecasters earned their cash today calling for the right shift, that during the beat was about 30-40 deg right of base. We maintained a good split between 217 and 254 marching up the right side of the course, cracked off at about 80-90 apparent but as we approached the bridge we saw the graceful sight of the Burnham/Baer syndicate bone crushing it right of the middle of the course to our leeward. This made for a close rounding with the 224 maintaining a 2 boat length lead over 107 at the mark. The RC posted a change of



NEWPORT EN MASSE: FLACK, MARTIN AND HIRSH, SLEE AND ALISON, BAER AND BURNHAM

course to finish to the southwest of Rose making for some of the most hair-raising racing we've scene this summer. The 224 and the 107 in a dead heat rocked and rolled down wind at and exhilarating 7 knots. We must have paid more for our seats because the view back towards the mark was hair ball with a micro squall kicking up rain and gusting breeze in the low 20s. As one person put it later that night at Zelda's, "These Wizard of Oz-like clouds came out of no where and the rain drops were the size of golf balls..." That boat must have had the beer sponsorship too.

All in all we had a great race, squeaking out the 107 at the very end to claim the gun. Great job to Robin and the gang plus help from the 138 last night. These guys had a major game of chess on their hands.

## FLEET 12 MONTEREY PENINSULA YC, MONTEREY, CA BY GARTH HOBSON

Last year's racing was very close and competitive, particularly the Wednesday night Sunset Series. With three races to go, three boats Harriet, October and Stillwater were tied with five wins each. Only first place finishes are recorded for the series. Harriet won the next two Wednesday night races to wrap up the series, which ended on

the last Wednesday of September with the annual water fight. Every boat in the fleet recorded a win during the series, and it was great to see Storm take two wins one with a crew of juniors aboard and the other with Jessica Jenks and her regular crew. Yankee's bullet was a horizon job, finishing before the rest of the fleet rounded the last mark!

For the weekend One Design Series, Stillwater won both Spring and Summer Series to take the overall Season Championship. Medora has a commanding lead in the Fall Series, with two wins as the Navy crew is just hitting their stride. Thankfully, a few of them will be graduating from NPS this December. Carol with a guest crew from Santa Cruz is currently in second place.

The fleet hosted two clinics, earlier this year, to increase fleet and club membership. The first one was for beginner sailors, showing them the basics of sailing. The second was more advanced with more experienced crew rotating through positions on each boat during a race series. In late August, we held a Match Race Series. Four boats competed, and we were able to complete one round robin before the wind exceeded 20 knots and all agreed conditions were getting to risky since some boats had already had minor breakdowns.

The fleet made their boats available, as borrowed boats, for the Past Commodores Regatta and will also do so for the Kelp Cup later in the year. Three boats raced with former commodores on each one including a junior to do foredeck. Significant was that a current Santana-22 owner and hopefully future Shields owner won the regatta.

The most exciting news from Monterey Bay, Fleet 12, is that Jerry Stratton has purchased FIVE of the UCI shields and these will be coming up to Monterey in series. Jerry already owns three boats and has been most instrumental in growing our fleet. We hope to have more than 12 boats on the line in a couple of years.

## FLEET 19 MASON'S ISLAND YC, MYSTIC CT

BY ROB BANAS

2010 was a magnificent year for sailing in Mystic. Fleet 19 began its regular season with race one abandoned (fog) and ended with its final race cancelled (gale), but the weather conditions between those dates were perfect. As a result, our yachts crossed

the finish line, a record 27 times in just 2 months of sailing. We reformatted our Sunday series from 5 to 15 races. This was accomplished by scheduling up to four short races, with five minutes between starts, on five Sundays over the summer. These shorter courses made for plenty of action at the marks and very tight finishes. Despite the competitiveness of our races one skipper managed to sweep all three series. Congratulations go to Al Burnett for his exceptional season and his ninth place finish at Nationals, as well as his election to Fleet Captain.

### FINAL STANDINGS:

#### JULY THURSDAY SERIES

1st: Al Burnett  
2nd: Barry Saluk/Ethan Tower

#### AUGUST THURSDAY SERIES

1st: Al Burnett  
2nd: Chris Wick

#### SUNDAY SERIES

1st: Al Burnett  
2nd: Chris Wick

#### SODERBERG RACE

Barry Saluk

#### HALSEY AWARD

Al Burnett

Hosting the 2010 Nationals was the perfect finale to a wonderful season. We would like to thank visiting skippers and their crew for joining us in celebrating the 46th Shields National Championship Regatta. We thoroughly enjoyed having you here with us.

## FLEET 21 TRED AVON YC, OXFORD, MD

BY JAY DAYTON

Fleet #21 in Oxford had 13 boats registered this season in Oxford and enjoyed good sailing throughout the season but much of our racing seemed plagued by excessive heat and/or little breeze. Not uncommon in the Chesapeake Bay, but unusually so this year.

Our Spring Series was held in May with a total of six races and eight boats participating. Close racing left the top finishers to be Pete Bailey in Freedom #255 in first, Harry Seamans in Sensation #225 in second, John Christ in Merlin #149 in third, and Schuyler Benson in Drygonfly #35 in fourth place.

Our Summer Series was held over four weeks in July, in conjunction with the Friday night OARS racing (Oxford Amateur Racing



OLD PAINT," #71, SKIPPED BY JOHN SHANNAHAN FROM OXFORD, MD.

Syndicate) with very light participation, due to the excessive heat, very light breezes, and a multitude of other things competing for everyone's recreational time.

The 47th Annual Oxford Regatta held in August marks the peak of summer sailing and includes the Robson Memorial Round the Buoys Race for the Shields Fleet. With seven boats racing, the top places were held by Jay Dayton and Richard Slaughter on Black Pearl #73 in first, Pete Bailey in Freedom #255 in second, Gudy Irving in Horizon #243 in third, and John Christ in Merlin #149 in fourth.

Heritage Regatta was held the next weekend in August featuring vintage classes such as Log Canoes, Comets, Penguins, Hamptons, Chesapeake 20s and Shields racing. There were eight boats racing and the end results were Harry Seamans in Sensation #225 in first, Pete Bailey in Freedom #255 in second, Mike Rajacich / Bill Wade on Shenanigans #133 in third, and John Shannahan in Old Paint #71 in fourth.

The Fall Series was held early this year over Labor Day weekend, in order to allow for more racing prior to the Nationals. There were 7 boats race in 5 races and the end results being John Shannahan in Old Paint #71 in first, Pete Bailey in Freedom #255 in second (by only 1 point), Allen and Henry Clarke in Tango #86 in third and Jay Dayton/Richard Slaughter on Black Pearl #73 in fourth.

Fleet #21 was very pleased to have five boats travel to the Nationals at Mason's Island Yacht Club in Mystic, Ct. to represent Tred Avon Yacht Club. We had a multitude of different racing conditions and placed from 11th to 24th in the overall standings.

We have a few new people interested in participating in our fleet for next season and hope to average more boats per race. General interest remains high and we hope to continue to grow our fleet.

**SHIELDS CLASS NATIONAL  
SAILING ASSOCIATION**

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**[www.shieldsclass.com](http://www.shieldsclass.com)**



SERENELY AT REST



RICHARD AND ETHAN ROBBINS  
WITH CORNELIUS SHIELDS  
MEMORIAL PRIZE



2010 NATIONALS WINNER,  
ROBIN MONK WITH MIKE  
SCHWARTZ, ABOUT TO  
"TAKE A BOW"



NEWPORT'S  
DUPE OF EARL

