

The Jib Sheet

December 23, 2005

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New Year's Day Frostbite Race Yes, those crazy sailors are doing it again. This fun race is a perennial favorite amongst sailors, spectators and media alike.

Meet: Lakeshore sailboat dock

Date: Sunday, January 1, 2005

Time: Come out around 11 AM for food, friendly chat and to ready your boat (or find a ride). Race meeting around noon (time may vary based on wind, weather, attendance, amount of food to be consumed, etc) with start shortly thereafter.

Cost: Free!

Course: Staggered start from the dock, out and around the island, with a finish between the buoys.

Bring: Nothing is mandatory, but it's nice to bring something munchie to share

Pre-race festivities generally involve commenting on the weather, talking with your friends and eating (and maybe a wee libation). What began as a few folks bringing stray items has evolved to an informal potluck, so bring a little something to share if you can, but do come and enjoy. Drinks or hot drink mix, grog, chips, salsa, dip, cut veggies, mixed nuts, pâté de foie gras, doughnuts, rhubarb pie, bagels or maybe something in a crock pot (to keep it warm), like chili, barbecue, Rock Cornish game hens in plum sauce, Swedish meatballs, chicken wings... possibilities are endless, and anything that sounds good to you is probably fine with everyone else.

Conditions last year involved mid-60s temps, sunshine and light wind. 2003's event featured rain, sleet and a freshening breeze that had some boats changing headsails. A couple of years before that everyone had to shovel snow off the decks. Regardless of the weather, the consistent element has been fun. Come have some with us.

No boat? Boat winterized? No inclination to be a skipper? E-mail the group (wlsc@lizards.net) and you can probably scare up a ride. Not interested in actually sailing? Really? Come out to chat, munch and watch the start.

Summer Saltwater Cruise At the December officer's meeting, the Race Captain promised to keep the weekends of June 10/11 and June 17/18 free so that we can go on a week long cruise without missing a race. The open question is "Where do you want to go?" At the meeting both a return trip to the Pamlico Sound and a possible trip to Deltaville on the lower Chesapeake Bay were mentioned. If you are interested in going on a cruise, either chartering a boat or trailering your own boat to the coast, send a note to Cruise Captain Bill Murdoch (wsmurdoch@aol.com) and let him know what you want to do.

Of PHRF and Dinghies Race Captains Tom Gerock and Sam Shafer held a meeting of the race committee on Saturday, December 17, to make plans for the coming year. The group discussed the race schedule, a possible winter series, committee boats, pre-registration, rating adjustments, the possibility of race clinics to help sailors hone their skills, and a variety of other racy issues. Expect an exciting race season. If you're interested in some winter racing, contact Tom (tgerock@aol.com) or Sam (deck-hand@excite.com).

Baron Eliason, the Dinghy Racing Committee Chairman, is working with the race committee to establish a separate racing program for boats outside the "self-righting with a cabin" realm. If you're interested in racing or helping, contact Baron at beliason@naxs.net or 423-434-4648.

Sailing when it's cold: the well-dressed frostbiter Bon Hiver! Cold weather sailing can be fun, but being cold is not. Warm is dead sexy; shivering isn't. How do you stay warm, mobile and readily able to adapt to temperature changes? Layers, a warm head and trunk, and the right fabrics:

- Start with a thin, wicking, non-absorbent layer next to your skin. Cotton long handles get wet fast and stay that way. Try polypropylene, Capilene, Thermax or another widely available high tech fabric. These come in a variety of thicknesses, so get several and adjust based on the temp and your personal needs.
- If it's in the low 50s or below, wear long john bottoms. The rest of your body will stay much warmer with fewer layers. A zip turtleneck will let you vent when you're hot but keep you cozy when you're not.
- Dress in several thin layers, so that you can easily adjust when it gets warm or you get busy sailing.
- Light fleece, which is cozy and warm, is available cheaply almost everywhere. This makes a great middle layer. Thickness varies. Better grade fleece is worth the money if you spend much time outdoors.
- An insulated or thick fleece vest will keep your core warm without binding your arms. A warm trunk means warm fingers and toes.
- A windproof, water resistant outer layer for top and bottom is important. Select one that's breathable so you don't end up drenched in your own sweat. Gore Tex has long been the benchmark for waterproof, windproof, breathable fabrics, but less expensive alternatives work almost as well. Some moderately priced jackets may include a thick, zip-in fleece liner. On top of your light fleece and vest, this should keep you toasty in all but the most severe conditions.
- A warm hat is a must. Up to 50% of your body heat is lost through your head and neck. A separate ear band or ear muffs will let you lose the hat to cool off without freezing your ears.
- Gloves need to fit well enough for you to handle lines and winches. Special sailing gloves are fine, but any glove that's wind and waterproof, with a good gripping palm and fingers, should do it. No matter what you use, you want at least two (or three) pair so that you have a dry set ready.
- Don't forget your feet! Start with thin, poly liners, followed by medium or heavy wool or blend (no cotton, please!) top socks. As with gloves, bring a spare set. Foul weather boots will keep you dry, but usually don't breathe, so your socks may end up wet. Gore Tex boots are waterproof and breathable, but be sure the soles are reasonably non-marking and will have good traction on your deck. My favorites for cold, wet weather are "pac" boots, with rubber bottoms, leather tops and a removable felt liner.
- What's left? A life jacket, of course! When you're swaddled up, you'll sink like a stone if you fall overboard. Keep all that "I'm a great swimmer" stuff to yourself. The water's in the 40s and getting colder, and you won't swim far. Get one adjustable enough to accommodate all those layers comfortably, maybe with a harness built in so you can clip on when it's really windy.



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