

SHACKLES AND CRINGLES



CANADIAN ALBACORE ASSOCIATION



LATE SUMMER 2009

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMODORE

As I write this letter I am just getting over a terrible head cold- at the end of summer! I just finished reading a letter from my Curling Club and was thinking about how fast this summer has gone by - and how weird the weather has been.

Lot's of great sailing took place this season all over the country and I am just beginning to hear the stories from Shelbourne and the East Coast Championships - and the Hurricane (Bill) that shortened the event on the Sunday - but NOT the enthusiasm.

Ralph Glass - the guy I usually sail with was sailing with a Junior Helm and they do have a wonderful Junior program in Shelbourne! This marked the second Junior CAA sanctioned event that took place this summer the first was in the Muskokas in early August. We are delighted to see young people gaining an appreciation for the Albacore Class and fleet.

I had the privilege to travel to Scotland in July for the Internationals and sailed at a great venue with wonderful people, in awesome wind!

Ottawa, Peterborough and Parry Sound all boasted a few terrific events and there's still more to come.

The Ontario Championships, at the end of August, were hosted by the Buffalo Canoe Club - which promised and gave a fantastic venue - big breeze and waves. This coming weekend we are holding the Canadian Championships and our AGM in Hamilton.

We had a number of sold out Educational Workshops and Clinics this season all organized by Michelle Arnot - and all received very high satisfaction results upon evaluation and you - have told us that you want event more - so that will be on the docket for next season - some suggestions have come forward for us to do another Rules Clinic as well as some Race Committee training.

I hope to see you at the Canadians- but please note - if we miss you - enclosed is a letter recapping our year to date and summarizing some of the functions of the CAA and the principles that guide our work.

We began the year with an overview of our plans and I want to provide you with a re-cap of our activities.

Also - visit our website and see the presentation that was made to the International competitors in Largs, promoting our Canadian hosted International Albacore Event in 2011. Some teams are already practising to win this on home soil!

There is still lots of sailing to do in the next month - so I am popping an Advil and heading out to get my boots on!

Cathyann

Editors's Note:

Photos in this issue are courtesy of Robert MacDonald (cover), Barney Harris, Henry Pedro. Thank you to all contributors.





2011 ALBACORE INTERNATIONALS in TORONTO

COME SAIL WITH US

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Save the date



THE RACE COMMITTEE - love 'em or hate 'em - well, you need 'em

By Stephanie Mah (who is grateful for input from David Sprague, who actually knows about this stuff)

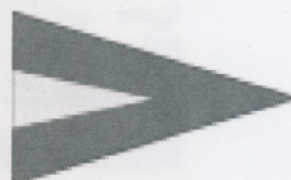
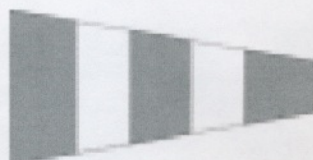
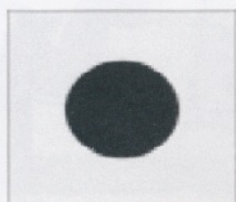
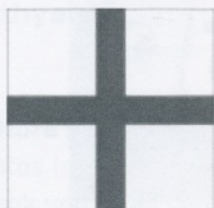
Unless your entire fleet has mastered rabbit starts, the race committee remains one of the most necessary things to a racer - and if one was to judge from the criticism that is levelled against them after any regatta, at any level of competition, the RC is also one of the greatest points of frustration. It would seem that running a race is an art, not a science, because someone is always unhappy with the performance.

On one hand, I want to remind people that most race committees, especially those in the albacore fleet, are unpaid volunteers. On a nice day, with the sun shining and the wind blowing gently, it can be a nice thing to watch the fleet go around the course. But on a not so nice day, when it's pelting rain, cold, blowing like stink and choppy, being trapped on an anchored boat trying to get the sequence right or babysitting a mark can really, really suck, and all the free post-regatta beer in the world doesn't really make up for the near frostbite or the abuse that tends to get hurled at RCs by frustrated racers. As another gentle (or not so gentle) reminder, even if you think the RC has just run the most horrific race ever, you are not justified in sailing by and abusing them for what you think is a cock-up. It's not nice, and it could lead to a disqualification. You could maybe offer some constructive criticism, but keep it clean and constructive. Always remember that running a race isn't easy, especially when conditions are not nice. Chop makes it hard to set anchors. Shifty wind makes it hard to set a square line. Big wind makes it hard to hear each other over the flapping of sails. Rain and cold makes it hard to score properly. If you're sitting in your albacore feeling frustrated with the weather, you can be sure the RC isn't feeling much better.

But now to the other hand. A race is only as good as the committee running it, and enthusiasm doesn't always make up for a lack of knowledge about how to properly do one's job. A race committee has an obligation to not just run the race, but to run it fairly, properly, and not to disadvantage anyone in any way. No one enjoys losing (or winning) a race when the line was hugely skewed, the sequence was wrong, or when a recall should have been signalled. As racers have an obligation to know the rules and abide by them, race committees have an obligation to know how to run a race and what to do when they've made an error. This obligation could easily be met by a club inviting the Ontario Sailing Association to run a race management seminar, or bringing in experienced race committees to talk about what to do.

So, what do you do if you are racing and you truly believe that the RC has messed up in a big way (e.g., half the fleet is over early and no general recall is flown)? You cannot protest the race committee, but if you don't mind cutting into your post-regatta drinking time, you could ask for redress under Rule 62. I realise that in the albacore fleet, no one really wants to cut into anyone's drinking time, but sometimes a message needs to be sent that a RC has messed up and some learning is in order. And really, anyone who has won a race or done well when he or she was clearly OCS but benefited from an error by the RC shouldn't feel wronged if the race is chucked - unless winning by cheating has somehow become cool.

I said in my last Shackles article that anyone who is serious about racing should put in some time on an executive, and the same holds true for doing race committee work - after all, you shouldn't be hurling stones unless you're sin-free (or however that saying goes). Experienced racers owe it to their fleet to put time in on the race committee boat, and to help further education where deficits are perceived. And hey, even the most experienced racers can always learn a thing or two while running a race. Finally, screw Flanders.



GB AL7518

Of the 53 competitors at this year's windy and cold edition of the Albacore Internationals in the Scottish Largs, there was only a tiny scattering of female skippers (which is not that unusual as sailing continues to be a sport dominated by men). One of them, Judy Armstrong, not only managed to break into the top 5, but she did it while breaking one of the silent rules of sailboat racing – which is, don't do it with your significant other. I was curious to learn more about this outstanding woman, so I sent some questions across the Atlantic.



I've heard of a lot of couples who started out racing together but eventually had to stop because it wasn't easy to let go of the frustrations that arose on the water. How long have you been sailing with Paul? And how do you make it work? And how do you make him hike harder?

Across the pond we've had some very good female skippers (e.g., Ann White, Teresa Miolla, Sarah Bury) but they are few and far between. How are women faring in the class in the UK? If you have a lot more women, what do you do to encourage them?

What are the challenges you face being a woman in the fleet?

Where is your favourite place to sail?

Who are you going to thank first when you win the Internationals?

Where did you get that awesome beanie I saw in some photos?



Judy's Answers

I have been sailing the albacore for nearly 20 years after coming out of 470's (dreadful boat). I sailed with another girlie who in 1992 decided to go back to her Europe sailing.

I had just met Paul at this time and he had never sailed before (so had no bad habits) and was very keen to have a go. It took a couple of years before we gelled as a team. It is an ideal sailing combo we get on very very well we never argue we just love sailing together and the social side that comes with it. If we didn't get on so well the enjoyment wouldn't be there. Paul enjoys the technical side of sailing what makes the boat go faster in different conditions (which I have never enjoyed that side) I am very much a pull the sails up and go sailor (must have a little bit of natural ability) I think!! I do the tactics and he doesn't question me even when I get it wrong! He has just recently started making the odd suggestion on tactics. How do I make him hike harder? Nibble his ear up the beat tends to work (joking). Just say could you sit out a bit further dear I can't see my tell tales.

We only have a few lady helms and I try to encourage anybody who is keen by taking them out with me and prove that you can sail on a level with the men.

I did think the only challenge that I had at Largs was upper body strength, in the breezes we had, I struggled to play the mainsail as much as I would have liked to. I should probably join a gym that would rectify the problem.

Favourite place to sail. I don't no . We both enjoy sailing on the sea as we only sail on a puddle normally.

I would love to win the Internationals some day, that would be a dream come true.

The awesome beanie was from a hiking shop it is actually a little girls, it's age 11/12 but I liked it.

My favourite place to sail maybe Rock Hall after we come across in a few weeks to do the US Nationals.

Why the Albacore is such a great class... note from Barney Harris - three time class International Champion about some coaching he offered midway through the Albacore Internationals in 2009.

"During the lay day (last Wednesday), David Byron and I took Kevin Boyce and his daughter Lizzie out for an evening training session. We left the dock at 1900 and did some side by side upwind pacing with Kevin steering USA 8122, with me as crew, and David steering GBR 7501 with Lizzie crewing and steering. We worked on sheeting and steering technique and positioning to get good comparative speed. Next, we did some reaching and running, going over proper Albacore set up and sailing technique. We finished the evening's sail with a short windward leeward course to practice tacks, gybes, and mark roundings. Kevin and Lizzie are sort of new to sailing and the Albacore, but seem to be hooked. We finished the night with a few beers from their local town micro-brewery and a curry dinner with others in downtown Largs.

Those two nearly cracked the 20s the next day, after having been posting high 40s of DNFs in the prior races. It's great fun to teach. Barn

I am an enthusiastic sailor, who races Albacore 7501 Memphis Minnie at the back of his club fleet. After a few beers from our local microbrewery I decided to enter the 2009 International Championships, I persuaded my daughter Lizzie 19 yrs, on her summer vacation to join me. She is an accomplished college dancer and occasional sailor; she has great balance, strength and courage, all the attributes of a great Albacore crew. Also her pals Olivia, Dominic and Kieran decided to join us, tempted by the thought of the hockey tournament prizes and Tunnock teacakes.

Boat packed, we headed north to the land of neaps, tatties and Loch Ness monsters. We immediately noticed how keen and serious it all was, we were weighed and measured and finally certified fit to enter. However, the free Tunnock teacakes and Benromach whisky cheered the crew and shore team up no end.

Practice race Day 1, our dream of sun and beaches and sailing in gentle Scottish summer breezes are broken by the noise of the tent trying to leave its pegs and guys. The waves and winds are exciting for the best Albacore sailors in the world, at the back of the fleet we are hanging on grimly, watching as 4 boats broach and capsize in front of us. We rounded two marks; the third gybe ended our afternoon on the Clyde as the boom hit the water. Water actually quite warm, something to do with the Gulf Stream. As I struggled to right the boat, Lizzie was shouting at me over the wind and waves, an anxious father was very worried, he should have been, for her new Ray-Ban sunglasses now sleep with the fishes and loch monsters of the Clyde.

Day 2, buoyancy bags are so expensive in Largs, (not to mention sunglasses) spent race 2 fitting new ones to Memphis Minnie, launched boat missed race 2 by 50 seconds. However we sailed the course and stayed upright. Race 3 now really windy, so the bar beckoned.

Day 3, Monday it is really windy, so DNC. A day out in Largs, which hosts a fine Viking centre and the best ice cream in the world. It was pretty good, so we double checked the ice cream to make sure, a fish and chip supper to finish a typically good day out at the Scottish seaside, not what we racers, were here for though.

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Day 4, we have not started any of the 7 races thus far and are easily dead last. Having a ball though, Olivia, Dominic and Kieran are now signed up members of the launch crew helping the Albacores launch and land in the heavy seas. Our hockey team 'Le Poulet De Mer' narrowly beaten in a penalty shoot out by Canada Red, who went on to be nearly killed by Shetland islanders in the next round. (We had seen their ancestors in the Viking centre, tough lads).

We do sail and start a race. We came in 46th the sight of 53 boats on a start line was fantastic and watching most of them sail away very familiar as we flog to windward yet again. Race 9 we start and notice very quickly that this is a gale blowing, we try to head home, spend an hour in high winds waves before reaching the jetty under our own steam without swimming once. The fleet is now spread across Scotland or upside down, the rescue boats and launch crews deserve medals for the work they did that afternoon. The sight of broken noses, masts and other gear does not bode well for 'Team Boyce' if this weather keeps up. We feel part of championship for first time, being able to swap sailing stories with others including Barney Harris and David Byron. The place had a real buzz after the storm and the bar staff worked hard.

You were wondering when I would get to the point of the story, but it is important that the view of the championships from the tail end should be recorded also. I was conscious that Lizzie deserved a better experience as crew than I could thus far offer as helm. In talk over beer the suggestion arose of Barney taking Lizzie out for a sail so that she can experience how it could be done. The USA boys went further offering to take me out and for David to helm 7501 with Lizzie as crew, throwing in a free tuning job on the boat as well.



Lay day. Barney and David do arrive on time (not beer talk after all), a nice 10-12 knot breeze. Out we go, I thought it foolhardy of Barney to even let me near his boat let alone drive it, I am sure he had no spare boat with him and the next day had a chance of pushing towards another Worlds. What a sailing experience the next 2 hours were for us. His boat is like a Steinway concert piano, everything works on fingertips and so smooth, lesson one was about friction, my own boat is the other extreme 22 years worth of friction.

We sailed upwind, I learnt how to come up in gusts easing the mainsheet and flattening the boat then pulling in mainsheet again. How to tack, gybe and what sails should look like on all points of sail. I am 6ft 4ins, 100kgs an ex-rugby player, so my tacking is not pretty, but Barney Harris does not give in easily. What a coach and sailor. Eventually, 1 in 3 tacks are looking quite reasonable, then horror! I slip, lurch and fall backwards bang and a cracking noise? Have I broken something? Is his championship finished? The great sailor is calm, we carry on it's only a tiller extension and should be okay.

So in conclusion what happened the next day? Did coaching work? Was Barney's boat okay? They finished 4th, 6th and 1st next day so no damage there. We crossed the start line in race 11 came upwind like a train, climbing up boats in the gusts and pointing as high as anyone in the fleet. At the windward mark we are about 12th, with 41 Albacores chasing us down. Barney Harris and David Byron a massive thank you what a sight for us. A few clumsy tacks, gybes and poor tactics downwind later we cross finish line in 30th place. You have no idea how good that felt watching 23, yes 23 Albacore nationals following us. What a Race. We finished 50th in the World overall. I apologise now to those dinner guests who will suffer this story over the winter. To Barney and David a class act who epitomise what sport should be about and for those who organised the championships Derek and Crawford fine event boys.

Kevin Boyce

INTERNATIONALS 2009, LARGS, SCOTLAND

THE GOOD, THE BAD, THE UGLY, THE LESSONS

Allan Measor

The Good:

Renting a house that was a 10 minute walk along the ocean from the regatta site with great friends from J -Town sailing club.

The Bad:

Deciding in the last race to start "Canada Style". Go over the line at one minute thirty seconds before the start, reach down the line across the bow of 10 boats, waving the obligatory hello, finding a open spot then proceed to bring people up over the line with us, causing a general recall. Doing this exact manoeuvre a second time, waving hello to a few of the same boats who were looking very puzzled. When asked why by competitors ...our response was "it's the last race of the regatta and we don't want to go home". However, the race committee got tired of our shenanigans and put up a black flag. We behaved after that.

The Ugly:

Gybing in 30 knots. Technically we completed our gybe, cheered in the boat, then proceeded to capsize. Although we weren't the only ones upside down, probably another 5 boats were swimming with us.

Why you decided to go, what did you learn? Is this your first time sailing in the UK ?

First time in the UK and learned alot about sailing with adjustable shrouds, which adds a great new dimension to the the albacore for North American sailors. Adjustable shrouds allow you to power-up/de-power the boat very easily without adjusting pins. It really makes a difference on windy days and on downwind and reaching legs. Playing tides was also a major factor in some races, calling laylines with current is very tricky business. We also learned that starts on a 1 mile upwind leg really aren't that important, just staying in clean air on the right side of the course is crucial.

Lastly, packing a boat to ship in a container isn't all that hard after all. It's a 2.5 hour investment pre-regatta and 2 hours post regatta, only slightly longer than packing to trailer.

Why go /travel and experience an out of country event ?

You get the chance to meet new albacore sailors, mix sailing with tourism. A great alternative to lying on the beach sipping fruity drinks.

Andrew and Ingrid Callum

The Good:

Great venue - great dinghy sailing.
Great competition - very fast and smart sailors
Great RC/PRO - 14 races achieved of a target 15
Only one protest in the whole regatta. Team Canada won the Ball Hockey Championships

The Bad:

Richard Piercey in a kilt.
Scotland was kind of damp and nothing dried out ... ever.
Allan Measor's wetsuit socks were wicked.

The Ugly:

Nothing, other than one race where we dumped on the upwind leg and took forever to drain the boat.
Richard Piercey in a pink bath robe

Why you decided to go, what did you learn?

Wanted to compete in the Worlds. Love sailing in Scotland. We sailed in more wind than we normally do here in Toronto, so a full week in high winds improved our boat handling and confidence.

Is this your first time sailing in the UK ?

Ingrid and I have gone several times to the UK to race: Great venues. Great people. Different boats (ie adjustable rigs) sailed a different way. Tides/currents.





Mary, care to explain?



Chris Maslowski

I've had a few days to reflect on my trip to the Internationals and the bruises and the feeling of being waterlogged are starting to fade.

It was a great trip and memorable not as much for the racing but for the way we were made welcome by our hosts.

Mary and I had travelled to the Internationals in Great Britain in 2001 and it was such a wonderful experience, we had to do it again.

The best thing, by far, was the hospitality of the Scots who made us feel a part of the Albacore community.

Our boat left something to be desired as it was a charter. We were constantly fixing and improving things, with daily visits to the local chandlery.

Arriving with little else but our sailing gear, we had to rely on our fellow competitors for tools, lines, spare blocks, vang systems, duct tape (we bought some but lost it instantly), rivet guns, spare centreboards, etc.

Not only did they gladly give us all that we asked for but offered us a shot of scotch, to help ease our troubles. It was also a great way to meet the locals.

Their accents put a smile on my face, even if I only understood half of what they were saying. Every comment or question was greeted by a friendly smile, and an aye, aye, aye.

The other cool thing was the house we ended up in. A luxurious mansion, beautifully furnished, walking distance to the marina, cupboards full of scotch, for the equivalent of \$30 a night.

The other best thing in Scotland was the cheap price of beer, cheese and bread. Really all one needs to survive.

The Bad? Very little that I can think of.

The charter boat mostly. Duct tape on the bottom of the hull. No blocks for the jib sheets. Not just no ratchet blocks, but no blocks at all. Sharp pieces of wood for all the angled cleats on the thwart, that constantly dug into my ass. All those questions that people ask me since my return, "how's your ass" refer to the cleats in the boat and nothing else.

Two centreboards breaking on us. A loop of spectra for the jib halyard that broke when the boat did a flip.

ooppss !



GETTING TO KNOW GUY TIPTON

CAN AL8 8015

Q

How long have you been sailing Albacores?

1.5 years

Q

What are your goals for the upcoming sailing season? What regattas are you sailing this year? Albacore or other

Well, we wanted to win the Albacore North Americans in Toronto, but we soon realised the fleet was much better than first expected, you lot have done a really good job with the fleet there, and we also noticed we have little to no idea how to get Albacores down wind. We then thought we would win Nepean but Mr. Leon put a stop to that. So I guess now we are going to try and win our own regatta out here on the east coast. After that Matt King and I get back into the Fireball and go after the Fireball North Americans at Point Claire in October. Next year Matt and I are off to Barbados for the Fireball Worlds and any result near top 10 we would be really happy with, later we'll be coming back to have a crack at a couple of the Albacore big regattas, we fancy the worlds and or NA's possibly the Canadians. We'll see where the location is.

Q

What changes would you like to see in the Albacore (if any).

We really need to have a couple of measurers out here on the east coast, it's a nightmare trying to get sail measured and sorting out what we can and can't do. Which in turn creates a problem for us lot out here to get to regattas out and conform with the class. I spent time at the NA's trying to figure out who was a measurer and then actually finding one who had time to measure my sails. Even the Fireball fleet has a measurer out here and there are only 3 boats. We have over 30 Albs here in Shelburne county.

(** Note the CAA exec are aware of this and are looking at various alternatives)

Q

At what age did you learn to sail, and what type of boat was it?

11 years old in my dad's Wayfarer

Q

Who was your biggest early influence in sailing?

Biggest 100% Paul Tingly, I never thought after 25 years of sailing I would meet someone in the sport who would make my hairs stand on end. Paul is a massive inspiration to me, a total 100% living legend. I would encourage everyone to look him up on the internet. If anyone reading this does not know who he is shame on you.



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Q
What other classes have you sailed? Do you think that has helped in your success?

Laser Radials, 420's, 470's, Fireball. For sure, especially Laser Radials and 470's international the hardest fleets I have ever sailed.

Q
Why did you decide to sail Albacores?

Mainly because when I moved to Nova Scotia that is what the Shelburne fleet was sailing. After the support that the CAA has supplied us by supporting our regatta and advice on what to do with the boats and donations from the community clubs (thanks Jason and Teresa) has made it is a very nice class to sail in. It's a good family and I have made a lot of good friends.

Q
What do you like about the Albacore Class?

The good sailing, good sportsmanship, good social and the fact that I can take my 3 year old out for a sail and then an hour later race like a mad man.

Q
How would you like to see the class change/grow?

More youth in the class, I totally expect to be sailing with my kids in the future and in Shelburne we have around 8 kid that race against the adults and it makes for a really good positives adult / kid relationship.

Cheers for now,
Guy



EVOLUTION SAILS NOW IN TORONTO

The Albacore group has enjoyed a close working relationship with Quantum Sail Design Group over the past number of years. However, market forces have caused Quantum to reorganize their business and with that decision they have announced the closure of the Toronto loft.

The working staff at the Toronto loft, in response, have realigned their business with Evolution Sails. Evolution Sails have a worldwide reputation with lofts in New Zealand, Australia, Singapore, the USA and Canada.

Greg Bratkiw, President of the new Evolution loft says "We're proud to be the only global sail manufacturer left in Canada". Greg adds "Our existing sailmaking facility in Toronto will remain at our current location with the same contact numbers."

John Dakin, sailmaker: "Our local manufacturing facility allows us to have much better service, warranty and quality control. We're going to continue to service the Albacore group in Canada and the USA with the exact same high quality product that they have always known from the former company. We're very excited about our new company."

Most of the same, familiar staff from the former Quantum loft will remain in Toronto with Evolution Sails. Evolution Sails can be found at www.evolutionsails.com

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