

LONDONLINE



Squadron trip to the Toronto Boat Show! Details on page 6!



NEWS & VIEWS OF THE
LONDON POWER AND SAIL SQUADRON

Attack on the Mac

The 2008 Port Huron to Mackinac Race began with wipeouts and ripped sails - for starters



We could see it coming on our on-board satellite weather system and on the water.

On the chartplotter in front of me at the helm, it was a fast approaching blob of crimson and yellow, fringed with narrow bands of green and punctuated with symbols for thunderstorms and lightning strikes. As it has been on the Great Lakes for mariners dating back to the natives and earliest European explorers, the signs were there on the water as well. A storm was coming.

The sky to the southwest turned gray-white, and darkening patches on the water from that direction indicated rapidly-strengthening winds approaching our position near the starting line of the 2008 Bayview Port Huron to Mackinac race. The 219 mile race is a venerable tradition on Lake Huron dating back 84 years to early in the past century... its sister race on Lake Michigan from Chicago to Mackinac celebrated its 100th anniversary this year.

We were in pre-start maneuvers aboard 'Respite', our 1984, 35 foot C&C sailboat, having left Sarnia Yacht Club an hour earlier and anchored briefly to clean any algae off the bottom. From the staging area, we were able to cross into the starting area 20 minutes before the gun for our start and begin setting up for our run at the start line. The object in sailboat racing is to hit the starting line at full speed as the gun goes off, allowing you to break through with clean air in front of your competitors. . . . continued on page 3

December
2008



Coming
Events

JANUARY

- 8th - Term 2 classes commence
- 13th - Squadron Bridge meeting @ 1900, HMCS Prevost, London
- 17th - Squadron trip to the Toronto Boat Show.

FEBRUARY

- 1st - Submission deadline for London Line February edition
- 10th - Squadron Bridge meeting @ 1900, HMCS Prevost, London

MARCH

- 10th - Squadron Bridge meeting @

1900, HMCS Prevost, London. New Bridge members invited.

APRIL

- 1st - Submission deadline for London Line April edition
- 14th - London AGM (Annual General Meeting) @ 1900 in Wardroom, HMCS Prevost, London
- 21st - Squadron Bridge meeting @ 1900, HMCS Prevost, London
- 24th to 26th - District Annual General Meeting.

FOR LOCATION OF HMCS PREVOST SEE MAP ON PAGE 4.

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from the helm



COMMANDER
MARK HUNSBERGER

To begin this month's article from the helm, I would foremost like to extend my congratulations to the organizing committee of the October National Conference held this year in our own district, in Windsor, Ontario. This location was selected to celebrate the 70th anniversary of CPS in its birthplace. The Western Ontario committee, who spent literally years planning this event, should be proud of their efforts to give us, in my opinion, one of the best conferences to date. A special 'Thank You' goes out to P/Cdr Paul Neve, Nick and Alice Baratta and Bev Miatello, who pitched in to ensure the London Squadron's contributions to the event were in order. Between myself and our Executive Officer, Deb Hughes, we were able to cover pretty well all of the meetings and seminars that were offered. Many new items were brought home with us and I urge all of you to visit the National site to

view the postings that are now available to update your knowledge of what was covered.

Secondly, I wish to express my thanks to our Training Officer, Steve Waite for his seemingly tireless efforts. Steve, after completing a journey from our west coast to Hawaii, graced about 40 Squadron members and guests with a presentation of his adventure. Also in this edition (Pg. 5), with a more concise breakdown available on our Squadron website, are the courses being offered this Winter and Spring. I hope many of you will take advantage of the offerings, and will consider suggesting courses to others who might benefit accordingly. Course gift certificates are available as well, by contacting any one of this year's Officers.

Finally, with Christmas now very close, please allow me to extend to each and every one of you, the very best of the season and a safe and healthy New Year.

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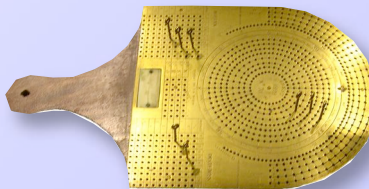


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The Brest Scale (15th C.)



'By recording the course and speed with this instrument every half-hour of the watch, it was possible to estimate the ship's position at a later stage.'

Museu da Marinha, Lisbon, Portugal

LONDONLINE

London Line is the official publication of the London Power and Sail Squadron (a unit of the Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons) to inform and advise members and students.

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Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor or London Line, London Power and Sail Squadron or CPS-EPC. The Editor reserves the right to decline article submissions if they do not meet editorial criteria.

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... continued from pg. 1 On this occasion, entering the starting area involved crossing the international shipping lanes, and we had to wait briefly for a mammoth southbound freighter to pass through before we headed there at 11:30, Saturday July 12th. Our start would be at 11:50.

Shortly after we entered the pre-start area, the waves of thunderstorms and driving rain hit. We tacked back and forth behind the starting line marked by two big motor yachts from Bayview Yacht Club, avoiding getting in the way of competitors in the fleet starting immediately ahead of us. By the time we were in the 5-minute countdown for our start, hard-driving rain had obliterated the start line and most of our 13 competitors (also jockeying for a fast start position) from our view. We resorted to our collective instincts to know where we were on the lake, while feathering the sails to avoid being blown too far downwind.

A time-honoured starting technique in sailboat racing is the timed start. Assuming your boat will approach and leave the starting line at a similar speed, you mark the time remaining until the gun while tacking away from the start line. When half that time has expired you turn back toward the start line with the intention of hitting it at the gun at full speed. The winds are constantly changing of course, so it's not an exact science. We last saw the start line about 3 1/2 minutes to the gun. In continued driving rain we planned to begin our run back toward the start line with 1 minute and 30 seconds to go, tacking for the line on a port tack. This would not give us right-of-way over starboard tack boats but it appeared most were planning to start on port so we could run down the start line if needed to begin the race. We nailed the start gun and were on our way! After months of preparation this was the moment we had all anticipated.

We did well in climbing to windward of our competitors as many of them reefed or shortened sails to cope with the big gusts that were enveloping the fleet. We had not put up our gennaker (the 'kite') because of the high winds and the competition starting behind showed us the wisdom of this strategy. Many blew out spinnakers and several mastheads came precariously close to the cresting waves! Moving into clear air and keeping the telltales flying I briefly glanced behind us just in time to see a blue and yellow sail go flat to the water taking a boat with it, while the rest of the Respite crew continued to call out various wipeouts and ripped sails. It was an expensive start for some of the competitors!

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We carried on with main and genoa up, moving well through the fleet as the rain eased and the wind settled. A few miles due north up the course we launched the gennaker only to watch it promptly float back down on to the foredeck and water. A quick assessment told us the snap shackle at the head of the sail had released. A bigger problem however, was that the halyard was now stuck at the top of the mast and we didn't have a spare.

Manning the helm at that time, Bill Morrison didn't think anyone would want to go up and retrieve the halyard until he spotted Randy Brown hauling out the bosun's chair. We dropped the mainsail and hauled Randy 50' up the swaying mast to save the day and then re-launched the gennaker with the shackle taped shut. It was shortly after this act of daring-do that a helicopter arrived to circle overhead and take the photograph (on page one) showing our colourful new sail in full flight. We continued on the rhumb line (most direct line to the next mark) for several hours with consistent speeds between 7.5 and 9 knots.

Later in the day, with the sun waning in the west, the breeze lightened and became patchy, catching some boats in 'holes' while others caught a chance wind line and ghosted ahead. We looked for drifts of darker water indicating some air movement that allowed us to gain ground on only a few boats while losing to others. Light winds can be as challenging to the helmsman and sail trimmers in a race as heavy winds at the other end of the Beauford Scale. But the flatter conditions allowed me the opportunity to heat up a delicious shepherd's pie, prepared ashore by Sandy Zupancic. I also had the opportunity to recall that it was at this same point in the race last year, off the American port of Harbour Beach, that we stalled for a full night watching a disheartening and unchanging view from sundown to sunrise. We weren't keen on a repeat performance this year and our spirits were buoyed as the breeze built through the evening until we were once again flying across the waves.

By nightfall we were again up to speeds of 8 knots as we ran through the steering rotation with each crewmember helming for an hour at a time. At times the steering was difficult, working around 4-5 foot waves that were hard to see as they approached the port stern quarter. Many skippers we spoke to later talked about the grueling nature of the race, and in particular how exhausted the helmsmen were. We were indeed fortunate to have six of them onboard, as even a one-hour shift was often quite tiring at the wheel. ... part 2 will continue next issue.



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4

INSTRUCTOR PROFILE:

Steve
Waite

...has been with CPS since 1999 and an instructor for the past 3 years. Steve is currently the Training Officer for LPSS



What CPS courses have you taught?

Maritime Radio and Piloting (now Seamanship). Currently I'm instructing Marine Maintenance.

What do you enjoy most about teaching?

Interaction with the students. Satisfaction when they pass the course. Learning from their experiences.

What do you enjoy the least?

Hauling computers, projectors & supplies back and forth from Catholic Central High School to HMCS Prevost.

Is there another course you'd like to teach?

I believe I'll try a hand at Depth Sounders, Distress Signaling, Extended Cruising, and maybe even Celestial Navigation.

Is there a course you'd like to take?

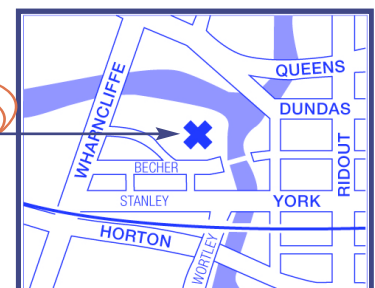
I'd like to complete Celestial Navigation. It has been simmering on my back burner since the completion of Advanced Piloting in 2005.

Tell us a little of your boat and/or experiences.

Since High School, I've crewed Other People's sailboats. I've sailed in Lakes Erie, Ontario, Huron and some of the Trent-Severn canal. The family chartered a sailboat for a week in the north Channel, and most of us are still on speaking terms. I've completed some Canadian Yachting Association (CYA) practical courses including Basic, Intermediate, Advanced and Offshore Cruising, Celestial Navigation and will apply for CYA Yachtmaster-Coastal designation this fall. I've sailed in salt in the BC Gulf Islands, St Lucia and Martinique in the Caribbean, and in June, I was fortunate enough to crew on a passage from Vancouver to Hawaii. A friend in Texas is now organizing a charter for 2009 March. It was to be Tahiti, but it appears to be very complicated and expensive to fly there, so we are examining alternatives. I've amassed enough gear that I can quickly be ready for most any opportunity to sail. Besides sail, my spouse bought her sister's 17 ft motorboat, and we enjoy summer weekends on Lake Erie near Port Rowan.

HMCS Prevost

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One Reason To Take The *Membership has its privileges . . .* Boating Course



While in Santa Maria, Cuba in October 2008, I went on an all day snorkeling expedition on a 23 meter Fountain-Pajot catamaran named Zeus. This boat was built specifically for day charters and was only 2 years old. It was 75 feet long by 30 feet wide with a 90 foot high mast which is as high as a 9 story building. I was told it cost one million dollars and was owned by the local hotel consortium. To my surprise, the captain let me take the helm for over an hour on the way back while winding our way through several islands in the archipelago. It was like maneuvering a giant whale and was quite thrilling. That Power Squadron basic boating course sure paid off!

Bernie Weis LPSS Membership Officer



2009 Winter & Spring LPSS Courses In 2009

HMCS Prevost - Thursdays

Boating - starts January 8, 2009 for 16 evenings

Seamanship (replaces Piloting) - starts January 8, 2009 for 17 evenings

Catholic Central High School - Tuesdays

Fundamentals of Weather - starts January 6, 2009 for 6 evenings

Marine Radio - starts January 6, 2009 for 4 evenings

Extended Cruising - starts January 27, 2009 for 10 evenings

RADAR - starts February 17, 2009 for 4 evenings

PCOC - starts February 17, 2009 for 4 evenings

Marine Radio - starts March 24, 2009 for 4 evenings

PCOC - starts March 24, 2009 for 4 evenings

Distress Signalling - starts April 21, 2009 for 1 evening

Important
Information

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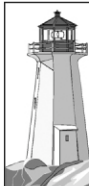
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The second rope goes up to the bar and orders a Rum & Coke. Same thing. Bartender says 'You're a rope. We don't serve ropes here.' So the rope goes away.
The third rope sees all this and goes into the washroom. He unties himself, frizzes up his hair, and goes back out to order a drink. The Bartender says 'Hey, you a rope?' And the rope says 'I'm a fraid knot!'

submitted by Bev Miatello

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