

Mainsheet

Newsletter of the Delaware River Chapter, TSCA

May, 2007

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 1,
1930 hours at the US Coast Guard
Station, Columbus Blvd. and
Washington Ave., Philadelphia. Lt.
Max Byar will give us a tour.



*(Melonseed as tramp steamer? Interesting concept).
Mike Wick sorts out his cargo after a damp, second-
place finish in the Cortez race. This and other photos by Dave
Lucas, as Mike's camera is in the cargo hold, drying out.*

News from Cortez

John Guidera and I drove down to Florida in convoy:
camper, car, and two boats on trailers. We pushed hard
and made it in two days, just in time to make the
gunkholing expedition that the Florida Maritime Museum
had scheduled to transfer boats to Sarasota, ten miles
south of Cortez.

We left Wednesday afternoon and camped on a spoil
island, Sister Key, three miles south of Cortez. I was in my
Brady/Weissinger melonseed, Larry Page in his
Swampscott Dory, Roland and Pat Anderson in their boat
of unknown origin, similar to a Glen-L 15, but gaff rig. Kurt
Bowman had a Drascombe Scaffie named BECKY
THACHER for which he had built an ingenious tent. He
hailed his boat up on the beach to sleep. Greg DeCowsky,
his sister, Nancy, and friend, Cherie, were all aboard a
Bahama dinghy, BABE, that he had borrowed from the
Museum for the weekend.

The night was a joy. We dredged from the beach a heavy
layer of marl to act as a firebrick liner for a firepit and

gathered enough wood for a good talking fire where we all
swapped lies. Then we retired to our tents for the night.
There was a squad of really rammy raccoons who would
stop at nothing to get at our food. Greg passed around a
few fingers of very fine Gosling's rum to keep the crew from
"rumblings of mutiny" or "trouble down the pits." Spoil
islands have a reputation for lots of insect life, but we had
few problems that night snug in our tents. The raccoons
had held a dance in muddy pawprints on my deck and on
BABE's rudder, of all places.



*Foreground, BABE, the borrowed Bahama dinghy. Next is
SALLY ADAMS, a Cortez sprits'l skiff; the soft-top launch
CHELSEA, and a couple of the Cortez-built Melonseeds.*

The next morning was sunny and fine for the ten mile run
down Anna Maria Sound to Sarasota in a hull speed
Easterly. We had allowed four hours for the passage but
most finished in a little over two. There was a very shoal
bar halfway along. I knew it was coming; a wide patch with
no ripples was adequate warning of trouble even though it
was a little cloudy to read the water well, but I figured a
melonseed is made for shoal water. She scraped a couple
of times and I finally had to jump out and run alongside with
the mainsheet in my hand to sail her over the last few
yards. Even with lots of sunscreen we were tired and red
before we reached the Sarasota Boating Club.

John had driven down and we spent the night in his
camper. The FGCTSCA put together a fine potluck supper
of yellow rice and cold shrimp, and our chapter
representatives sat together with our new friends. We had
already convinced the Andersons that they should meet us
on the Virginia Barrier Islands for some more gunkholing as
soon as we got our boats north again.

Next was the race on a fine windy day. Bill and Karen Rutherford had flown down for the festival since they had had such a good time there with Wendy and Peter Byar last year. Remembering how I had mis-sailed the course at St. Michaels because I was sailing during the skippers' meeting, I spent the morning tuning my gaff rig and testing with plenty of time left over for the meeting.

John and I carefully eyeballed the fleet of Cortez melonseeds. They looked smooth. Would they be as fast as we feared? They used four inch PVC pipe for mast hoops, so they must be good. Bill and Karen took photographs of us and of the competition.



Dave Lucas clubhauls his Melonseed LAYLAH during one of those life-defining moments, "Shouldaputta reef in first."

We cornered David Lucas, the man who was behind the building of the Cortez fleet as he admired and sized up our northern addition to the fleet. David may put on an "Aw, shucks" attitude, but he is a facilitator. Seeing the fleet showed me the extent of his achievement. Mark, from Boston, had towed down a fiberglass, Crawford melonseed to act as control for the fleet of six wooden melonseeds.

The rest of the fleet was a menagerie of Bahama dinghies, sharpies, a Chesapeake Bugeye. There was even an antique Old Town Canoe at the start, and that seemed to me to be the definition of *cojóns*. He must have been one busy sailorman in that much wind against the tide on top of substantial powerboat wakes.

The instructions were comprehensive; Turner Matthews was in charge. The fleet would sail around a couple of marks that were over there, somewhere. And there wouldn't be any protests heard, so nobody bothered making any. There were going to be classes, but the committee would announce them later when they knew which boats were sailing. There should be different flags

for different parts of the countdown for the start, but there was only one flag, and the ants had eaten the second flagpole. It would be the same flag for the different minutes of the countdown. If you don't know how many minutes to the start, just ask someone. Bahamian rules, Bahamian principles. It isn't *mañana* in the Out Islands, it is *directly*, as in "I'll get to it, directly."

There was plenty of wind. I had in a single reef. I saw David Lucas with full sail, but he had crew; I didn't want to chance losing everything in a quick capsize. JOLLY CODGER is still a new boat to me. I tried a couple of timid jibes before the start and was amazed at the stability of my new mount in these conditions.

When the gun went off, I was close to the committee boat and in a good position. John was confused about the time and had to do a three sixty before he could start. His excuse was that it was a Bahamian start; ten minutes late. On the run down to the first mark I passed up a chance to slam a French luff into a Bahama dinghy; I remembered there were no protests, and his boat was built more substantially than mine. Anyway, he wasn't my competition. In a quiet moment I looked back; a lot of boats were back there, and not very far back. "You go, girl."

At the first mark a couple of boats were in front of me, but only two melonseeds. So I just hung on hoping for the best. No yelling for "mast abeam" or for "water" just get boat speed. Thanks to the skill of Carl Weissinger, my factory team, I was in the pack with a fast boat. "This is fun."

The final beat wasn't a beat at all, just a close reach. The wind had clocked after the race committee set the marks. I was able to pass one of the Cortez melonseeds, but David Lucas was still right ahead of me. He was still ahead of me at the finish line. But there is always next year.

I flew home and got out my catalogs. "Let's see, a few square yards of Kevlar, some carbon fiber ribbon, titanium, spectra, dynema, maybe some spent uranium for ballast, and I'll be able to close the gap." More important, I found out that the gaff rig is really fun to sail. It may be that there is much sail area down low so she has lots of power without the heeling tendency of a taller rig. I have sailed on bigger gaff rig boats, but this was a lot more intimate. I really enjoyed pulling on all the strings. She accelerated like a sports car.

Was it worth all the miles, driving and towing our boats? "You bet." Will I be back next year? "You bet."

More info and photos at www.fgcscf.org.

May 3 is Cedar Key. John and I will be there. Pictures and copy in the June Newsletter.

Greg did well in the race. Because of the storm that started on Sunday, the Out Island Trophy race wasn't run on

schedule. Greg's good showing in the Saturday race means he earned the trophy for 2007.

More Pix from Florida, courtesy of Dave Lucas:



Another shot of the sharpie, SALLY ADAMS and the launch CHELSEA, plus an "Asplundh orange" 'seed.



John's 'seed at rest; JOLLY CODGER at water's edge.



'Seeds and more 'seeds....



Launching the Chesapeake Bugeye.



...And a couple of nice pulling boats (background) as well.



MAGIC, another pretty launch. Gotta have sun protection in Florida.



A Sea Pearl joins the Cortez fray. (Next year, Ned hopes to make it a two-boat class race).

Other Clubs

ACA Canoe sail schedule:

May 5: Florida, Mug Race with Bob Halsey.

May 5 or 6: Spruce Run, Clinton, NJ. Annual B. Califarco Cruise.

June 2-3: John Gardner Small Craft Festival, Mystic CT. Demonstration of canoe sailing.

June 9-10: Union Lake, Millville, NJ. C class and ACA class races.

June 30-July 1: Lake Sebago LadyBug Centennial Races. Steer with a paddle, cruising class.

July 8-9: Ohio Division, Pymatuning Reservoir.

July 29: Opening Day, Sugar Island, beginning of races.

September 15-16: Possible National 5 meter and ACA Class. Lake Nockamixon, Quakertown, PA.

Meeting schedule

Hot skinny from Pete Peters about coming events in our presentation schedule:

June 2- 3: John Gardner Small Craft Weekend, Mystic Seaport, Mystic CT.

June 5: Pond Boat Regatta and Gam, Cooper River Yacht Club.

July 10: Picnic at Red Dragon and Sea Chanty Sing.

NOTE: this is the second Tuesday.

July 11: Barnegat Bay Sail.

August 7: Vacuum Bagging an epoxy and fiberglass matrix. Mike Wick.

September 4: *The Crossing*, Pete Peters.

October 2: Racing Rules for noncompetitive sailors, by Jenny Slavinskas

November: TBA; December: Christmas Dinner

Wooden Boat Factory



Geoff McKonly (right) opened up shop space at the Wooden Boat Factory for our winter boatbuilding project. We have made good progress in laying the new plywood deck that we mentioned last month.

On Thursday, April 19, Frank, Rick, Paul, Wendy, and I helped Tom Shep inaugurate the new Scarf'O'Matic jig Tom developed for joining the pieces of 6mm plywood.



The Thursday-night TSCA deck crew consults. (Or are they rearranging deck-chairs...?)

Tom was his usual cheerful self, but I infer that he was aware of entirely too much advice from some of his "so called" assistants in the project. He kept saying "You could do it that way" under his breath as we filled the air with helpful suggestions.



Glue-up of the scarf-o-matic trimmed pieces. Left-to-right: Paul Skalka, Tom Shep and Frank Stauss.

There is still work to be done, so hold open your Thursday nights for the final push if the MARION BREWINGTON is to maintain her position of World Champion Tuckup.

Thank you, Geoff, for your generous offer. We promise to give generously to the WBF when it comes to contribution time.

(Photos courtesy of Wendy "I'll Show You Boys How to Scrape Proper" Byar)



More Pix from Wendy and Peter



Bargain-hunters browse the annual Bid-and-Buy stock. Thanks to generous bidders, the Auction raised more than \$500 for the club.



One of this year's Bid-and-Buy highlights was a tortured-ply rowboat, built by Tom Jones and generously donated by his wife, Carol. Russell Firth is the lucky winner.



Wendy is helping the Workshop on the Water staff with this garvey.



URCHIN, a 1989 Amesbury dory-skiff built by Lowell's Boatworks, and new proud "parents," Wendy and Peter.

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Monthly Newsletter of the
Delaware River Chapter TSCA
c/o 134 East Main Street
Moorestown, NJ 08057

Classifieds

Kevin Brennan wants to sell his seventeen foot sharpie ketch, a veteran of several outings to Tyce's Shoal. There was a nice writeup in the latest *Messing About in Boats*. (410) 666 8958.

Tom Shephard is selling a plywood Bluejay, complete with trailer. \$500. 856 691 4053.

Tom's also looking for leftover cans of house paint, latex or oil. Needed for homeless bees.

Dyer dinghy gunter mast and sail, approx. 36 sq ft. (2 available) plus one rudder/tiller. \$75 each or 125 for both; first buyer gets the rudder. Ned Asplundh, 215-947-2052 or nasplundh@yahoo.com.

Last call on the Delaware Ducker. Ask Ned for details.

FREE * Stuff that didn't make it to the Auction:

Bolger Shoebox Punt, 75% complete. Needs glass at chines, paint, rowlocks and seats. Plans may be available.

Peter Milne Bullet Dinghy, restoration project. 13' marine ply British one-design; looks like a sneakbox on steroids. Hull and foils only.

Tanaka 5.5 hp outboard and remote tank.

2 windsurfer masts.

1 square-section wood Thistle boom.

**** Each item requires a minimal donation to the club. Must pick up from Ned's shed, at Huntingdon Valley, or farm, in Green Lane PA, BEFORE May 15.***