

THE LIGHTNING IS ALIVE AND WELL IN THE MIDWEST

Roger's Report: In general, what has been working for us (and by the way we need more pushing to keep the results coming in) is:

1. Supporting and working closely with local organizations that teach sailing, such as the American Red Cross and High Schools that offer summer programs in sailing. Wherever possible, Lightning hulls are used in training new sailors. The hulls are spring-mounted and sails and all running rigging are installed giving a very real "feel" to the practice craft. Then, once the budding "salts" are comfortable with the terms and handling techniques, they are invited to crew by skippers in the fleet.
2. Introduce the young people in your neighborhood to sailing. The thing to do here is to:
 - a. catch them **before** they get a driver's license. They then depend on you for rides to the lake and back. You've got a captive audience then to plan strategy for the day, slip them little morale boosters and it gives them a chance to see how much fun it can be to get into the sport, both physically and mentally. It gives all a chance to do a good job and get the benefits of the sport.
 - b. As a light draws a moth, so a pretty girl draws big strong teenage boys. Sign the girl on as crew and she'll soon be followed by young men who make excellent crew. A few seasons down the road these young people then become boat owners too.
 - c. These new skippers and crew usually start with older less expensive boats and equipment. They need a lot of encouragement and help to keep things working. They also need advice on tuning, sail handling, maintenance, etc. Support them in all ways.
3. Promote out-of-town regattas, summer social functions, off-season sporting events just to have a party with the members of the fleet. Any excuse for a party keeps the spirits (pardon the pun) up. Other sailors or just plain folk hear what fun the group is having and somehow they decide they had better hurry up and buy a Lightning to get in on the fun. When a new member joins the fleet it's up to everyone to encourage him to get into racing as it is the best way by far to learn boat handling, seamanship, and new words of all kinds. But if the sailor prefers cruising and daysailing, that's not all bad either. He'll bring people out who may want to get into the more active life of the racing bunch via crewing. Hopefully he'll later buy his own boat.
4. Encourage people in the fleet to get involved in the mechanics of the class on the measurement level, regatta planning, etc. Also, get a core group to get involved in District and I.L.C.A. plans and groups. You get a direct feed both ways on what's happening in our class and become familiar with the leaders of the class. This keeps continuity of ideas and the lines of communication open and flowing.

By Roger Grohne and Vince Daube

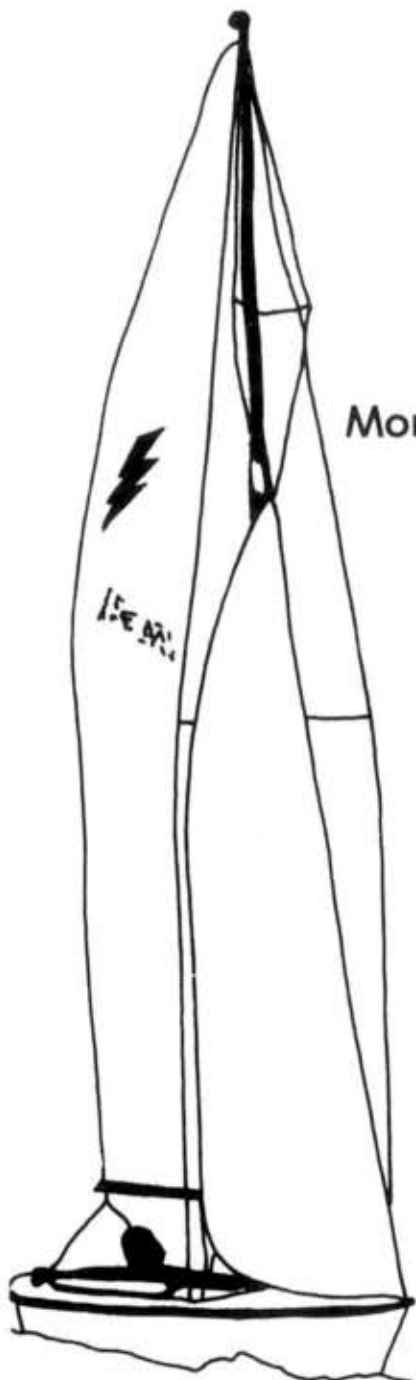
Vince's Report: To Roger's comments I would add this.

Get the media behind you. Get to know, on a first name basis, if possible, the sports directors of the area newspapers, radio and TV. They sometimes need to be convinced that sailing news belongs on the sports page instead of the society page. If they don't believe you, invite them out **only** on windy days. They soon become believers. Once they're on your side begin by showing them the rudiments of racing as well as the excitement and charm of racing. There is no sport that suffers more than lack of coverage, due, I'm sure to lack of understanding, inaccessability to the area of competition and lack of appeal to large segments of the population. In any sailing center there are many people who could, I feel, be attracted to sailing if they were shown what it's all about and that there are fleets in the area that are active and friendly. That's where the media come in. Sports directors could be enticed to do a feature on your fleet's weekend races or the area's major regattas. Suggest a theme to them — a handle to hang their story on (human interest, big-name entrants, wide area appeal).

Racing is loaded with good visual possibilities and human interest themes. But, you've got to take care of the reporter. If you're in charge of the regatta make sure the press (including TV) is provided with a separate stake boat manned by a driver knowledgeable in racing a sail boat. Make sure the reporter is in the right place at the right time. This will insure excellent visuals around which to build a story. By the way, the **separate** stake boat is necessary because the working media have very tight deadlines to be met and they may have to leave the race before the finish to cover another story or process the film. In this event the regatta publicity chairman then needs to fill them in on the results of the race for inclusion in the story. However, don't hesitate to include them in your lunch and social plans. They may decline, but the regatta beer bust might also fit into the story as human interest. If they can stick around long enough for a shot of the winners and crews that's a plus for the story.

The sport of sailing is, of course, one in which the team of the skipper and his crew act together in their own special world. There's often a lot of drama on board. This is one of the charms of the sport that can't be realized by an outsider unless the reporter can be exposed to it. If necessary, invite reporter on board after the race to give him a glimpse of your special world. At this point the sport is no longer a reportage of abstract pretty white shapes on the water going here and there without seeming reason, but rather one in which very intense people do their thing—hopefully in concert.

In short, keep the press, TV and radio informed and they will inform those who may be your next competitors, your next fleet builders.



Lightning Red Flannels Regatta

September 24 & 25, 1977

Chicago Corinthian Yacht Club
Montrose Avenue (4400 North) & Lakeshore Drive
(east of the outer drive)

Saturday, 24 September, 1977

9:00 - 11:00 am Registration \$6.00

10:45 am Skippers Meeting

12:00 Noon Start 1st race, 2nd immediately
after

Sunday, 25 September

10:00 am Start 3rd race

Trophies - First Five Places Awarded
Immediately After Last Race

1977 Red Flannels Regatta

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mail to:

Checks payable to: LIGHTNING FLEET No. 5
Fred House, 3928 Morton Ave., Downers Grove, IL 60515
please mail early or register prior to the skippers meeting on Sat. Sept. 24
(Allow 5 days for receipt of mailed registration blank, etc.....)

SKIPPER _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

BOAT NO. _____ NAME _____ COLOR _____



Skipper Scott to crew, "Are you sure Gary Cameron (1292X) is going in the right direction""

Photo Credit — Glen Smith and John Scott

ONE FLEET'S SUCCESS

When five of the first six boats in a competitive District hail from the same Fleet, we must be doing something right. Fleet #34, sailing from the Metedeconk River Yacht Club, is average in many ways. Our dry storage area, hoists, and docks can only be classed as adequate and our waters are often labeled less than adequate by visiting sailors who feel cramped by a north-south leg which is limited to less than three quarters of a mile. Our success is built on a number of important things, none alone spectacular. We are fortunate to have an excellent Race Committee made up of three experienced sailors who share and rotate prime responsibility plus a half dozen dedicated women who have been thoroughly trained in the mechanics of race committee procedures. Successful racing starts with a good committee which can provide good courses, fair conditions, and permit the sailors to concentrate on tactics and sailing as opposed to worrying about where the marks are and what unusual condition the committee may impose.

We feel practice makes perfect. Hence we schedule ten race series in the spring and fall, two per Sunday over four to five mile "quicky" courses sandwiched around our normal ten race summer Championship Series. Spring and fall races are open to visiting sailors, as well as other classes, enhancing the quality and quantity of competition. This program has helped attract

a core of first rate, regatta oriented Lightning sailors from other less competitive Fleets who not only provide a goal for our less proficient sailors, but encourage other sailors to join them at regattas. Excellence breeds further excellence as the less experienced sailors strive to beat the winners. Then too, some of our better sailors have unselfishly allowed their crews to race their boats, a great way to give somebody the "I gotta get a boat" bug. Bill Cramer, Bill Newman, and Jay Lutz are some of the better known products of this practice.

Finally, we cannot discount a program developed two years ago whereby a limited number of selected 14-18 year old juniors, having completed all the Club's regular junior programs, attend a three hour evening training session once a week during the summer. These sessions, conducted by our top sailors, consist of a half hour classroom session covering a selected topic followed by two hours of racing and on-the-spot instruction and a half hour critique. Not only do we foster new skippers but, through practice, we generate a very proficient crew pool, a must for any successful fleet.

Our Fleet does little on its own by way of social or promotional activities, but we cannot discount those activities scheduled by the Yacht Club with which we help as well as participate.

ANOTHER FLEET'S SUCCESS

The Portland Oregon Lightning Fleet is a successful one because it's a very active fleet both socially and on the race course. There is always something going on - January - the Portland Boat Show. February - Mid-Winter Meeting of all the Pacific Northwest fleets for a weekend. March - Time to bring Winter lies to fruition (get that Bucket ready for another season). April - a race every Sunday. May - Club Race every Sunday and Tuesday (as soon as Daylight Savings Time starts) plus two out-of-town regattas. June - Club Regatta, Lightning Districts, one out-of-town regatta, plus the continuation of the Tuesday series. July - Our lake dries up, but we do have three out-of-town Regattas, plus the Pacific Coast's. August - traditionally is a month of no wind, however, we have a Lightning family weekend at a nearby mountain Lake. September - three out-of-town Regattas. October - Fall series with two races each Sunday for three weeks on the River with the current, tugs, barges, log rafts, power boats and more current...capped by the Team Races. November - get ready for December. December - our Christmas Party, new Fleet Officers, new Fleet Champion, plus the outstanding announcement of the possessor of the Broken Rudder which is awarded annually for such outstanding feats in a Lightning as: Capsizing while at Anchor; Capsizing while Tied to Dock on a Windless Day; Hurrying so Fast to Retrieve Boat at the Foot of the Ramp you Forget the Trailer; Jumping Overboard to Retrieve Sunglasses during a Race with Novice Crew; and assorted other brilliant maneuvers. This is all capped off by a breakfast as Fleet 283 should not be let out on the public roads after Midnight.

Much of the success of our Fleet can be attributed to one individual, John DeBenedetti, Vice-President I.L.C.A. John is known to some as "Father Lightning" or "Dirty John" and some as "That crazy guy in front of us in the pink boat". No one else can live Lightnings like John and remain human.

As mentioned earlier, we always participate in the Portland Boat Show. We can't say we have ever sold a boat in the Boat Show, but then we aren't selling boats, we are promoting a Class. For those of you who haven't babysat a boat at a Boat Show, you would be amazed at the number of people who, although they aren't going to buy a boat, recognize the Lightning and say, "Hey, this looks like a Lightning". They then look at the sail emblem and remark "I've heard of these; they are supposed to be good boats". For those that show more interest than this, which is always quite a few, we have a sign-up sheet and **FOLLOW-UP** with a demonstration day where everyone is treated to a ride and beer. At this time, crewing possibilities are discussed. This is one area whereby being a three-man boat, the Lightning has an advantage. We discovered early that we appeal to a rather narrow audience of outsiders. The athletes want their Trapezes and the people over thirty that haven't sailed before want a Tupperware twenty-five with head, bunks, and motor. However, there are a lot of people left after this. We have also discovered that selling the boat on its daysailer points is useless. One - because it doesn't compare well as a daysailer; and two - the boat will disappear from the Fleet. Of the approximately 45 boats in the Portland area, 30 can be considered active. On Tuesday nights this Spring, we averaged 18 boats on the line

and on Sundays, 23. The Boat Show, as I said, doesn't sell boats, however, it picks up crew and Associate Members for our Fleet who, in many instances, go on to buy a boat later.

Our Fleet meets the first Friday of every month except during July, August and December. We skip July and August because it's a lull in frantic sailing activity and December because we have our traditional Christmas bash. Meeting or not, there is always our monthly newsletter, "The Windbag". This is mailed to all Fleet members, Associates and Crew. This way everybody is kept abreast of what happened, is happening and will happen. This we feel is important to our marginally active members — some of us show up all the time, some of us most of the time — but we still have to keep track of and keep informed those who show up once in a while.

SANDY BEACH YACHT CLUB BEST FLEET REPORT

A few years ago Fleet 78 was down to a handful of boats. These were enthusiastic and skillful skippers but sometimes they were hard pressed to have three boats at the start for a race.

Now, the roster stands at 16 boats and our fleet is the most active in the Lake Erie District.

Much of our present success rests with the core of sailors supporting our program when it was small. Skippers like Tom Lafferty, Bob Schmidt and Jim Walsh were our backbone at that time and continue to be avid supporters.

However, much of our growth centers on a few salient points which other fleets might be able to adopt. First and foremost, ours is a "do it yourself" club. We have a weekly work night, winter and summer. In addition to the obvious contributions to the physical welfare of the club and waterfront, it affords our members the opportunity for talk and fellowship.

Secondly, a few years ago, our membership adopted an intermediate category. This was available only to men under thirty at reduced dues. The effect of this was almost instantaneous. New, younger, members, as well as sons of members, joined and many of these quickly turned into Lightning skippers.

In August we traditionally go to Yale Lake, a nearby mountain lake, for the weekend. We, as a Fleet, eat, drink, swim, sail, play ball, drink, tell stories, drink, sail, drink, and have a generally fine weekend with the kids and friends. Some even bring their boats.

Our January Mid-Winter Weekend Meeting and Skiing Trip is conducted on a District Level and we have a prime sailor speaking (in the past, Bruce Goldsmith and Bill Shore).

Starting this year we have added another family get-together at a coastal lake in September. It's a repeat of August, but the beach is different from the Mountains.

Basically, our promotion of the Lightning boils down to enthusiastic, outgoing, friendly assistance to anyone we encounter who acts interested in Centerboard Boats.

At this time a good dry sailing area was established and the hoisting equipment improved. This combination is extremely important to a growing Lightning fleet. Boats must be conveniently launched, retrieved and stored.

Throughout this growth period, our fleet had a dedicated and proficient race committee. A former Lightning sailor, Jack Taggart, and his race committee was there every Sunday and running a very precise race. His effort was complimented by club power boaters who provided the committee boat on a rotating basis.

All these are certainly contributing factors: however, the most important is an intangible enthusiasm which exists among our skippers and their crews. Fleet 78 is always well represented at all District Regattas and whether on the water or in the touch football games, they are in the thick of the action.

The size of Lightning fleets within a club are cyclic. They change with the years and have their ups and downs. But, over and above the sheer numbers of boats in the fleet, the people involved are the most vital to a fleet's success. Enthusiasm is infectious. No formula can create it, but with a concerted effort the excitement of racing a Lightning can be imparted to others and fleets will prosper.

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FLEET 50 PLANNING NOTES

Seminars

4 at monthly intervals; rotate members' homes starting in January.

Meet at 8 P.M. from 1½ to 2 hours.

Activity Chairman maintains beer, coke and chips with advance from fleet. Stock is maintained by contributions at a little more than the unit cost of a beer or a coke.

Speakers are drawn from our fleet, that of Fleet 329.

Subjects - The boat, the windward leg, reaching, running, spinnaker work, wind and weather, boat construction, sailmaking, crew duties, yacht etiquette, etc.

We combine with a sister fleet (329) in one or more seminars and try to co-sponsor one seminar with a nationally ranked sailor (who is on his way to the Southern Circuit). 1974 was Bill Shore, 1975 was Tommy Allen (snowed out), 1976?

Warm Weather Activities

We try for one major fleet activity per month. These, with the exception of the Walter Cup Regatta Party, are usually quite informal and are family and/or crew oriented.

Events well attended have been (we don't do all these in one season):

Spring Regatta Picnic

\$2/head (\$1/kid), hamburgers, hot dogs, cokes and beer by fleet. Salads, desserts, other good things by the ladies.

Down River Picnic

Sail to marina and picnic ground for lunch and back. We have two, one 4 miles from launch point and another at about 8 miles.

Mystery Sail

Treasure hunt on the water using Clorox bottles anchored by coffee cans with eye bolts poured in concrete.

Boat and Sail Measuring Party

Measure sails, boat arcs, masts, weigh boats, masts, etc., and then have picnic.

Ladies Day Picnic

Ladies (wives, daughters, crew) skipper boats in short races, and then have picnic.

Slalom Racing

Two or more side by side courses with Clorox bottles, etc., for flags to mark gates. This one's on the planning boards.

Walter Collier Party

We hold an annual picnic in September. Fleet provides main course and beverages.

Winter Sailing (Frostbiting)

Alternate Saturdays (wetsuits mandatory)

Severn Sailing sponsored by Fleet 329; two or three crew, race is cancelled if a boat capsizes, safety reasons naturally. If they can't break the ice out to the course they cancel the race.

Occasional Sailing

On the Potomac with one Frostbite Race in February or March sponsored by P.R.S.A. - Usually a spontaneous event with starts for several fleets; Lightnings, Lasers, and one or two other fleets.

Sailing Events

P.R.S.A. Spring Series (Potomac River Sailing Assoc.)

Weekly - alternate Saturdays and Sundays.

Starting late March or early April.

Ending week before Memorial Day.

We take 2 byes - one for the Azalea Regatta - one for an S.S.A. Regatta. P.R.S.A. Race Committee duty rotates fleet by fleet, we take our turn. Series stops prior to Memorial Day.

P.R.S.A. Spring Regatta

Memorial Day weekend unless hydroplane racing schedule interferes.

N.Y.C. (National Yacht Club) Down River Race on

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Memorial Day, 18 miles.
N.Y.C. 1st Summer Series - Sunday Afternoons.
N.Y.C. 2nd Summer Series - Sunday Afternoons.

September:

N.Y.C.'s Walter Collier Cup Regatta terminates N.Y.C.'s events.

P.R.S.A.'s President Cup Regatta - Preceeds P.R.S.A.'s Fall Series.

P.R.S.A. Fall Series - weekly - alternating Saturdays and Sundays - terminates about 1st weekend in November

Special Events

Norfolk Azalea Regatta - Naval Base in Norfolk.

Last weekend in April or first in May. We have been attending this one in strength 9 - 11 boats and 30 to 45 people. We try to reserve all rooms in the same motel and make a fleet and family weekend out of it.

Maryland Governor's Cup - Severn Sailing Assoc. - September

Home and Home - Fleet 329/Fleet 50 challenge.

Uses Walter Colier Cup as the Fleet 50 end of challenge and Severn Sailing Assoc. as Fleet 329 end of challenge.

Quantico - Quantico Marine Base - October.

This event, last major Lightning Regatta of the year, usually draws everybody who can get there and a large Fleet Spectator Group. The competition and hospitality is super.

Special Sailing Events

Other regattas regularly attended by boats from our fleet: Myles River, S. S. A. (Severn Sailing Assoc. - Fleet 329's home port) for a number of regattas, Smith Mountain, Havre de Grace, and of course, Rehoboth.

Annual Banquet

Our Annual Banquet normally closes out the end of our year and usually is held in one of the few places overlooking the river which have a function room which can accomodate 50 people. The program this year and last included three or four Carrouseles in an automatic slide projector which portrayed fleet events. This year it included pictures of the "Tall Ships" and our fleet events.

Usually we have a speaker from the boating world. We have had Jack Lynch from Haarstick Sails & Larry Kaltman, Sailing Editor from the Washington Post in recent years.

The slide show which is run unattended all evening, except during the meal and speech, is most popular.

Fleet Promotion

1. Membership Chairman (volunteer)

- a. maintains card file of all boats in area.
- b. maintains ownership file.
- c. writes welcome letter to all owners who are new to their boats or new to the area.
- d. phones all of the above (if possible) and invites them to participate in fleet functions.

2. Participation in P.R.S.A.'s (Potomac River Sailing Assoc.)

Open House at the local Marina - wherein all fourteen fleets provide one of their boats and people to answer questions about it for the general public. Boats are placed on trailers. In light winds the sails are raised. We are not allowed to publicly advertise this event because we are on U.S. Public Park Service land with minimal parking. It does however get good attendance.

3. We maintain a bulletin board with Newsletter on it in the Washington Sailing Marine where we sail.

4. Our Newsletter of which there are four to eight in number per year is one of our strongest Public Relations tools. A high quality Newsletter is so much a standard with us that it is taken for granted. We have been blessed with an unusually fine string of editors. We pick somebody that's a worker and relatively new to the fleet. He shortly learns "everything and everybody". He quite often goes on to become a skipper within a few years.

5. Telephone Call List

Each officer takes a sheet of the fleet roster and calls everybody in the fleet several days before each event.

The previous year's junior champion gets to set up the same kind of a committee for the junior sailing. The word thus gets out quickly and efficiently.

Junior Sailing

Starting the Saturday in June that school lets out and held on alternate weeks and around other major events, we sponsor junior sailing. We start about 10 a.m. when the power on the crane comes on and race on an extremely informal basis. This year for the first time we had a one day regatta at the end of the season just before Labor Day. This one day regatta works well as it allows juniors with jobs and vacation schedules to plan for one day.

Our junior program has to be flexible. Five years ago we had a number of 12 to 15 year old people and sailed with a senior advisor in each boat to teach the kids how to sail. Today we still have some of the same people and quite a group of 16 to 20 year olds in addition who need no senior advisor.

We typically draw three to seven boats and race short courses. On the rare occasions when only two show we are apt to practice starts. For the first two races, crews usually sail their own boats. After that everything is free form including whatever seniors are around.

Junior sailing program is open to any Lightning Sailor in the area. More especially regular crews of seniors and neighborhood kids sponsored by seniors. No Club, fleet or international association is necessary. These Saturday events are great training ground for crews. One rule - Seniors don't sail with their own juniors.

UPWIND ORGANIZATION

--Getting Help From Your Crew

By Bob Hutchinson

In 1968 I bought a brand new Lightning and joined Monmouth Boat Club on the fluky air Navesink River at Red Bank, N.J. The first weekend I concentrated on steering and took pot luck on the shifts. The result was that even the kids in Bluejays took less time getting to the weather mark than I. Although their Bluejays went slower than my Lightning, the kids were sailing a much shorter course. Over the next month I abandoned my concentration on steering in favor of looking around and trying to play the shifts. The result was that the speed of my new Lightning slowed to that of a Bluejay. Also, my shift picking did not improve, because I did not know what to look for. Relative to me, the other Lightning skippers seemed to be able to both steer and look around for shifts at the same time and do both well.

My racing record was much better in 1976 than it was in 1968, even though I still can not steer fast and look around at the same time. The solution has been an organization by which the crew does all the looking around. This organization includes a scheme by which the crew reduces the data obtained and a list of terms used to communicate the reduced data to the skipper. The reason for the data reduction is to keep things simple for the skipper. The mental effort of data reduction is off-loaded from the skipper's brain onto the crew's. The list of terms is designed to maximize information per syllable with the goal of minimizing the number of syllables needed to convey the reduced data to the skipper.

The things I use the crew to tell me and the reduced form and terms used for each come next.

COMPASS: Before the race we estimate the mean sailing direction on which ever tack is most convenient, and I tell the crew what angle to assume the boat tacks through (usually 80 degrees is assumed). The above mean is the reference for that tack. The crew computes the reference for the other tack using the eighty degree assumption. During the race the crew reports "zero" if our heading is equal to the reference for that tack. If the heading is greater or less than the reference, the report is "plus x" or "minus x", respectively, where x is the number of degrees by which the heading and the reference differ. For example, if the heading is 30 degrees and the reference for that tack is 15 degrees, the crew reports "plus 15". If the heading had been 5 degrees, the report would have been "minus 10". **NOTE:** A heading clockwise (to the right) of the reference is by definition more positive. A heading counterclockwise (to the left) of the reference is more negative. Things get messy when the heading and reference are on opposite sides of 0/360 of the compass. For example if the reference was 355 and the heading was 10, the report would be "plus 15".

The beauty of this system for the skipper is that (assuming my 80 degree tack assumption was correct) if the wind holds

steady the crew's report after tacking should be the same as it was on the old tack. If it is not, then the wind has changed.

The mental arithmetic requirement on the crew is considerable especially when you remember that he is tacking the jib, hiking out, and going through waves at the same time. Bob Heick, my regular jib man for many years, is excellent in this regard. In fact, he will even pick the initial reference and apply a default assumption of 80 degree tacks, if I forget my part; and I get my reports anyway.

WEATHER MARK: Weather mark location is described by the angle between the direction to the mark and the center line of the boat. If the mark is dead ahead, this angle is zero. To aid in estimating and reporting this angle, colored sighting lines (strips of tape) are installed on the side deck. These lines are colored red, black, green, and yellow. They are at angles of 45, 75, 85, and 90 degrees to the centerline. The crew reports the color of the nearest line and an estimate of the angle to that nearest line in degrees. For example if the weather mark was 70 degrees to the centerline, the report would be "5 ahead of the black."

Sometimes the crew will know the weather mark angle only approximately. In this instance, he reports his knowledge in terms of a best guess and a measure of uncertainty—ie. "10 behind the red plus or minus 20 degrees". Many crews untrained in my scheme would report, "I don't know", when actually they had the approximate knowledge above. Such a report does not provide the skipper with any of the knowledge available.

SAILING ANGLE OF BOATS ON OUR TACK: Boats sailing parallel to us are reported as "same". Boats lifted relative to us are described as "lifted" or "up"; boats headed relative to us are described as "headed" or "down". The estimated amount of up or down is expressed in degrees—NEVER in words like: "a little", "a lot", "slightly", etc.

SAILING ANGLE OF BOATS ON OPPOSITE TACK: Boats sailing perpendicular to us are described as "90" (90 degrees). Boats sailing at less than 90 degrees or greater than 90 degrees to us are reported as "less than 90" or "more than 90", respectively. A boat on the opposite tack is NEVER described as "up" or "down", "lifted" or "headed". These terms are reserved for boats on the same tack as us. This convention eliminates the need to add the words "port tack" or "starboard tack" to reports describing the sailing angles of other boats. If we are on port tack, I am told about starboard tack boats which we are in danger of fouling.

JIB TRIM: The trim of the jib is always described to me by

the location of the top batten with respect to either the spreader end or a band of tape 5" from the spreader end. If the crew is hiking to weather, he estimates the batten position. Thus I only need contend with one format of jib trim report.

MAINSAIL TRIM: The crew works the backstay which has a 10:1 ratio and leads to a WACO 360 on the centerboard trunk just aft of the thwart seat. The control line has marks in three places. The least tight mark is one black band, the next is two black bands, and the tightest is three black bands. These backstay settings correspond to my understanding of what Bruce Goldsmith means when he speaks of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd gear mainsail shape.

The middle crew and I communicate backstay settings in terms of these three marks using words like: "one", "two", "one and a half", "three", etc. The number of backstay changes per weather leg ranges from zero to thirty.

The use of reference marks on the control line obviously precludes the use of a double ended arrangement with a backstay control lead to both sides of the cockpit. This is the reason we do not use the popular double ended arrangement. On my previous boat we had a double ended arrangement and put reference marks at the stern of the boat where the backstay enters the aft deck. There are two reasons why the marks should be on the control line instead. One, they are easier to see in a hurry. Two, if the crew sets the mark one inch off with my rig the backstay length is only off by a tenth of an inch versus a full inch for marks at the stern.

Sometimes I even ask the middlecrew to tell me how far the aft end of the boom is to leeward of the centerline. I usually ask this in rough big wave water, like Lake Michigan off Sheybogan at the '76 NAs. Living on a flat river, I do not get enough rough water miles of practice per season. My only hope is to never take my eyes off the waves and concentrate on steering. Thus I do not want to look aft at the end of the boom even for an instant.

I trim the mainsheet myself and use yams about 40% aft in the upper half of the sail plus seat of the pants feel to determine mainsheet settings.

DO CREWS LIKE TO THINK?

Some people have told me that crews do not like to think and that the organization described above will make it hard for me to get and keep a good crew. My thoughts on this are that nearly everyone agrees that a good crew must be at least mechanically good and concentrate on sail trim etc. for the entire race. Well, concentration takes mental effort. I have found that people who have good concentration and like to concentrate also like to think and are good at it. (If you have a crew of daydreamers, forget this article!) Furthermore, the crew soon learns everything that the skipper knows about racing a Lightning since the crew gathers all of the information used to make decisions and adjustments. Intelligent crews recognize this, consider it an advantage, and are thereby attracted.

CONCLUSION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have found that my organization is most successful on larger bodies of water with steadier wind—the type places where major regattas are hopefully held. This organization has worked least well on my own fluky wind river.

From the above description of the organization of my boat, it must be clear that I owe a lot more to my crew than most skippers do when we do well. This year Bob Heick and Eric Olving accomplished all the above described duties and more well enough to drag their mediocre skipper, who had never made the Blue Fleet before, up to 8th place in the NAs thereby qualifying for the 77 Worlds in Switzerland. A grateful skipper says Thank You! I believe the editor is well aware of this and that is why I was asked to write on the subject. I hope some of you find this useful.

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