

The Cup of Champions — Ingredients for the Success of a Regatta

By Paco Sola'



Start of Race 1. Qualifiers for the 1992 American Airlines Cup of Champions.

At a time when the Lightning Class was suffering almost complete inactivity in our area. The Board of Directors of the Salinas Yacht Club decided it was, once again, time to do something for the Class that has given the Club so many glories in the past.

It was in this way, and tied with the Club's 50th Anniversary, that the "First Annual Cup of Champions" was developed. The main objective of the regatta was, and still is, to promote the Lightning Class and to bring up the competitive level of its members.

I am sure there is not a single regatta like this in the whole world. If you don't believe it, just ask yourself where in the world sailors are invited — all expenses paid — to come sail in the best one-design boat there is and in one of the best race courses in the entire planet. Not to mention our people's hospitality and the perfect weather that one encounters in Salinas.

This may look like an advertisement for the regatta, but it isn't! You see, the organizers are very picky with the sailors they invite. Usually they invite three crews from North America who have recently won major Lightning events, and to that list we add the current South American Champion. These people are given a new boat to sail, free airline tickets, free food and free accommodations. In turn they will just come sail, have tons of fun and give the locals a short sailing seminar. They will get more than just a free regatta, for after it's all over, they will keep Salinas in their memory for years to come, hoping to do better in next year's regattas in order to be invited again.

Although we can only invite a given number of people, we



Paco Sola is the Secretary of the Salinas Lightning Fleet 405.

think that the whole event is worth attending. In fact, the regatta is open to anyone who wants to come, provided they are good sailors and they pay for their airline tickets (you've got to be a nice guy too!).

We believe the regatta has been a complete success in its two past editions. Already we have had people like Ched Proctor, Tom Allen, Jr., Mario Buckup, Brad Read, Colin Park and Dave Starck sailing against local shots like Juan Santos, Paco Sola (Senior), Juan Carlos Plaza, Miguel Plaza and up-and-coming sailors like Carlos Lecaro, Johnny Meira, Santiago Romero, Jimmy Pazmino, and the list goes on.

The success of the regatta has been tremendous. Last year we had record attendances to all races prior to the Cup of Champions, boosting the competitive levels of the fleet still higher. This year we not only plan to race qualifiers before the Cup, but have already increased the Lightning fleet with three new boats.

You may say these people are crazy, running a regatta without asking for a penny! You may also say that's not the way they run regattas in any other place...

Then again, Salinas is not like any other place.



Windward leg in Salinas Bay. Qualifiers for the Cup of Champions.

Dealing With That Young Contingent

By Bruce Goldsmith

Many years back I wrote this same article on my peers in Lightning sailing. I'll now try to point out the strengths and weaknesses of some of my favorite young guys. These are the rock, ooch, pump kids that have been throttled by the kinetics rules. I congratulate them on getting with these rules. However, that vintage did teach them boat handling and everyone of them is super at it.

Hopefully all will take my comments in fun and all of you will know them (these young sailors) a little better.

Brad Read

The best inland lake sailor the Class has ever seen. He has also improved greatly from his handle of "The new Jim Dressel." Makes huge comebacks from individual race adversity, if he's winning the series your best chance to catch him is light air on big water for the last race or two.

Jody Lutz

Not quite as good lookin' as his brother Jay, but just as nice of a guy and just as good a sailor. "Broke out" with a big win at the 1991 North Americans which could pump him up for more victories to come. I'm 92-89 with him in match races, on the last leg of a race so I guess the only chance we have is to set the time back and match race.

Dave Dellenbaugh

Always impresses me with how bad he can be early in a race and early in a series and still win. He's no dummy and he's patient. Our World Champion probably keeps more inside his brain than most of us could consume.

To beat him, hope for the natural phenomena of "Tacking on the gold flashes" when they are deep.

Bill Faude

Has all of the characteristics of a creative genius and the best improviser in the Class. Can borrow anything and make it faster than it's owner did. Now that he's working for Lightning Sailor Tryg Jacobson and buying his own boat, sails, car, clothes and crew, we can hope for a lull in his winning. However, Bill is living proof that nice guys with talent can be winners.

Jody Swanson

If you know Jody's parents, you are not surprised by the rise to stardom for this attractive young lady. We're just pleased she chose sailing so we can all "claim her" as one of ours. I've seen her win St. Pete in 3 knots and pinch me off after the start in 22 knots. I guess our only hope is she someday will marry a guy who won't let her sail so much. We don't really mean that, of course.

Jim Alman

Has deceptive speed in the open water and is super aggressive on the corners. I'm guessing Jim has fantastic concentration that we don't detect around the Coral Reef Y.C., Miami swimming pool. Unlike my record with Jody Lutz, I always lose the match races with Jim. To beat him you have to create some off the water distraction that either concerns him or interests him and that's hard to do on an 85 degree December weekend on Biscayne Bay.

Michigan Young Mafia

We're very proud of the young guys in the Michigan



Brad



David



Jody



Bill

District. **Sean Fidler** won a Pan American gold medal as crew for Matt Fisher and won the Candy Stripe a couple of years ago. He develops blazing speed upwind. Sometimes he can be distracted in jams. Look out with age and experience.

Dan Norton wins our Fleet Championship at Devil's Lake. Sails a lot like Brad Read, hence really tough on inland lakes. Best bet to beat him is to steal his crew (finance), Linda Schulte.



Jody



Jim



Sean

George Sipel won the Michigan Jr. Districts about 12 times in a 10 year span. With super crew Craig Gabel you don't want to be just in front of them on a screaming reach. Their spinnaker work will get you. As these guys sail on my J-29 they've inherited some of my party habits. You have a better chance on Sunday against these guys.

Mark Whatley—Here's a guy who has really worked at it. Ninth in the North Americans in 1991 has to show the most improvement. His attention to detail and work with his crew of Leslie Fink and John Morley has been impressive. One way to rattle Mark is to get Hank Hodgson right behind him on a reach and encourage Hank to go high (a feat in itself).



Dan



George



Mark

"Make Sailing Available To Your Kids"

George and Greg Fisher

George —

I certainly do not consider myself an expert or an authority on this subject. However, I've been asked to give my ideas on the dos and don'ts of getting a young boy or girl interested in sailing. I, of course, relate back to my experiences with Greg and Matt and the junior program at Buckeye Lake Yacht Club in which I've been active over the years. I'm sure there are all kinds of ways or alternatives available to do this and *these are only suggestions*.

The greater percentage of junior sailors are exposed to sailing because their parents are active in sailing and usually racing; and the parents would like to sincerely and unselfishly have their kids enjoy sailing as much as they do. So, let's look at this situation involving the parents. I'm not trying to suggest how junior programs should be structured—this is just from parent to child.

There is no ideal age to start your kids sailing. It depends on them and, just as importantly, you. Do they have any interest and are you able and willing to spend the time? The latter is just as important as the former, if not more so. Let's assume the answers are yes to both questions. I do think the younger you can get them started, however, the better. I winced when I see a five-year old because that seems so young to me today, but Greg and Matt could steer a boat on their own at that age. I don't know what that means except I think the younger they start, the easier it is for everyone.

Don't immediately put them in a racing or competitive situation. It might be a positive experience for them, but chances are they'll be intimidated either by their peers or you. And they might not be ready to see or understand you in a competitive posture.

First, you have to get them to like or enjoy sailing. Just let them sail. So they over trim the main, or pinch, or periodically get confused—so what? If they enjoy it, they will want to get better without your badgering and then they'll ask for your suggestions.

If you can work it out, let them take a boat out by themselves, in light air, naturally, and even if it's a Lightning (a smaller boat is more preferable at this stage). Take the jib off and just let them sail around. I also think it is better at this point if they are by themselves because then, they'll be doing it all and figuring things out on their own. Don't push them! If they want to come in, let them come in; if they don't want to go out, don't make them go out. Your kids will go through different stages that you just roll with at the time. At different times in their young careers, they might either be intimidated by heavy air or lack the patience for light air. But they will work through this; your job is to keep them from getting discouraged or disenchanted.

The two or three of you ought to go out as often as possible, after a race, or on a day when there is no racing. Just sail—you have a tiller and let them crew for you and then switch. Let them make mistakes and screw up—no big deal. You're trying to get them to *like* sailing, and hopefully,



Greg, Matt & Dad
1965

racing.

As far as eventually crewing with you in a race setting, let them crew with you, don't make them—like a family duty or responsibility. If they do crew with you, talk about the race afterwards. Let them sail the boat in from the race and stay out with them if they want to sail. This is a two-way deal—you want them to get involved, so they have to have the interest to become involved. But you also have to make these commitments.

When Greg and Matt became interested in crewing, they would take turns and then the one that wasn't with me would crew with someone else in the fleet. Both of them have done a lot of crewing for Jim Dressel who was a very good teacher.

I made a serious mistake by crewing for Greg in the North Americans in 1967 in Cleveland. Matt had crewed for me at The Worlds in Toronto the week before (he was eleven and did great), and so then I crewed for Greg at Cleveland where we qualified for the Presidents' Cup. But rather than letting Greg make his own decisions and enjoy being the skipper, I was on his back all the time. I was stupidly too concerned about where we finished rather than letting Greg sail his own boat and make his own moves. I know Greg had a horrible time and I felt lousy about it afterwards (still do). I think when we crew for our kids, we should let them make the decisions and then talk about their decisions after the race. Don't argue with them during the race; it will take all the fun out of it.

I think it's easier all the way around if you possibly would

be able to provide them with their own boat, like an Optimist, El Toro, or a Penguin. I personally think a Laser is too much for any kid who is either fairly young or light. But then, they have their own boat, they can take it out when they want to and also, take care of it themselves. When they outgrow their boat, if it's been taken care of, you probably can almost get your money out and whatever you do lose, it's worth it. But if you do do this, I again would not put them in a racing situation unless they're really driving you nuts to do it. I'd be afraid again of their being intimidated when they're just starting.

Once they're hooked, it's all downhill from there. Your toughest adjustment then, is going to be when they know more than you do and aren't agreeing with everything you've been telling them in the past. I had some problems with this, but worked through it. I really enjoyed crewing with both my boys once I learned how to keep quiet, but again, that's not easy. After all, you've been teaching them sailing for some time, and all of a sudden, it seems, they're criticizing your crewing attributes and I say again, that's tough. It's interesting how these things turn around. Now I really enjoy having Greg or Matt crew for me and they can tell me what to do and I like it and do it. They each can talk to me and actually tell me what to do during the race in a way that just makes it fun. When either one of them crew for me, it's really the high point in my sailing now.

But it's all worth it—you're exposing your kids to be greatest sport of them all—a sport they can participate in as a junior, in college, and literally, all their lives. They'll be meeting and sailing with great people, great sportsmen, and hopefully, will appreciate what you tried to do and in turn, pass it on to their children and so on. And, isn't that what it is all about!



Lisa and Amanda

Greg —

I'm writing my section of this article after having just spent two days in a little rubber boat watching the Optimist Midwinters. The Optimist is an 8 foot dinghy designed strictly for junior sailors up to age 15. It is already a huge class in Europe and is exploding here in the United States. At the Optimist Midwinters there were 75 boats!

I rode in this little rubber boat with two extremely enthusiastic parents of two of the better sailors in the regatta. It was fun watching their kids sail because, not only were they sailing extremely well, they were having a lot of fun...

While these two Dads were enthusiastic about their kids winning, they were more concerned about their enjoying the sailing. Don't get me wrong, they definitely wanted their kids to do well and would do whatever it took to help them perform at their best....Except push them. Both Dads said that the key was not to force their kids to sail or push them to do well. Instead the slogan of the day (and as I found out, the weekend) was "Make it available for them."

When Matt and I first were becoming interested in sailing, my Dad never pushed us to go out on the water and sail. We'd take turns crewing for him in fleet races and if there was a shadow of a doubt whether we wanted to sail or not, we rarely went. As time passed, Matt and I grew to love to sail every weekend and in between if we could. We rarely missed a race with Dad, and often had pretty good "discussions" as little kids might, about whose turn it was to race.

While I have plenty of memories of those early days of crewing it is interesting that I don't remember much about winning but more, just how much fun I had pulling the lines, watching the other boats, and helping Dad sail. It wasn't until much later that we definitely got into the "heat of battle" and learned what it was to try and win the race. It's obvious to us now how much Dad compromised his sailing so that we could crew for him and get involved with the sport. I'm sure that had he pushed us hard or made the goal to win, we probably wouldn't have taken to it. In the same way the Optimist parents at the Midwinters would never yell at their kids that they could sail better...or they didn't do a good job. They might offer comments like, "What do you think about pulling your outhaul a little bit tighter?" or "Do you think you were close enough to the starting line?" They made their ideas "available" just as dad made the opportunity for us to sail with him "available."

Not too long ago my wife, Charlotte, our two kids, and I went to a regatta at a small lake in Atlanta, Georgia. Charlotte and I were supposed to sail together and we had a baby sitter all lined up. Unfortunately, when we got there Charlotte didn't feel well and couldn't sail. Since it was a two person boat we were sailing I was in a bit of a bind, crew wise. However, there wasn't much wind and when my daughter Martha, then four years old, stated that she wanted to take her Mother's place, it seemed like the thing to do. Just before we left the dock, Charlotte reminded me with a question, "Are you going out to introduce Martha to sailing, or are you going out to win?" Of course my answer was "Who me? Try to win? No Way!"

Well, being over 100 pounds lighter than the lightest boats total crew weight wise and because it was blowing all of 2-3 mph, you might say we had pretty good boat speed. We somehow slid into the lead at the last leeward mark and actually extended just a bit by the finish. You might think that Martha would have been a bit enthused about our first

win together, but she had fallen asleep on the cockpit floor on the first reach. Still, it was quite a thrill for me... During one of the next races, however the breeze finally came up and actually blew pretty hard. Martha was having a blast with the boat heeling over and moving through the water a lot faster. This race we weren't so spectacular at the first weather mark. Since I knew it could do nothing but get tougher, I thought we might as well head in since Martha had been having fun up to that point. However, at that moment we got hit by a puff that sent us off on a wild plane (remember we're over 100 pounds lighter) and quickly we jumped into third place approaching the jibe mark. By her squeals I could tell that Martha thought this is what sailing should be all about. I was thinking to myself, "If we could just make it through this jibe we might just catch another boat on the next reach and then hang on upwind and still finish in the top..." Suddenly I remembered Charlotte's question and could picture her sitting on the dock wondering what in the world her daughter's father was trying to prove. Martha's squeals quickly ceased when the lead boat flipped at the jibe. It wasn't worth it. If we capsized it literally could have ruined sailing for her forever. We bailed out of that race and on the way in Martha couldn't stop giggling about how we were going faster than a motorboat, how the splashes got her wet... When we reached the dock Martha jumped out and announced that she couldn't wait to do it again... We certainly didn't win that regatta but Martha learned that the fun of sailing was certainly "available."

Now next year if we practice just a little more and get Martha some hiking pants...



Greg & Kirk

What Works

by Dick Hallagan

Fleet 77 at Newport Yacht Club in Rochester, New York was chartered back in 1946 and for many years had Irondequoit Bay all to themselves for sailing and racing. At the present, there are 35 boat owners belonging to Fleet 77, plus another five social members of N.Y.C. that play a role in fleet activities. It is an impressive sight to see this number of Lightnings on their "boatlifts" at mid-summer. However, this is the 90's, and times have changed in a big way. To keep up with the times Fleet 77 has had to fine-tune their efforts and change a few rules, or one design Lightning sailing may fade.

Flexibility in the number of crew was an issue changed about 3 years ago. The I.L.C.A. specification calling for a skipper and two crew was leaving too many boats stranded at the dock wanting to compete in Fleet Races. This situation brought on the change to a skipper and 0 or 1 or 2 or 3 crew would be permissible in Fleet 77 racing. What a difference! First: it puts on the starting line an average of two additional boats in each race. Second: the boats racing with a skipper and one, pick up a speed edge which adds to the over-all competition of the Fleet. The individual who is the marginal type that day and probably would have said, "I am short, bag it", is now out there sailing and has a real good chance. The important thing is to get the boats out. Once just for fun, I sailed a race with four kids. What a gas! Five pairs of hands all over the place, and little people going everywhere.

Scoring fleet races and fleet series has received much debate every year. For years it was a percentage score, and averaging this score, with minimum races required to qualify. Once a boat established a good average, the owner would sit out a race or races not to risk hurting his average. A new system of points seems to work better because it encourages participation; one point to start, one point to finish and one point for every boat you beat each race. The more races one enters, the more points one accumulates. The system is aimed at getting out the boats and this should be the goal of Fleet racing. Over the span of a season (May to October) the point totals become very close between the regular Fleet Races (vs) the Regatta Races who is away several weekends.

About five years ago, Irondequoit Bay was opened to Lake Ontario. This has brought on a mixed blessing: access to the lake for open-water racing, while the power boat traffic in the bay during July and August has killed bay sailing on summer Sunday afternoons. Irondequoit Bay develops beautiful thermal winds (10 to 15 mph) on most days of the racing season, however power boats by the hundreds cruise the bay on a hot summer weekend. The compromise in the schedule was to keep Fleet racing on the bay during the Spring and Fall, going to the lake only during the summer. In July and August better sailing conditions appear to exist out on Lake Ontario, but the thermal winds out there are usually lighter and for some reason are apt to

die. Also, Lake Ontario does have some current which impedes the success of open-water racing. A race that starts, must have some kind of an end, not with the RC waiting for hours to get all the finishers. A compromise is needed to terminate extended drifters and still reward those who stay out to finish. We think the RC should stay on station 35 minutes after the first boat finishes and record finishes, and at that point all boats still on the course be scored with a 2 point penalty beyond the last boat to meet the time-limit; PMS, WD, DSQ still get their penalty score. Thus all boats and the RC can get off the Lake if conditions go light.

These changes have kept this Fleet very active. Our newest member thought about it for three years before joining N.Y.C. Leaving a big boat at another location, he says the cost of a new Lightning divided into the experience of good

one-design sailing and the time spent, has equated into dollars well spent. His crew sees it this way: "on the big boat, I trim the Genoa and have to wait until tomorrow to see the corrected times. I don't know if I'm trimming the Genoa right or wrong. In the Lightning, the results of good or bad trimming are immediate — the reward is experienced while you are sailing."

One can write about all this, but it is the people who count. Of the 40 people in Fleet 77, 35 are actually owners., the additional five (none boat owners), have Lightnings in their blood. This group have readily undertaken position of Fleet Captain, Commodore, Treasurer, Food Catering. Come to Newport Yacht Club in Rochester, NY and check it out.

Group Dynamics

A study of a Lightning team, their responsibilities and psyche.

By Brad Read, Betsy Alison, Terry Hutchinson

When Bill Neal approached me about doing this year's Year Book article I drew a complete blank. There are only so many times you can hear about sail trim and rig tuning before your mind turns to mush. What I came up with is a 3 tiered outline on a Lightning team's responsibilities.

The 3 "outlines" that you are about to read were put together by Betsy Alison, Terry Hutchinson, and me, Brad Read. The instructions to each person was to fill in an outline comprised of:

- I: Dockside
- II: Pre-Race/Pre-Start
- III: The Start
- IV: Windward Mark Rounding
- V: Reach Mark Rounding
- VI: Takedown
- VII: Remainder of Race

I asked each of us to put our roles on and mentally go through a race day. What you are about to read is an unedited and (mostly) uncensored conglomeration of thoughts, from the three of us.

Skipper by Brad Read

Middle by Terry Hutchinson

Foreward by Betsy Alison

THE SKIPPER — Brad Read

I. Dockside

- A. Set Goals
- B. Make sure "paperwork" is done. Pre-register if possible
 - 1. Boat is measured and legal
 - 2. I make it a point to come to the regatta site with an accurate weather summary from a source other than the local news. NOAA is a decent avenue for solid weather information.
 - 3. On our boat the skipper makes sure that the

boat is tuned properly. Shroud tension, mast blocks, headstay length, etc. are set before the boat goes in the water.

- 4. Check to see if we have enough drinking water for the day.

II. Pre-Race/Pre-Start

- A. *Relax ...* There's not enough said about relaxing in this sport. If your boat is race ready when you leave the dock (as outlined above), then your sail to the starting area should be the lowest stress time of the day. This is a time to relive the previous day's and evening's events. Terry would usually take this time to discuss some bodily function which isn't working properly.
- B. *Preparation:* Practice driving. The skipper must get in tune with waves and wind conditions. Practice depowering and powering up the sails and relearn how the rudder feels in and out of the "groove".
 - 1. Make sure pre-bend and jib wire are set properly.
 - 2. Tack, set, jibe, takedown, round leeward mark/starting pin.
 - 3. Be cognizant of starting time and don't be too far away.
 - 4. Practice listening to your team
- C. *The Start:* On the way out I stacked up the competition and chose who the best starters were. We'll make sure that they have no opportunity to start on our lee bow.
 - 1. Avoid Collisions
 - 2. Do wind and line checks
 - 3. Formulate strategy with the team
 - 4. Set up to take advantage of strategy.
 - 5. Attempt to keep one boat length between you and the boat immediately to leeward while stay-

ing within a boat width of the boat to weather. This allows you an acceleration space at 15 or 20 seconds in which to get your boat going faster than upwind speed.

- a. *Good Start:* Make sure that boat is in *perfect* trim for conditions *immediately*. Put the blinders on and drive.
- b. *Bad Start:* Look for a bail out maneuver and listen to your team. There is no substitute for experience here.

III. 1st Beat

- A. *Shut up and Drive*
- B. Give most tactical calls to the middle and forward person. Best speed comes when everyone focuses on *own* job.
- C. Call crossing situations for middle guy, i.e. "we're crossing by 1/2 boat length" or "we'll hit him just about at the chainplates". This will give the middle guy enough info to call the tactical maneuver which sticks to your strategy.
1. Keep tactician honest. Ask questions i.e. "are we up or down?", "how's speed?", "you got the mark". *Shut up and Drive!*

D. Approaching the weather mark

We tend to hand off the tactical responsibility to the skipper as we approach the weather mark. The skipper is in the best position to call crossing situations and can accurately judge his/her capabilities of placing the boat in a good lane in the last 50 yards of the beat. The skipper needs constant input now. Approaching breeze, boats, etc.

IV. Upon Rounding

- A. I call for either immediate or late set, depending on the mark placement and traffic patterns. If it's windy I have the middle person pull the centerboard up half way. If not, I leave it down for better pointing after the set. (I need to be reminded to raise it after we are full and going.) During the set I stand up and pull the spinnaker up from aft while steering with my legs. Sit back down and steer. Let the two other folks deal with the rest.
- B. The skipper must make defending attacking decisions within this first 30 seconds of rounding. Don't forget to ease mainsheet! Foredeck person and skipper then communicate on breeze, boat placement, strategy and tactics.

V. Jibe Mark

- A. Don't forget to steer around the mark.
- B. *Light air* — Put board down to 2/3rds down.
Medium air — Know where you are going as you turn.
 1. Wing boom across as you roll the boat to weather.
 2. Grab new guy from aft while middle crew pulls twing down or puts guy in guy clip.
 3. Steer, defend, attack, pull board up.
- C. Ludicrous speed — keep board way up.
 1. Make sure you are planing when you try to jibe.
 2. Snap the helm so that the boat goes through the wind fast.
 3. Avoid the dreaded hesitation when the main comes half way and then stops and fills the

same way (starboard tack).

4. I grab the 1 to 1 at the back of the boat and swing it as hard as I can once I've pushed the helm across.
5. Grab the guy and cleat it at your mark and hike while the foredeck gets the pole on.

VI. Douse

- A. Clear the halyard and centerboard pennant, preset backstay, Cunningham traveller. Call for jib up. Call for pole down, preset. Call for douse, let board down. Try not to let it slam.
- B. Count down the seconds or number of boat lengths before the turn. This allows everyone to know when to get their eyes out of the interior of the boat and concentrating on sail trim during the rounding.
- C. (This is key if main is way out and it is a tight rounding). Pull the main in around mark or call for a handoff to the middle guy. The helmsman must get the boat going max upwind speed immediately. Concentrate on driving and make sure that your tactician knows that you can hang in there behind someone or that you are in bad air.

VII. Rest of Race

- A. Stay positive
- B. Don't dwell on previous disasters
- C. If behind try to pass boats one at a time. Frustration only leads to further disasters.

VIII. Points to Remember

- A. The key to keeping a consistent crew is letting them know that you appreciate the effort they put in. This is recreation and if we get too serious we can lose people to other types of activities.
- B. Middle guys buy beer.
- C. When you don't do well remember that the skipper can't drive for beans and got a crummy start.
- D. When you do great, tactics were perfect and boat handling was smooth as silk.
- E. The skipper is seldom right!
- F. SHUT UP AND DRIVE

MIDDLE PERSON — Terry

I. Dockside

- A. *Psyche* — show up to boat ready to sail and be prepared to do whatever it takes to make the helmsman comfortable. Half of the job is preparing the skipper and making him feel relaxed.
- B. *Motivation* — It's the crew's job to be more motivated than the skipper on the dock. This shows the skipper that his team is psyched and ready to race.
- C. *Preparation* — Go over the boat and make sure nothing is going to break. Breakdowns are inexcusable and should be handled by the whole team. The middleman should also soap up the bottom, wet sand the centerboard and make sure the spinnaker is rolled and ready. Check the regatta notices and board for announcements.

II. Prerace/Prestart

- A. *Relaxation* — Middleman is responsible for making sure the team is leaving the dock on time. He is the tactician and they need to feel comfortable in the amount of time to collect information. Deep

breaths to relax when feeling stress.

- B. *Preparation* — Go through 5 tacks, 1 set, 1 douse, and five jibes to warm up. Go upwind on each side of the race course and get the proper numbers for each tack. Observe what is happening with the wind. Most importantly take this information and develop a game plan with alternatives.

III. First Beat

- A. *Jobs* — Make the tactical decisions and don't be wrong. HIKE!
- B. *First Shift* — want to have the skipper position the boat best for the first shift. This will be dictated when you start. Hike!
- C. *Middle of the beat* — Tactician, Keep the boat in phase while sticking to your game plan. Hike!
- D. *Approaching the weather mark* — avoid the laylines. Get the boat into a clear lane to approach the mark, while also keeping an eye out for traffic. Hike Hard!

IV. Windward Mark Rounding

- A. *Jobs* — Trim the jib while pole is being put up. Hike extremely hard! pre-feed the guy and trim sheet immediately after hoist.
- B. *Defending/Attacking* — Listen to Brad and Betsy criticize my chute flying capabilities. Whine about my arms, neck, and eyes hurting. And constant concentration on the spinnaker and boat balance if necessary.

V. Reach Mark/Gibe

- A. *Jobs* — Rotate spinnaker. Do not let the spinnaker collapse. Pull down new twing rest of way.
 - 1. *Heavy air* — Be ready to hike hard and plenty of ease on the sheet. It's normally the middle guy's fault if the boat broaches due to over trimmed spinnaker. Unless of course your helmsman SUCKS!
 - 2. *Light air* — Roll Gibe. Be agile and make sure the spinnaker does not collapse.

VI. Takedown

- A. *Jobs* — Pull the spinnaker down and be ready to help trim the main if necessary and Hike Hard!
Aside: Also while pulling the spinnaker down, get it wrapped on the shrouds and rip it to shreds.

VII. The Rest of the Race

- A. *Looking forward* — As the tactician it's my responsibility to make sure we either extend our lead or pass as many boats as possible. By allowing the competition to make the mistake and just being in position to capitalize on these mistakes.
- B. *Big Picture* — Always keep in mind about what has happened in the past few legs. Never get tunnel vision.
- C. *Small Picture* — Good time to concentrate on passing one boat especially by focusing on mark roundings or near the finish. Always have the big picture to avoid getting burned.

VIII. Middle Guy Blues

Always buy the beer, food, and pay for the hotels. Anything goes wrong blame it on the middle guy. Anything goes right it is normally due to excellent driving and jib trim.

FOREWARD — Betsy

I. Dockside

- A. Greet the competition. Read SI's/figure out who players are.
- B. Check scores and notices.
- C. Make sure we have water, snacks, sunscreen, sunglasses, Brad (with his coffee caffeinated)
- D. Leave dock first!! Become one with lake, bay, river, whatever.
- E. Check our list of things to do (or have been done) to make sure everything is a o.k.
- F. Take excess junk out of boat and make sure everyone has right clothes to sail in.
- G. Spare spinnaker pole in boat.

II. Prerace/Prestart

- A. *Relaxation* — discuss things other than racing — we know job to be done. Take a short nap, check spinnaker tapes and knots. Duck oncoming waves and dress for race.
- B. *Preparation — Prestart*
 - 1. Get #s (compass) on each tack — write them legibly down (are they straight on #s or from lubber line?) Tell Terry what # approximations are — find out what my highs and lows are for each tack.
 - 2. We do boat handling maneuvers. I mark hal-yard tension for jibs and jib car leads. A bunch of tacks and jibes, at least one set and takedown.
 - 3. We check the line a lot to determine favored end and head to wind direction. I try to note time we take HTW reading to figure if breeze is oscillating or is shifting persistently.
 - 4. Check current and get range.
 - 5. Get line sight on land.
 - 6. CHECK COURSE AND COMMITTEE FLAGS. NOTE AND WRITE THEM ON DECK. We formulate basic game plan for first beat.
- C. *At start* —
 - 1. I trim exactly to telltales on jib for speed — adjusting according to Brad's calls/direction (slow, fast, luff, etc.)
 - 2. I inform him of specific boats and people, and also boats coming at us to avoid collision. We talk about favored end and who is setting up where.
 - 3. I back up middle crew with 2nd running watch.
 - 4. I trim for start and hike like crazy. Immediately after start I figure out if we're up or down.

III. First Beat

- A. Up front I decide if we're up or down on the compass. Terry figures if we stay or tack. We work together giving Brad info on height, speed, pointing ability, if we need to pinch or foot. If we're stupid, fast or wicked slow. I generally call puffs (3,2,1 puff) and steep chop or bad wave patterns. Terry relays tactical info. Primary consideration is going right way in clear air.
- B. *First Shift*
 - 1. In prestart we try to figure out what phase we're in and where the first shift will come in from.

Then we set ourselves up at the start for this.

2. Object is to be able to tack on first shift (leader) therefore you must have *speed* and *position* at start. If not, we look for a chance to go the correct way, even if it means tacking and crossing *behind* boats, especially near the starting area in big fleet. Bail out if necessary, the earlier the better.

C. Middle of Beat

1. We look for opportunities, hitting shifts better than competition. We try to think like the "other guy" and think several moves ahead. If we do X he'll do Y; if he does Y we'll do Z, etc.
2. We look for lanes and use blockers. I try to look up course for breeze lines and indicators for shifts (smoke stacks, flags, other boats sailing). Always looking for windward mark for position on course.

D. Coming in to windward mark—

1. I first look to locate jibe mark and find a reference it will line up with as we round. I set pole, hand Terry jib, unhook spin halyard and sheet from under leeward guy hood and play jib as needed. As we round we *hike hard to help boat bear off*. Terry slides in to throw chute and grab leeward spin sheet. Brad hoists, I pull guy back and immediately hike. Then we yell at Brad to raise the board. Jib is secondary — we can ease it to luffing point and take it down when and if possible. On reaches it's my job to hike, play centerboard, play vang in puffs, call puffs, and feed information as to whether people are attacking or defending behind us. Only three reasons why someone behind will go up. (1) Puff (2) They are attacking us to try to pass or (3) they are defending on someone who is attacking them.

- IV. As we approach the jibe mark, I try to *locate leeward mark* and a reference point behind it. We look for and anticipate the opportunities at the mark rounding and we execute the jibe. Through the jibe, I preset new twing about 2/3 down then I release windward twing as we turn jibe pole and final trim new twing if Terry didn't get it. Terry flies chute through jibe. Brad throws main and steers boat to try to throw me off bow.

Light air: Everything is pretty easy (except flying chute). I jibe pole by either going on deck from leeward (so I can roll boat hard from deck level) or jibe from inside boat. My weight is forward and to leeward holding boom out. I make sure controls are eased and jib is down and out of way.

Heavy air: More jobs to do — hiking is key, playing vang, jib, centerboard, twings, reminding Terry not to be a girly man when the big puffs come.

When we are ludicrous speed — I hang on for dear life and try not to get upset when Brad yells at me for not listening. The only helpful thing to keep me hearing clearly would be a diving helmet, a periscope

and snorkel. It's hard to hear with wind whistling and underwater, so don't get frustrated with the "dry guy" in the back end. Just duck a few times when the waves come.

V. Take down

Approaching leeward mark — jib goes up and halyard is set to appropriate numbers. Outhaul goes on, board down. I take down pole and help Terry pull in chute if necessary (not too often). Then I trim jib as we round. It is key to know immediately what upwind numbers are — are we lifted or headed? This determines start of beat as well as if there are lanes to tack in if necessary. Make sure no lines or halyards are dragging in water!

VI. Rest of Race.

- A. Depending on our position after the first triangle the game plan will vary. Is one side still favored? Is breeze oscillating — what phase are we in?
- B. If we are ahead, we sail conservatively, staying between competition and mark — we try to increase lead if possible.
- C. If we are behind, we try to be patient, look for opportunities, capitalize on them when we can and pick off one boat at a time. Looking ahead is the only option. We try to find breeze before the other guy, play the shifts a little better, work hard on boat speed. The race is never over till you pass the line.

- VII. It's important to know what you're focus is. Early in regatta (1st 3 races) we look at *big picture* and sail the fleet, going for it, not focusing on any specific boats. As we get into the series and the players sort themselves out, we keep an eye on specific people while still sailing our own kind of race. In the last couple of races, our focus may change to play with one or two boats depending on the score/points. It's key to know the points and prepare/plan for what you have to do.

VIII. Points to remember

- A. Middle guy buys beer
- B. Skipper pays the bills
- C. Front guy keeps other 2 organized and makes sure everyone fixes the broken parts.
- D. Remain calm and patient (deep breathing techniques are perfect)
- E. Look for opportunities
- F. HAVE FUN!

When this information was sent back to me, I was planning on writing an article based on the outlines. The way it is written here struck me as closer to the way that we all think on the race course. Sailboat racing is a reactive sport. We react to the conditions around us, we react to each other in the boat and we react to our competition. I hope that you had as much fun reading this as we had writing it.

See you in the spring!

Brad

Betsy

Terry

Brad is the one design coordinator for Shore Sails, R.I. Betsy is head of One Design production for Shore Sails, R.I., and Terry is the sales manager for Shore Sails, Great Lakes.