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OFF SOUNDINGS CLUB

1933 – 2008

Celebrating 75 Years of Great Yacht Racing

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January 28, 2008

Greetings to All Off Soundings Club Members

As we near the end of January and the days grow noticeably longer my thoughts turn again to the upcoming sailing season. Even though the snow still lingers, your Board has been hard at work planning the usual sailing events as well as marking a major milestone in our history. This year marks the 75th Anniversary year of the Off Soundings Club and a number of special events are planned to celebrate this historic occasion.

During the past years, the Club has grown in membership and financial stability as well as conducting some of the best race events in the area. We plan to continue these traditions, and also to celebrate our accomplishments.

Events kick off with our Annual meeting and dinner on the 5th of April in the River Room at the Seamen's Inn. It has been a number of years since we have had a Club video, so we will debut a new video at the dinner. What better way to document part of our history! Vice Commodore Bill Loweth and our Scorer Greg Gilmartin have been working for over a year to bring this production to you. Bill promises me that it will be spectacular! You will find other attractions at the dinner as well as the awarding of the season trophies. Copies of the video will be available, free to the membership at the April dinner. For those not able to be at the dinner, copies will be available at no cost upon request. A nominal mailing charge will be made if mailing is required.

For all and particularly those of you who are unable to join us for the Spring and Fall regattas, another special event is planned for you this summer. We will conduct a rendezvous at Mystic Seaport over the weekend of 12-13 July. Whether you have a powerboat, a sailboat, no boat at all, or have been unable to sail in the regattas, this event marks a great opportunity to see old friends and share the ambience of the Seaport. Come by boat or car, but please plan on joining us. This weekend will be marked by several activities and capped with a Club dinner in the Boat Shed on the 12th. More details will be coming in future correspondence and available on our website. Rear Commodore Steve Purdy is working with Seaport staff to ensure that this is a memorable event.

While we continue to enjoy good sailing and after race gatherings, we have been tending to the business of managing the Club. Treasurer Ron Breault has been working with the IRS for the past 18 months and we now feel we have a good understanding of our tax and Not-For-Profit status, and of our need to file informational returns. Many, hopefully all,

of the required filings have now been made. We are also continuing to address the matter of membership and membership participation. Adding qualified members to our Club has always been a focus in order to keep our Club strong and vibrant. Enclosed with this letter, is a membership posting by our Membership Chairman Gerry Keeler. Please review the proposed candidates carefully and comment directly to Gerry as necessary. As we reported to you previously, we constantly are seeking ways to improve communications with you and run our operations in a more cost effective manner. In our survey last spring, many of you indicated an interest in receiving electronic communications from us. For those who have done so – nearly 60% of the membership, this correspondence is being delivered that way. If this letter came to you in the mail and you are willing to “Opt In” for electronic delivery for future correspondence, please drop our Treasurer a note, or better yet, an email at RonBreault@cs.com.

As in the past we will conduct winter luncheons on Long Island and in Connecticut. Past Commodore Frank Bohlen and Steve Corkery have arranged the Long Island lunch. Frank has also scheduled a no-host luncheon at Skippers Dock in Stonington on February 28th. It is through these meetings that the Board and Flag Officers seek feedback from our members and meet potential new members. So, please join us, even bring a friend, and give us your thoughts as to how we can make Off Soundings a better Club.

As many of you know, Block Island Race Week 2008 begins immediately after our Spring series. To increase yacht racing participation, your Board has been in contact with the BIRW organizers, suggesting that our series may be a feeder race. As with the Nonsuch and J-35 special classes, we will assign a liaison to ensure that those who wish to join us on Friday and Saturday are formally invited and welcomed as guests to our race series. Having more boats racing should make the spring series more enjoyable for everyone. In addition, there is interest in the T (Traditional) class rejoining the Fall series on Saturday. We are also pleased to report that the Nonsuch group will be sailing with us as a class in both the Spring and Fall regattas. There is significant interest among the Nonsuch sailors in Off Soundings membership. This is all great news!

The Board has also spent some time in review of our membership process, and, quite frankly, we found that it may be time to simplify our processes and procedures. Proposed changes to our Constitution and By-Laws have been prepared for consideration at our Annual Meeting. These changes will be distributed to the membership and posted on our website 30 days in advance of the meeting, in accordance with the By-Laws.

Wishing you a warm and early spring,

Bob Geary



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28 February 2008

Greetings to the OSC Membership

As the month of March approaches, and the boat yard season begins, our thoughts turn to the April Annual Meeting and the Spring Race Series.

Enclosed you will find the particulars for the Annual Meeting and Dinner. As you know, Vice Commodore Bill Loweth and Greg Gilmartin have been working all winter on the new OSC video which we will debut at the dinner. Copies will be available to those members attending. Bill assures me that this will be something NOT TO BE MISSED !

The planning for our Spring Race series is well underway. You should expect to see some changes to simplify our NOR and SI's. Race Secretary Walt Pratt has been hard at work on these documents. We hope you will find them easier to use. There has been considerable communication with the Nonsuch fleet and we expect them back in record numbers. This is all great news! Also, as many of you know, Block Island Race Week 2008 begins immediately after our Spring series. To increase yacht racing participation, your Board has been in contact with the BIRW organizers, suggesting that our series may be a feeder race for their entrants. Having more boats racing should make the spring series more enjoyable for everyone. Also, since you will be racing with us for the weekend prior, BIRW invites you to stay for an additional week of pure fun. Both Spinnaker and Non-Spinnaker classes are welcome. Attached is more information.

When I last wrote to you in January, I indicated that the Board has spent a considerable amount of time reviewing our membership process. As a consequence of that review, we concluded that it is time to simplify that process. At our January Board meeting, the OSC Board of Governors accepted the attached changes to our Constitution for presentation to the members at the April Annual Meeting.

The objective of these proposed changes is to improve the Off Soundings Club membership process and to improve communication with guests, candidates and members by modifying and expanding the Membership Committee. It is planned to have the Membership Committee be composed of Area Membership Representatives who will be responsible for facilitating and communicating on membership matters within a specified geographic area as well as acting on membership matters.

Traditionally the OSC membership process has been such that members of the Membership Committee, other than the Chairman, have been anonymous. This may have been appropriate in

times when there was concern over possible undue influence on the Committee in considering membership candidates; however, this is no longer the case. Secrecy is not appropriate to our times; open communication is more acceptable and practical”

We also have been following an undocumented practice that is not consistent with the process described by the Constitution, i.e., having a membership review and comment period before pending members are accepted into membership. This seems to be a good contemporary practice that is included specifically in the proposed changes.

In summary the proposed changes:

- Expand the Membership Committee from four to five members, including the Chairman, each of whom will be responsible for assisting in the membership and guest invitation processes and provide an ongoing presence for communication in a specified geographic area.
- Make the Chairman a voting member of the committee,
- Make the committee’s identities and functions publicly known and encourage their use as local membership contacts.
- Make additional supporting letters optional.
- Change the approved membership process to include the 30 day membership review and comment period prior to a candidate’s election to membership by the Membership Committee, which is now being done by tradition.

If there are questions or concerns about these changes, please call me or another member of the Board prior to the meeting. This way concerns can be addressed ahead of time and the meeting can proceed appropriately. Article XIV of our Constitution requires a two-thirds vote of all present at the meeting. Your Board of Governors recommends adoption of these changes.

Finally, Treasurer Ron Breault asks me to remind those of you who have not yet paid your 2008 OSC dues to please do so ASAP and avoid the late penalty. If you have any questions of Ron you can reach him at _____ or at 860 434 8298.

Best regards

Bob Geary

Current Off Soundings Club Constitution now reads as follows:

Article VIII Standing Committees, Section 2

The Membership Committee shall consist of four members, the Chairman of which will be the only member of the Committee whose name shall be made public. The Chairman shall have no vote. Voting members of the Committee shall elect to membership in the club such candidates as they deem desirable. Such election shall be by unanimous vote of the voting members of the Membership Committee. No rejected candidate may be eligible for membership within six months after rejection.

Article XI Membership, Section 2

Each candidate for active membership must be proposed in writing by one member, seconded by two members, and with these communications must be included two or more supporting letters from other club members. Application forms for membership must be executed by the candidate, and must state full name, age occupation, and give home and business address. All applications must be sent to the Chairman of the Membership Committee by the proposer for action who shall immediately transfer same to the Membership Committee, and they shall hand their decision to the Commodore and the Secretary, with as little delay as possible. Except the final action thereon all proceedings of the Membership Committee upon any proposal for membership, and all communications to them in reference thereto, shall remain confidential. Membership in this club shall be restricted to those who enjoy and participate in the sport of sailing.

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The OSC Board recommends adoption of the following revisions:

Article VIII Standing Committees, Section 2:

The Membership Committee shall consist of up to five voting members. They consist of the Chairman, and four area representative members. The area representatives will be responsible for facilitating and expediting membership issues and communication in their geographic areas, including promotion, expediting guest invitations and assisting in the assembling and processing of membership proposal packages. The committee area members will be appointed by the Membership Committee Chairman with the approval of the Commodore.

The areas are: (1) Eastern Long Island Sound (Watch Hill, RI to Madison, CT), (2) Western Long Island Sound (Guilford, CT and west and NY State other than Eastern LI), (3) Eastern Long Island (ELIYA), and (4) Rhode Island (RI east of Watch Hill). All Other Areas (Responsibility of the Chairman)

Article XI Membership, Section 2

Membership in this club shall be open to those who enjoy and support the sport of sailing. Each candidate for active membership must be proposed in writing by one member and seconded by two members. Supporting letters from other club members are encouraged. Proposal packages can be obtained from the Membership Committee by any member in good standing. The enclosed membership application form must be completed with full name, age, occupation, and home and business addresses, signed by the candidate and returned to the proposer. The membership application, proposal, seconding and any supporting letters must be assembled into a completed package by the proposer and sent to the Membership Chairman.

Copies of completed packages will be sent immediately to Membership Committee members for review. They may by unanimous vote recommend candidates to the membership for a 30 day period of review and comment. Recommended candidates shall be published in the next mailing to the full membership. Comments should be directed to the Membership Chairman only. When the review period expires the Membership Committee shall consider any comments received from members and by unanimous vote elect to membership any candidates that they deem desirable. No rejected candidate shall be eligible to reapply for membership within twelve months after rejection.

The Chairman shall hand the committee's decisions to the Commodore, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Race Secretary and notify the new member and his proposer with as little delay as possible. Except for the final action thereon all proceedings of the Membership Committee upon any proposal for membership, and all communications to them in reference thereto, shall remain confidential.