

Frostbite series

The Frostbite Yacht Club 1991 Spring Series starts Sunday, March 3 at Essex Yacht Club (contact FBYC at 1 Spring St. Noank, Ct. 06340.) The Spring Regatta is scheduled for April 5-6, also at Essex.

Larry White is *The Day's* sailing columnist. Information for this column may be submitted by calling him at 739-3253.

Frostbite Yacht Club

Essex — On a day that seemed more like early summer than late winter, a fleet of close to 50 boats began the spring competition in the Frostbite Yacht Club series on the Connecticut River.

In the InterClub competition, Dave and Cindy Nickerson were the winners with Dave Dyson and Linda Dowd second and Chris and Vicki Field.

In Lasers, Mike Keegan was the winner, Rob Erda second and Dave Frazier was third.

In Blue Jays, Bill and Sharon Bell were first, Tad Moriarty and Dave Sanson and Chet Rutan and Nancy Byrne were third.

The club is trying to add a JY/15 class and will begin competing in that class next week if enough competitors are found.

Introducing columnist Larry White

Timing aside, region's brimming with activity



Larry White

I've really agonized over this first column, not because of the challenge of doing it — I've written for publication before — but because of the timing. We're not quite two weeks into a war, one which will undoubtedly alter each of our lives in some way. A column about sailing seems pretty trivial. In that context, though, so does Super Bowl XXV.

But there's one thing I've learned about tough times. Beyond "... the tough get going" and other such aphorisms, there is the homely but undeniable truth that "business as usual" is what keeps you going. Routine and familiar circumstances provide stability in our sometimes chaotic lives — job, family, friends, Super Bowl XXV and sailing (put these in your own order, which changes with mood and time).

There are many sailors in The Day's circulation area, sailors of all kinds, from Lee Rail Vikings to Olympians. We'd like them to look to The Day for their sailing news.

The challenge to us is to collect that news in a timely way, to build a network that reports on events promptly and effectively, and without bias. Competitive sailing news, including results and racing conditions, will be handled by the sports department. Call after 5 p.m. daily at 444-2956 (FAX 442-5599).

Please let us know ahead of time about events that warrant coverage, especially events in which local sailors will be competing. Such events would include the Off Soundings Club's racing series, Block Island Race Week, the 420 Area B's or a national or international event taking place outside the area in which local sailors are competing.

For example, in the near future how about the Lightning Midwinters in St. Pete, Snipes at Clearwater, Sunfish at Satellite Beach or the CAN-AM Regatta for Olympic Classes in Miami? Anyone in an America's Cup campaign, or the Maxis?

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There's also local frostbite sailing. Yes, some folks never quit. In fact, if you want to be good at racing, you do have to compete year-round. The best competitive sailors usually start in dinghies (small boats) and go back to them periodically to hone their edge in skill and tactics.

For many people, this is a time to go skiing — and think about sailing. It's too early to work on the boat, but you can learn more about all aspects of the sport, get in better shape, go to boat shows. The Connecticut Marine Trades Association Boat Show is at the Hartford Civic Center, Feb. 1-3 (727-8010). The Boston Boat Show is Jan. 26 to Feb. 3 (617-536-8152).

North U, a seminar series to improve racing skills, features the SMART course this year (strategy, tactics and rules) at Marblehead, Mass., Feb. 9-10 (617-631-5147) and at Milford, March 9-10 (877-7621). A wonderful text is provided and it's taught by successful sailors who can really help.

Locally, Halsey Sailmakers are running Performance Racing Seminars on racing fundamentals, Feb. 23, and advanced racing, Feb. 24, at the Halsey Loft in Mystic (536-4235). Their teachers are also highly qualified. A text is provided, the third edition of Performance Racing Technique.

Cruisers and racers can learn or refresh their knowledge on safety at the ECYRA/USCGA Boat Club Safety at Sea Seminar, March 23. This USYRU and Cruising World sponsored seminar is one of a nationwide series to foster safety at sea. The Coast Guard presentation features well-qualified Coast Guard speakers on many subjects and a live demonstration of man overboard recovery, towing and helicopter rescue techniques (444-8507). This course is part of the preparation given cadets for offshore sailing. The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and the U.S. Power Squadron offer courses on skills and safety, as does Mystic Seaport.

I'm looking at a flyer we just got from the East Lyme Board of Selectmen about recycling — bottles, cans, paper and eventually plastic. Many

race committees are specifying that the dumping of any trash or garbage overboard can result in disqualification. In fact, USYRU itself recommends that this be included in Sailing Instructions.

Anyone on the water for any reason should take heed, or we'll all be disqualified at the bottom, and surface tide and shorelines fill with our debris. So, as you plan your sailing, plan not just to keep your trash aboard until you reach shore, but plan to recycle, as well. And if you feed a group of one-design sailors on the water, arrange a trash pickup before racing resumes. It's really a matter of thinking about it seriously, and then doing something specific about it.

As you plan your sailing program for the year, note that not just the sailing press and magazines provide schedules of events. Locally, the Sound Info Calendar will be out shortly, as will the ECYRA yearbook. One-design newsletters, college (NEISA and ICYRA) and high school (NESSA, Connecticut League and ISYRA) publications all provide schedules.

Perhaps the best bargain for information on sailing is the USYRU magazine American Sailor. The United States Yacht Racing Association (USYRU at 401-849-5200) is really the United States Sailing Association, but the name change is long in coming. USYRU serves all sailors, not just races, in many ways and mostly for free. Of all the organizations around, it's perhaps the only one reducing dues this year as well as offering very attractive group rates and junior rates.

Sailing really is a lifetime sport which you can enjoy at any level of seriousness or intensity. There is a basic need for specific skills and knowledge appropriate to your level for the sake of pleasure and safety. But you can relax and clear your head or sail hard to win at the highest level. There's fun to be had in whatever way you choose to sail, and then there's that special friendship that comes from shared trials and pleasures.

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