



OSTS Notes



Newsletter of the United States Naval Academy
Offshore Sail Training Squadron

DIRECTOR'S CUT

by Renee Mehl



It's hard to believe another season is over. It was a very successful one, and I am thankful for everyone who has contributed to the program over the past year to train our future Navy and Marine Corps Officers. I was fortunate to participate in a "Meet the Fleet" event down in Norfolk and Quantico this fall through a leadership program run by the Stockdale Center. It was a great insight into what our midshipmen will be doing in just a few short years, and a good reminder that everything we do is to get them ready for that.

We start our volunteer winter training with the Leadership series to emphasize that point. I plan on sharing what I've learned this fall, starting with the recommended reading list later in this newsletter.

Other winter projects include updates to the BIB, SOP and Experiential Leadership Guide. Thanks to **John Formisano** and **Rick Robey** for starting that process. If anyone has recommended updates, please forward them to our new training officer, **LT Christian Burton**.

We wish you and your families a safe and happy holiday season.

FLEET CAPTAIN NOTE

by John Formisano



Skipper John Formisano

It's hard to believe that we have another summer of sailing and fall training in the rear-view mirror. The 44's are in their winter homes and we're preparing for the classroom training.

You can see from Director Mehl's and Captain Jackson's summaries what is planned for the "off season". Overall through the upcoming training sessions you'll see more emphasis on using our standard processes to make changes between STC leadership more seamless.

Table of Contents

- Director's Cut
- Fleet Captain Note
- Maintenance Director Note
- Welcome Aboard
- Midshipmen Fall Awards Ceremony
- Volunteer Recognition and Awards
- Winter Training
- Safety at Sea
- D-Qualification Training
- Naval Academy Yard Access
- Huntington-Steele Regatta
- Recommended Reading
- OSTS Facebook Page
- Email Opt-Out
- Thank you!

One of the "lessons learned" for me this summer, via feedback from my crew, was that if my XO and I weren't aligned in the early part of the block sail in how we taught basic skills the crew felt that we were telling them two different ways to do the same thing. In retrospect, I can see how our crew, who typically have little knowledge of small boats or sailing, isn't able to process all of the input we're giving them. When we aren't perfectly aligned, we can create either confusion, frustration or both. I heard this from my crew in debriefs, thus, my emphasis on using our standards.

During my time on the 44's in the fall I've made it a point to review what is in the BIB and the SOP. I encourage you to do the same if you have some time during the off season, (and there isn't anything better than being by a cozy fire reading SOP's and Boat Information Book procedures?)

I look forward to seeing you at the winter training sessions and at "The Naval Academy Club" for sea stories on Thursday's after the class.



MAINTENANCE DIRECTOR NOTE

by CAPT David Jackson, USN (ret)



The sailing season is over, Santee Basin is empty, and the winter work period has begun across the river on the Navy 44s. Some interesting wrinkles developed over the summer which are guiding our work this winter:

- We must follow the Navy BOATALT process if we want to change the as-built configuration of the Navy 44's. To that end, the two jobs we hope to accomplish to enhance the reliability of the boats are pending review and approval. The two jobs are 1) replace the existing weather fax system with a Sirius/XM marine weather receiver and 2) remove the remote oil filter and hoses and mount the oil filter directly to the engine block.
- As part of boat inspections, we discovered that some of the mast steps (the aluminum box that the mast sits in) had cracks in the weld that joins the sides to the flat. The affected boats are NA21, 24, 26 and 34. Those mast steps will be replaced, but it's something to look at as you are inspecting boats prior to going offshore
- M-division will be busy this winter fixing oil leaks and making sure shaft seals are sound. Please make sure you give the engines and shaft seals a good visual before going offshore. We will talk more about that during the class at SCR D
- E-division components (batteries, alternators, etc.) were pretty reliable this past year, so no major work is planned

I look forward to seeing everyone — new and experienced — at the winter training sessions. Have an enjoyable holiday season.

WELCOME ABOARD



Please welcome aboard **LT Christian Burton** as the new OSTS Training Officer. A native of Virginia Beach, Virginia, LT Burton graduated in 2015 from Virginia Military Institute with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and a Minor in National Security. He played four years of Division I basketball, as a starter and team captain his senior year. LT Burton received his commission through NROTC in May of 2015.

Upon commissioning, LT Burton reported to USS FORREST SHERMAN (DDG 98) as First Lieutenant where he completed an arduous 5th Fleet deployment. Selected to fleet up to Fire Control Officer (FCO) for his second division officer tour where he qualified Engineering Officer of the Watch (EOOW) and Force Anti-Air Warfare Coordinator (FAAWC) for a dynamic 6th Fleet deployment as Alternate Air Missile Defense Commander

for Operation Inherent Resolve. He qualified Tactical Action Officer (TAO) for HSTCSG C2X 2019.

LT Burton's personal awards include two Navy/Marine Corps Achievement Medals. Designated as top Ship handler in his BDOC class and Distinguished Graduate of his ADOC class, ranking 2nd out of 64 students.

We also wish **LT Jordan McCullough** the best as she assumes her new duties as the VOST Operations Officer. Jordan did a superb job these past 2 years as our training officer. We will miss her, and she is a welcome addition to the VOST team.

MIDSHIPMEN FALL AWARDS CEREMONY

The annual VOST and OSTS Fall Awards Ceremony was held on November 15th in the Chesapeake Room. Awards from the summer season, and D-qualification certificates were bestowed upon the deserving midshipmen. The OSTS fielded numerous nominees for the various categories of our awards.

The LTG Robert C. Tabor Award is presented to a midshipman serving as a Skipper who best demonstrates outstanding leadership and command skills while participating in the SAILTRAMID Summer Cruise Program. The Tabor Award went to **MIDN 1/C Robert Leam**.



The RADM Robert W. McNitt Award is presented to a midshipman demonstrating exemplary leadership while participating in their OSTS summer cruise block as XO. Recipients' performance in seamanship, navigation, leadership, and sailing skills set them apart from their contemporaries during their cruise block. This year's McNitt Award went to **MIDN 2/C McGregor Scott**.



The CAPT Robert D. McWethy Award is presented to an outstanding midshipman participating in the SAILTRAMID Summer Cruise Program for seamanship. We had an excellent field of candidates this year, and received numerous nominees for the award, so have expanded the Award to a midshipman from each block. The McWethy Awards went to:

Block 1: **MIDN 3/C Oliver Prinsen-Balu**

Block 2: **MIDN 3/C Andrew Beck**

Block 3: **MIDN 3/C Isabelle Ross**

The Frank "Bing" Simpson Maintenance Award is presented to a midshipman who exhibits the best engineering and maintenance qualities on their boat. **MIDN 3/C Jon Beauchamp-Moran** was awarded the "Tool Kit" for his superior actions over the summer.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION AND AWARDS

We typically have our volunteer recognition and awards ceremony in the spring but have made the executive decision to host this in November to celebrate all the accomplishments of our talented volunteers at the end of the season. It was a great evening to thank all of the people who dedicate their time to train midshipmen. This event is for volunteer coaches and instructors with the Intercollegiate, Varsity Offshore and OSTS programs, along with the Race Committee who support our home regattas.

It was also an opportunity to recognize a volunteer who has gone above and beyond in the past year to support Navy Sailing. This year's recipient of the Grosvenor Award is Race Committee Chair **Tom Stalder**.

WINTER TRAINING

The 2020 Winter Training Schedule is still a work in progress, but we will be having classes on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 1600-1800. There will be a few Saturday classes: boat systems, Safety at Sea and the navigation practical exam. The first class will be Leadership #1 scheduled for January 28 starting at 1600 in Michelson 110. We will provide a map in the next newsletter, with the final schedule. These lectures will also be posted on Blackboard shortly after each class is completed.

New XOs are also required to pass 14 online exams on different topics, and a practical navigation exam. To help you manage the course load and get through the D-qualification on-line exams, we recommend that you attend or review each lecture, read any additional recommended study materials, and take that segment of the test shortly thereafter, while the information is still fresh. Reference books are available to check out from the sailing center, we have the editions with the specific pages/chapter cited. As a reminder, you can take the tests in any sequence, and each segment can be taken at any time. Blackboard will let you take each test twice before recording a final score; however, the questions are pulled from a pool, so you will not get all the same questions on a retest.

SAFETY AT SEA SEMINAR

Save the date! The Safety at Sea Seminar (SaS) is a requirement for our volunteers, and is good for five years. Tracy Edwards, MBE, the Skipper of the first Whitbread Around the World Race with an all-female crew will be our keynote speaker. We offer the one day course on **Saturday, March 28th** in Alumni Hall for free if you bring your own lunch, or you can sign up for a boxed lunch for \$10. If you want a US Sailing certificate for having attended this seminar, that cost is \$25. Some organizers of offshore races in the United States require these; however, the certificate in itself is not required by OSTS. A sign-up link will be provided in early March. If you've already taken the course, send us your certificate and we will sign off that line item in your PQS book. US Sailing does offer an online course that is the one day equivalent, but there is a fee for that course, \$75 for US Sailing members, \$85 for non-members.

D-QUALIFICATION TRAINING

Personnel Qualification Standards' (PQS) books are the responsibility of each volunteer. For our new people, please remember that you need to keep track of your underway hours (round to the nearest .25 hours), and when you have enough hours and all the skill signatures and recommendations for a section, drop it off with the OSTS Training Officer for the final signature. Put your hours total in the box provided at the bottom of the logbook on the left hand side.

Volunteers who earned the recommendation of their Skipper and enough underway hours during their XO tour, should bring in their PQS for final signature from the Program Director and DNAs for their D-OS qualification.

Blackboard accounts are being set up now for all new volunteers. Blackboard administrators will send you an email with login instructions. All of our online qualification tests are hosted on Blackboard, and the winter lectures that are recorded on Panopto™ (voice and PowerPoint) can be accessed there too - usually within an hour or two of the lecture. If you are changing your email, please notify **LT Christian Burton** so he can download any grades you have in the system first.

NAVAL ACADEMY YARD ACCESS

You will need to have a CAC card, military ID, or a visitor pass to drive onto the Naval Academy for classes and spring / summer sailing. If you do not have a visitor pass, you need to fill out a request form as soon as possible as it does take a few working days to process a guest visit request. Please contact **LT Matt Vernam** for the form.

HUNTINGTON-STEELE REGATTA

Every year at the end of the season, we host a fun regatta before we put the boats away for winter maintenance. It's open to staff, active volunteers and midshipmen, and is sailed on the Navy 44s. This regatta was established in 1971 by the Robert Crown Center staff and coaches to honor the outstanding dedication and leadership of CAPT Robert Dache Steele, USN, Class of 1945, Commanding Officer, Naval Station Annapolis and Commodore, Naval Academy Sailing Squadron. Upon the death of CAPT Steele's long-time friend, CDR Robert Dinsmore Huntington, Jr., in January 1973, CAPT Steele re-dedicated the trophy to the memory of his shipmate.



This year there were 11 entries, which included two OSTS teams, a VOST coaches' team, our sailmakers, a MIDN women's team, and several other midshipman and staff teams.



It was a nail-biting competition between the top two boats up the beat, in a blistering 2 knots of wind up the Severn River toward the bridge. It looked like one of the OSTS boats was going to sneak past the VOST coaches, but a wind shift at the end of the leg foiled those plans, and we finished second. The Race Committee took pity on us and ended the race at the first mark so we didn't have to sail dead downwind against the current in a dying breeze. Lots of fun was had by all for this annual end of season event.

RECOMMENDED READING



In anticipation of our first winter class on leadership, *Fire in My Eye: An American Warrior's Journey from Being Blinded on the Battlefield to Gold Medal Victory* is a great read. This book tells the astonishing true story of a wounded veteran who refused to give up. LT Brad Snyder, USNA Class of 2006, did not let blindness build a wall around him – through tenacity and courage, he tore it all down.

EXPERIENTIAL LEADERSHIP GUIDE UPDATE

The Experiential Leadership Guide or ELG is undergoing an update over these next few months. The last edition of the ELG was released in 2014 and it is due for a refresh. The ELG is a working reference and instructor guide for D-qualified Skippers and XOs preparing for a summer block. The primary objective is to create a successful leadership experience for the group of midshipmen assigned to each OSTS Skipper/XO.

The Guide is broken down into five (5) sections: Introduction, Teach & Coaching Fundamentals, Preparing for Deployment, Reinforcement of Leadership Experience, and Lessons Learned. Specifically, over this winter break we are looking to refresh the case studies included under the Lessons Learned section. **Rick**

Robey has taken the lead on this update project. If any of our Skippers and XO's would like to contribute to the process especially if you had a leadership experience from one of your past summer blocks you would like to further develop into a case study, please contact Rick at richard.robey@gmail.com. Rick will also be reaching out to our volunteer base for assistance.

OSTS FACEBOOK PAGE



OSTS has its own Facebook Page! In addition to this newsletter, we will post important information about the program to this Facebook page. Please "Like" us so you have the program information as it is released. We have 409 "likes" to date and growing every month. Help us get to "500" likes in 2020. Please encourage your Midshipmen to send photos and video from their spring training sails and summer block sortie. Anyone can post to our Facebook page. We are generating a good following of OSTS family and friends that are following your sailing experiences. Do not be shy and please post!

Please "Like" us at:

<http://www.facebook.com/USNAOffshoreSailTraining>.

EMAIL OPT-OUT

If you are on this email newsletter and would like to be taken off, please let us know. If you have any articles or information you would like to share through this newsletter please email to richard.robey@gmail.com. As always, thank you for your support of OSTS.

THANK YOU!

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