



OSTS Notes



Newsletter of the United States Naval Academy
Offshore Sail Training Squadron

DIRECTOR'S CUT

by Renee Mehl



I hope this May edition of our newsletter finds all of you and your families safe and healthy.

Since May is the long-awaited month of commissioning for our 1/C midshipmen, I'd like to start with congratulations to all of the midshipmen (and our guest Army cadet) who have served as either an XO or Skipper during their undergraduate years with OSTS. We trust that this leadership experience and the lessons you learned from it will help guide you and be a positive influence in your careers as officers. See below for some special recognition of these individuals.

Everyone at the Academy continues to work toward the best solution for continuing to educate and train our midshipmen, so they are ready to graduate on time and prepared to lead. These are unprecedented times, which call for very innovative and unique solutions. Academy wide updates since our last newsletter include:

Final exams ended last week. The graduating class will be brought back in small groups, for two days at a time to handle logistics and administrative duties. More importantly, they will be commissioned, in person and in uniform at this time. Each graduation session will be recorded, and the entire class of 2020 graduation ceremony will be broadcast on May 22nd, 2020. Please visit www.usna.edu for graduation details.

Plebe summer induction is the next USNA priority. The Superintendent's team is refining their plan to bring the new midshipmen in, which will probably require them to be subject to a two-week quarantine before starting plebe summer activities. The Sailing Center is still planning on running Basic Sail Training for the plebes, with TAD Ensigns and 2nd LTs as instructors this summer.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, all summer fleet cruises for rising 3/C-1/C are cancelled. Leatherneck and Plebe Summer detail are the only confirmed Professional Training Events (PTEs) at this point. Other summer PTEs that are still viable, including YPs, OSTS and VOST, are still being considered.

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The academic plan for summer has been announced. It will consist of summer school during the traditional Block 1 and Block 3, for mandatory and elective training. There will also be a new eight-week "Block Alpha" that will span Blocks 1 and 2. All summer school courses can be done via distance learning. The Training Office is now working on the details of scheduling all summer training/academic events.

What does all of this mean for OSTS this summer? If allowed, we would be limited to local operations in 2-week blocks, the earliest being the second half of Block 2. We currently have three Navy 44s in Santee Basin available for training. There are three more ready to launch and load out. Getting more in the water and ready is contingent on the SCRDE employees coming back to work.

Limiting factors include the following issues.

- Number of boats available to train on.
- Number of midshipmen available to train. Priority space in Bancroft will be given to the incoming plebe class. They will need to socially distance in the dorms, and all the midshipmen detailers will also have priority for housing. There will be limited room in the dorms for OSTS, VOST, and YP crews.
- State guidelines have recently been relaxed to allow recreational boating in Maryland. There are limits on the number of people on board (10 pax) but only those who are sheltering in place in the same household are allowed on each

boat. That works for the midshipmen on lockdown if you consider “Mother B” (aka Bancroft Hall) the same household, but we need to figure out a solution for the instructors. We are looking at utilizing more TADs with D-quals from the VOST team. Many of our OSTS volunteers who work and teach at the Academy are already obligated to teach summer school.

As you can see, there is still a lot of ambiguity regarding what our summer will look like. Our goal is to continue looking at creative solutions to get back to training as soon as it is safely possible. We will continue to update you with the decisions the Naval Academy publishes, and how that affects our program training both the midshipmen and future volunteers.

FLEET CAPTAIN NOTE

by John Formisano



Skipper John Formisano

“Plan for the worst and hope for the best” was the mantra when I was back in the corporate world, and it says a lot about where we are today. As you can see by the other columns in the newsletter there has been a great deal of planning for a fluid environment with many unknowns.

We all hope that we can be back on the water again sooner rather than later. I’m confident that this will come eventually (i.e., hoping for the best). If you have your D-Qual, and you find yourself with some extra time during the lockdown you might want to get a head start on your recertification. As you know, the D-Qual tests are required every 3 years; however, there is nothing that prohibits taking the tests EARLY. If you have the time now and would like to take the D-Qual Proficiency examinations, it is waiting for you on Blackboard®. Although you might not be due this year, if you take it now you won’t have to think about it for another 3 years!

https://usna.blackboard.com/webapps/portal/execute/tabs/tabAction?tab_group_id= 21_1

Another useful “lockdown” training opportunity is **US Sailing's Starboard Portal series**. The vast majority of these sessions are free, and most are recorded and available on the website to view at your leisure.

<https://www.ussailing.org/starboard-portal/>

Hope to see everyone soon!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2020

Congratulations to our graduating OSTS Midshipmen (and Cadet)!!! We have been fortunate to have the following individuals sailing with us in OSTS. All the Academy grads are slated to continue their involvement as newly commissioned TAD officers this summer. It has been a pleasure and an honor

having them involved with the program and seeing them learn from the experience.

- CDT Evan Crowell (ARMY), D-OS Skipper
- MIDN Ryan Eilers, D-OS Skipper
- MIDN Robert Leam, D-OS Skipper
- MIDN McGregor Scott, D-OS Skipper

2LT Evan Crowell, U.S. Army



2LT Evan Crowell

Evan will graduate from USMA on June 13th, 2020 with a degree in Human Geography. He was the Vice Commodore of the sailing team there. He will be commissioned as an Infantry officer and his first duty station will be to pass Infantry Basic Officer Leadership Course at Fort Benning Georgia, Airborne School, and then on to Ranger School. After that, he will take a Bradley platoon at 2nd Brigade, 2nd Armored Division in El Paso Texas.

We regularly have cadets from West Point participate in our sailing program each summer, and they usually come back to get their D-qual and participate in a leadership role. The past two years that Cadet has been Evan Crowell. He sailed as crew in 2018, then as an XO last summer. “*Cadet Evan Crowell was a trustworthy XO, a fantastic mentor, a stellar sailor on NA-35 Valiant! He quickly diminished the gap between Service Academy rivalry and taught his midshipmen how to have a great trip sailing to Boston, while fostering comradery and teamwork within the crew. Good luck to your future endeavors!*”, stated his Skipper, ENS Paige Krumweide, regarding their 2019 summer cruise to Boston. “Evan and Paige were on the Block sail and I was the OTC for the trip up to Boston in 2019, and both were very professional and engaged in all aspects of the cruise. Their crew clearly respected them”, said Renee Mehl.



CDT Evan Crowell (r) offshore last summer



ENS Ryan Eilers, U.S. Navy



ENS Ryan Eilers

Ryan will graduate from the Naval Academy in May with a degree in Computer Science. He will be commissioned as an Ensign and head off to nuclear power school in Charleston, South Carolina for submarine training.

He won the CAPT Robert D. McWethy Seamanship Award as a 3/C midshipman and went on to become XO on an all-midshipman boat his 2/C summer. Ryan has a Scout background, and his 3/C

Skipper enthusiastically endorsed him for the McWethy Award.

"From first day of the block to the very end, Ryan Eilers was a consistent leader, trainer, and model midshipman onboard. Despite the fact that he came into the program with NO sailing experience, he immediately took charge of his responsibilities, working tirelessly to learn not only his own position, but also to learn advanced sailing skills, watchstanding and lookout responsibilities, as well as very competent paper and electronic navigation. He is a solid leader, and most deserving of the Captain Robert D. McWethy Seamanship Award."

He also volunteered to help generate interest in the program at one of the Experiential Leadership Department events last winter and will be back to work with OSTs again later this summer. Our midshipmen will benefit from his experience leading peers.



MIDN Ryan Eilers (l) offshore last summer

ENS Robert Leam, U.S. Navy



ENS Robert Leam

Rob will graduate from the Naval Academy in May with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He will be commissioned as an Ensign and head off to flight school in Pensacola, Florida to become a Naval Aviator.

He has been a steady and strong midshipman leader throughout his time with OSTs. He served as an XO for three different Skippers on his 2018 cruise to Bristol, Rhode Island, and was the continuity for his crew.

He was the Skipper of an all-midshipman crew to Mystic, Connecticut in 2019, and learned much as a peer leader.

Rob learned to sail from his grandfather growing up and refined his talent and leadership at USNA - on VOST, onboard *Summer Wind*, and finally through OSTs. He won the RADM Robert W. McNitt Leadership Award as outstanding XO in 2018 and the LTG Robert C. Tabor Leadership Award as outstanding midshipman skipper in 2019, when he led one of the rare "all midshipmen boats."

"Rob will be commissioned as a Naval Aviator and will soon put his fine understanding of lift and turbulence to good use down in Pensacola. Congratulations!", said one of his (3 different) Skippers aboard his 2018 summer cruise to Bristol, RI -- CDR Lawrie Heyworth.



MIDN Rob Leam receiving the LTG Robert C. Tabor Leadership Award from DNAS last November



ENS McGregor Scott, U.S. Navy



ENS McGregor Scott

McGregor will graduate from the Naval Academy in May with a degree in General Science. He will be commissioned as an Ensign and will become a Surface Warfare Officer eventually assigned to the warship USS MCFAUL (DDG-74) homeported in Norfolk, Virginia.

He won the RADM Robert W. McNitt Leadership Award in the Fall of 2019 and is on track to become an excellent Naval officer. His Skipper on the trip to Port Jefferson last summer had this to say about him.

"MIDN Scott was a consistent, calm, and confident leader. Through positive and direct interactions, enthusiasm and irreproachable personal example, he created a command climate where all the midshipmen could fully realize their potential and achieve unprecedented levels of performance. When the boat was in very rough weather off the coast of Long Island Sound, MIDN Scott skillfully led the execution of the day to day operations. He demonstrated work ethics and expertise while ensuring every member of the crew was secure. MIDN Scott safely and effectively guided the crew through the challenge. I had absolute confidence in him and his abilities to lead the vessel. In addition to leading through the position that he has held, MIDN Scott consistently leads by example. He ensures that he sets the example with his hard work and leads from the front."

He has been quick to offer his help in the winter training classes to provide the midshipman perspective and is an excellent peer leader. We look forward to working with him this summer, hopefully on the water as a skipper.



MIDN McGregor Scott offshore last summer

BLACKBOARD® TESTS

While we are still in a hiatus, now continues to be a good time to study and catch up on your D-Qualification exams. You can take them one subject at a time. It is not necessary to take them all at once. There are 14 online D-qualification test segments. The navigation test is a practical exam and you will need to do chart plotting.

You can take the other Blackboard® online tests any time, and you can take each test twice. Blackboard® will pull different questions from the pool for your second attempt. A recommended test schedule, based on the class schedule, was published in the January newsletter. We keep about the past 12 months of OSTS newsletters posted on the Navy Sailing website for your reference at: <https://www.usna.edu/Sailing/osts/Newsletters.php>.

A handy guide to references that are specific to exams is also posted on Blackboard® under the *Books and References* tab and information is also online at many sailing-related websites. If you have any problems accessing exams or signing into Blackboard®, please contact **LT Christian Burton**.

Current D-Qualification holders must pass the Rules of the Road (RoR) exam annually and must take a Quarterly RoR refresher exam before summer blocks, and in the Fall if participating in Fall training. Current D-qualification holders must also pass the Navigation practical exam every two (2) years, D-qualification Proficiency exams (13 tests) every three (3) years and attend a Safety at Sea Seminar every five (5) years. Exams are posted on Blackboard® in the OSTS Section under the tabs *D-Qual Exam, RoR Annual Exam, and Quarterly RoR Refresher Exam*.

Additionally, the following link will take you to our current qualification tracker. You are able to view (not edit). This is to assist in helping you in tracking your qualification timelines and post D-qual proficiency requirements. Legend: Green - current, Yellow – due within 1 year or in current year, and Red – overdue and D-Qual suspended.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yCpPi0nIgtKfKJRqAE-gTE9_sQEaUJoh/view?usp=sharing

NAVAL SAILING POLO SHIRTS UPDATE

Now that we are slowly engaging back at work in some areas, we wanted to let you know that the long sleeve polo order is almost complete. We should have the finished product in about two more weeks. We'll let you know how and when we plan on distributing them in a safe manner. If you have immediate questions, please email Frank at dayfrank44@yahoo.com.

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 419 “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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