



# OSTS Notes



Newsletter of the United States Naval Academy  
Offshore Sail Training Squadron

## DIRECTOR'S CUT

by Renee Mehl

Summer weather is finally here, and I know we all miss sailing with the midshipmen on our fleet of Navy 44s. Block 1 midshipmen would be on their way back from Bristol and Stamford after completing their first offshore passage right about now. We're all getting a different kind of leadership lesson this year, however, in remaining flexible (*Semper Gumby*) and healthy.

The Naval Academy is moving forward in accordance with state and federal guidelines to safely bring personnel back into work and bring in the new plebe class. Summer school is in progress remotely for the rest of the Brigade. For now, the Sailing Center remains closed to the public, so we can prepare for Basic Sail Training (BST) for the plebes, who will be starting one week later than scheduled. The Varsity Offshore Sailing Team (VOST) is planning on local area training during Block 3. Updates about what's happening at the Academy are posted at [www.usna.edu](http://www.usna.edu).

OSTS training for volunteers is still on hold while we work through our phases of re-opening. We continue to discuss options for training, and we will need to revise some guidelines on personal protective equipment (e.g., wearing of masks), defining at-risk personnel, maximum number of crew and cleaning protocols. We do have three Navy 44s in Santee Basin right now. VOST will be using one for their training but the other two are sea-trialed, loaded out and ready to go when we get the green light.

We'll continue to issue this newsletter on a monthly basis to keep you informed and provide some extra training ideas. Please email us if you have any content to recommend.

We are very much looking forward to the book club discussion at the end of the month. This idea originated with the Stockdale Center for Ethical Leadership. They are conducting a book club each block of the summer for midshipmen, led by faculty and staff. The book *Call Sign Chaos* is awesome, so even if you're not signed up for the discussion, I can highly recommend it. It has leadership lessons and techniques in spades, many of which are applicable to OSTS.

We appreciate your support and patience through the pandemic and hope that you and your families remain safe. Wear your

## Table of Contents

- Director's Cut
- Fleet Captain's Note
- Maintenance Director's Note
- Lieutenant's Corner
- Navy Sailing Polo Shirts Update
- OSTS Facebook Page
- Email Opt-Out
- Thank you!

mask (and sunscreen) and we will see you back on the water as soon as conditions allow.

## FLEET CAPTAIN'S NOTE

by John Formisano

As things slowly re-open you may still find yourself with some time on your hands and although you may not be able to get your keel in some blue water you might want to read about others who did. If you are interested in getting your sailing adventure from a dry chair, I have listed a few of my favorite books about others who have lived the adventure and have documented it in book form. Reading these gives great perspective how safety practices have evolved and our ORM focus.

- *Fastnet, Force 10: The Deadliest Storm in the History of Modern Sailing*, by **John Rousmaniere**. The book documents the 1979 Fastnet Race around Ireland in Force 10 winds. A USNA boat even gets a small reference.
- *Godforsaken Sea: Racing the World's Most Dangerous Waters* by **Derek Lundy**. The book details the hair-raising account of the world's most demanding, dangerous, and deadly sailing race—following the field of the 1996–1997 Vendée Globe race through a grueling four-month circumnavigation of the earth, most of it through the terror of the Southern Ocean.
- *The Proving Ground* by **Bruce Knecht**. The 1998 Sydney-Hobart had 115 boats start but on 43 finish. It was one of the worst sailing disasters since the 1979 Fastnet Race. It will



make you appreciate our new SiriusXM marine weather capabilities.

Hopefully this will help provide some chair bound sailing excitement and an appreciation for the power of mother nature.

### MAINTENANCE DIRECTOR'S NOTE

by CAPT David Jackson, USN (ret)

We have three Navy 44's in the Basin that are available for sail training, and another three that are ready to be launched when OSTs resumes. Onboard there is bleach and a spray bottle to be used to clean the boat after use. **Since most of you have your own PFDs, I ask that you use them when you sail.** That way there is no risk of getting contaminated if you don a shared PFD.

That's about it from the maintenance team. Stay healthy and sail safe!

### LIEUTENANT'S CORNER

by LT Christian Burton, USN

It is safe to say that this Summer has turned out much different for our program than anyone could have anticipated. That being said, in the spirit of staying connected with the volunteers that make this program possible, I'd like to extend an invitation to everyone to join us for a casual book club this summer. Details below.

- First Book: *Call Sign Chaos* - by Jim Mattis and Bing West.
- Discussion on the Book: June 30, 2020 (Tuesday) via Google Hangouts (time TBD). I'll send instructions on how to utilize the Google Hangout software separately for those who have not used it.
- This will be a guided discussion on some of the leadership lessons that "Mad Dog" Mattis covers in his book.
- Available in hard cover, e-book, and audio book format.

This is obviously completely voluntary, but if you are looking for a great read, and a meaningful discussion on leadership, we would love for you to join us. If you are interested please send me a note at [cburton@usna.edu](mailto:cburton@usna.edu), and I will forward you more information. Otherwise, I wish everyone a safe Summer, and look forward to the days when we all can get back out on the water.

### NAVAL SAILING POLO SHIRTS UPDATE

Polo shirts are ready for pickup. Naval Academy faculty and staff shirts will be available at the Robert Crown Sailing Center through **LT Christian Burton**.

Volunteer shirts can be picked up from **Fleet Captain John Formisano**. Text John at (410) 991-1008 to schedule a day and time to pick up your shirt at John's home. Please include your name in the text so John knows who you are.

If you need to still pay for your shirt, make a check out to **Frank Day** for the amount shown on the spreadsheet and give to John when you pick up your shirt. You can check your payment status through the following link:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1HXReEsH3Wq0QC0qYg1R3yzMJFBoRJvXTIIBib2dPJfc/edit#gid=0>

### 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 420 "likes" to date and growing every month. Help us get to "500" likes in 2021. 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](mailto:richard.robey@gmail.com). As always, thank you for your support of OSTs.

### THANK YOU!

**Ms. Renee Mehl**  
Program Director  
[mehl@usna.edu](mailto:mehl@usna.edu)  
(410) 293-5610

**Mr. John Formisano**  
Fleet Captain  
[jeformisano@comcast.net](mailto:jeformisano@comcast.net)  
(410) 991-1008

**CAPT David Jackson**  
Maintenance Director  
[djackson@usna.edu](mailto:djackson@usna.edu)  
(410) 293-5629

**LT Christian Burton**  
Fleet Operations Officer  
Training Officer  
[cburton@usna.edu](mailto:cburton@usna.edu)  
(410) 293-5604

**CAPT(ret) Rick Robey**  
Communications Officer & Editor  
[richard.robey@gmail.com](mailto:richard.robey@gmail.com)  
(443) 875-2245

