



# OSTS Notes



Newsletter of the United States Naval Academy  
Offshore Sail Training Squadron

## DIRECTOR'S CUT

by Renee Mehl



Thank you all for your patience while we figure out the best path forward for the midshipmen at the Academy, and the OSTS program, and continued vigilance to keep the OSTS family safe.

Fall classes have started, in a blend of in-person and classroom teaching. The full Brigade is returning to the Academy, with overflow housing at nearby St. Johns College. You can read more about the Fall plan on the USNA web site or at:

[https://www.usna.edu/NewsCenter/2020/08/MIDSHIPMEN\\_TO\\_RETURN\\_TO\\_ANNAPOLIS\\_FOR\\_FALL\\_SEMESTER.php](https://www.usna.edu/NewsCenter/2020/08/MIDSHIPMEN_TO_RETURN_TO_ANNAPOLIS_FOR_FALL_SEMESTER.php)

Midshipmen are not allowed liberty outside the Academy, in order to minimize contact with the coronavirus, and to keep them and the community well. The Academy is also limiting the number of people allowed on the grounds to essential personnel only for the same reason.

The sailing programs are considered mission essential. We have been given the green light to resume Fall training for OSTS, with risk mitigation in place to keep you and the Brigade safe. Midshipmen will not be sailing with volunteers this fall. Only the USNA faculty and staff can be instructors on midshipman boats. We will designate volunteer-only and midshipman-only Navy 44s.

Masks must be worn at all times; when entering the gates, onboard the Navy 44s, in the sailing center, and transiting on the yard. We'll send you some self-screening criteria to review and determine whether or not you come to training. Boats will need to be wiped down and cleaned after each training session. We will not have any overnight sails this fall.

Our goal is to train enough personnel to be able to execute a "normal" summer training program next year. As usual, that means we need a total of 60 instructors so that we can send out 30 sorties, over three training blocks. The crystal ball is a little dusty, so we don't have a clear vision of what summer training will look like in 2021, but we already have several options developed for this year that will allow us to provide some experiential, hands-on training for midshipmen.

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Our Fall training is limited to those who can commit to supporting all or part of a block next year. We understand that life happens, and a commitment now may change by next summer, so we normally plan for attrition during the training period and aim for starting out with more than needed. We reached out to our already qualified Skippers and XOs and those who were in the XO pipeline last year to get an idea of availability for next summer. Midshipmen who participated as crew in OSTS have also been invited to come train for an XO position, and we have a good response from them so far.

Our priority is to finish up qualifications for volunteers and midshipmen already in the pipeline and recruit more midshipmen. We will be screening new volunteers for their ability to complete the training this year, participate in training next summer, and for prior boating and/or leadership experience. There will be very limited ability to train basic sailing on the Navy 26s (Colgates) this fall due to very high demand by midshipmen, and limited instructors.

We need to do everything possible to keep all of you safe. If you prefer not to return to the program at this time, but want to remain in the communications loop, that is completely understandable. Just email **LT Christian Burton** and we'll put you on the newly created category of "newsletter only, back to active status when we have a vaccine" (code name COVID break), so you continue to get the newsletters, but your inbox won't get flooded by scheduling emails.

Thanks again for all you do to keep the OSTS program going and help train our future leaders!



**FLEET CAPTAIN'S NOTE***by John Formisano**Skipper John Formisano*

It's September and perhaps you are thinking about Fall training. As you can see from OSTS Director **Renee Mehl's** column, things are a bit different this year. With the goal of minimizing the number of individuals on the Yard and not having volunteers interact with the midshipmen we have some new protocols to follow and the new schedule is designed to support that goal. I know that these new safety requirements will keep me off the water this Fall as personal commitments will require some out of state travel and I'll need to spend a few two-week periods in self isolation. You may be in the same situation and I thank you for following these new guidelines even though you would rather be on the water. Every single person can help control the COVID-19 pandemic by reducing your own chance of getting infected by SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes the coronavirus disease) and preventing the spread of COVID-19 to coworkers, friends, and loved ones.

For those that will be sailing soon, or perhaps like me just wanting to sail, there are a few resources you might want to review to brush up on your Navy 44 skills.

- The new and revised 2020 Boat Information Book (BIB) and Navy 44 Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) are now posted on Blackboard® at <https://usna.blackboard.com/>. A summary of changes can be found by reading the revisions page at the beginning of each document.
- A wealth of detail on boat systems, sailing evolutions, and past newsletters can be found on the USNA Sailing Center website <https://www.usna.edu/Sailing/lectures/navy44.php>
- If you're working your way through the D-Qual process, you can find the PQS book and D-Qual study guide on the site as well <https://www.usna.edu/Sailing/lectures/navyDQual.php>
- Instructor-trainers need to take their annual ROR examination prior to getting back on the water. Passing grade is 90% or better.

For Skippers and XOs, please update your reference materials as appropriate and use the new BIB, SOP and checklists as you get back out on the water. I'd rather be sailing with you than self-quarantining but these, in case you haven't heard it yet today, are unusual times. Be safe.

**MAINTENANCE DIRECTOR'S NOTE***by CAPT David Jackson, USN (ret)*

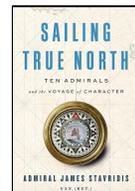
I hope everyone is healthy and ready to get on the water. We have four Navy 44s ready to sail, with one spare. Here's a link to the OSTS Gripe Book so you can check on a boat before you take her out. The boats that OSTS will be using this Fall are NA31 *Courage*, NA33 *Intrepid*, NA35 *Valiant* and NA36 *Fearless*.

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1z8TQOZG2M0H03J1HwHTW7vUapeGVa4RZJ2Ff\\_YfvS14/edit#gid=1275344133](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1z8TQOZG2M0H03J1HwHTW7vUapeGVa4RZJ2Ff_YfvS14/edit#gid=1275344133)

The boats are pretty much the same as you left them, with the only exception being that SiriusXM Marine Weather module was installed. Updated boat checklists are now onboard each of the Navy 44s. These revised checklists mirror the recent updates to the BIB and SOP. Please follow the revised guidance and directions in the new checklists particularly on the proper sequence for turning on breakers (e.g., SiriusXM Marine Weather). We will not be activating our SiriusXM Marine Weather service until the Spring of next year. This will still give you time to train on this new service before the summer block sails start.

The other job that was completed was the removal of the remote oil filter on the engine. The oil filter is now mounted on the side of the engine. This means leaks are less likely and less heat generated, which is a good thing.

It's not too early to be thinking of jobs that you want done this winter to enhance the reliability of the 44 fleet. Please drop me an email if you have any inputs at [djackson@usna.edu](mailto:djackson@usna.edu).

**LIEUTENANT'S CORNER***by LT Christian Burton, USN*

Thank you again to all those who participated in our June book club. We would like to continue this going forward in the spirit of staying connected with our volunteers. The next book that we will be delving into is *Sailing True North: Ten Admirals and the Voyage of Character* by Admiral James Stavridis. If you are interested in joining us, please email me directly and I'll forward additional information your way. Our discussion was originally scheduled for Wednesday evening, September 16, 2020; however, since we will be training this Fall (and I accidentally double-booked myself on my wedding anniversary) we are postponing the Google chat discussion to Tuesday, November 10 (Time TBD). I look forward to hearing from you all!

**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 423 "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!**

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