



Acton *Action*

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Hobie Skipper Mike Wier has been an HSA racing sailor since 1972 and at age 78 he is the oldest active racing member. Mike is testimony that not just sailing but race sailing is a life sport.

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New Member: Bob Taylor
got his Y-Flyer in March
and a week later he was
racing it in Atlanta,
Georgia. His story is on
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Hobie Fleet Loaded with Veterans – And a Rookie

Although all of the active fleets at HSA have a corps of veteran skippers, the Hobie fleet boasts the oldest active racing skipper.

The first Hobie sailor to join the club was Mike Wier who brought his Hobie 16 to Acton Lake in 1972. Mike is still racing after 49 years as a member, and is the oldest active racing member of the club at 78 years old, still putting the giant Hobie mast up and down when he comes to the lake. Mike will sometimes even venture out on the course when the wind strength tells him he maybe shouldn't, but he is clear evidence that age is no barrier in sailing, even in a catamaran.

The Hobie fleet has had an up and down existence. It wasn't until 1982 that a couple of Hobie 18's joined Mike in the Handicap fleet. John Buchert, Charlie and Joe's dad, raced one in 1984, then in 1985 George Fecher brought son Don and their two Hobies to Acton Lake.

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HSA's Launch Day is coming up soon on Saturday, April 9th. At left a work party attends to the rescue boat in 2020. The "party" begins at 10:00 am, followed by a race committee clinic and a luncheon.

Is your boat and trailer ready for the coming year? The article below will help you with that all important spring preparation.

Seven Steps to a Successful Spring Season: How to Get Your Boat (and Trailer) Ready

Reprinted from *American Sailing*

Article by Pat Reynolds

1. Purge and Organize

Yes, it can be slightly overwhelming, but once you're knee-deep in it all, pulling everything out of the boat and assessing whether it stays or goes, you'll be feeling good. Make piles – keeper, trash, need-to-decide. Once it's all out of the boat and on the lawn the boat is empty and something feels right. Make the necessary decisions and return the items in the keeper pile to where they should live onboard. The boat is neat and organized and this feels amazing!

2. Standing Rigging

Losing a mast because you felt like you could get one more season out of the 22-year-old rigging is not the story you want

to tell. Lightly run your thumb and forefinger along the wires of the rigging – if they are full of metal splinters and blood, don't call the doctor, call the rigger! There are lots of places for things to go awry in a sailboat's rig – here's a good article that addresses this issue in great detail –

<http://www.sailmagazine.com/diy/inspecting-maintaining-and-replacing-standing-rigging/>

3. Running Rigging

In the aforementioned "keeper" pile there will no doubt be a bunch of running rigging lines. Go through and decide how they look. Are they the correct size or have you been making do. Are they grubby, fraying and on their last legs? Spending the cash to replace new control lines is not fun but *having* all new color coordinated control lines is the best! (continued on page 3)



Why Go to a Regatta?

Only one boat, only one team can win a regatta. It begs the question, "Why go?" The question is even more insistent when you consider that the competition at a regatta is likely to be far better than you since they often attract the best sailors in the class.

The first and best reason is that you learn. And it isn't just in the rigging area or in the evening social settings or the debriefings after racing. You also learn on the water. You can watch top sailors trim, steer, and handle their boats and make decisions about tacking or where to be on the starting line. Lots of these conversations happen on the water as well as in the boat park and during the cocktail hour. (page 4)

Seven Steps to a Successful Spring

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4. Trailers

For the trailer sailors, check that thing over before it hits the road for another season. It carries the prize, the love, the muse...Driving a boat on a trailer is a very special yet distinct anxiety. When the trailer is suspect, there are many formally uncovered thoughts and concerns as you make your way. Amongst them, the low level but omni-prominent, "I really hope this trailer doesn't fall apart right now" thought. It makes the muscles tight around the neck. Go through the trailer, replace the bearings, paint the rust, get a new front wheel crank...it's addressing these types of things that insures the fun goes mostly uninterrupted.

5. The Iron Genny

It's the thing we look to turn off as soon as possible, but it is important. The motor of a sailboat whether an inboard diesel or an outboard has to be looked at from time to time. If you didn't winterize it at the end of the season, give it a good looking over now. It's a lousy feeling to be out with a group of friends and family for the early season sail and suddenly see the temp gauge go to the sky as a broken intake hose attempts to ruin your life. Go through or have someone check it all out so you can head out with peace of mind.

6. Life at the Bottom

For those who pull the boat at the end of the season, the first thing you looked at was whether or not you need new paint and/or bottom repair. For West Coast sailors it's a gradual rating on a dive service ticket, but either way, the bottom has to be right. For bigger boats that have through-hulls, zincs, sea-cocks and below the waterline devices, these areas have to be checked. A fresh bottom job and all of the valves inspected and/or replaced is another peace of mind investment that is well worth the trouble.

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Hobie Fleet Loaded with Veterans

(continued from page 1)

The Hobies first separate start was in 1986 when the Fechers and Mike Wier were joined by Steve Rooks and newcomer Bill Molleran. (Bill still races, in a Sunfish, as does his wife Julie.) Don Fecher has been a member since then for a 36 year long run as a racing sailor.

In 1988 the Hobie Fleet grew to its zenith at eleven boats. Later Charlie Buchert and brother Joe would have their own Hobies. Joe has taken a sabbatical from racing but Charlie is still a regular after starting in 1994, and the Hobie fleet remains intact.

They were most recently joined by 22 year old Kevin DeArmon who is sailing a Hobie that was once owned by Charlie, then by Mark Costandi, and then by one of Charlie's cousins.

Mark was just eight years old when his family joined the club in 1977 with their Mariner. He sailed a Sunfish as a boy too and won the Junior title in 1982. (Mark is one of seven former Junior champs still in the club and still racing. Pete Peters, Laura Peters, Chris Snider, Kevin DeArmon, Megan DeArmon, and Kayla Draper are the others.)

Mark crewed in his dad's Mariner and sailed his Sunfish starting in '77. He remained a member until taking an eight year hiatus to start his own architectural business, making him another member of the 36 year membership club along with Don.



In the photo at left, future Hobie (and Sunfish) skipper Mark Costandi is almost three years old. He doesn't remember who the ladies are, but he thinks the Sunfish at the left was his family's first one.



Why Go to a Regatta? (from page 3)

A second reason is that sailing demands that you learn a range of skills. And you never stop learning. Sail trimming is a lifelong effort, as is figuring out wind, waves, and weather. Tactics, strategy, and rules become second nature in time, but at regattas where you can sail against anywhere from 15 to 100 boats really affects how steep or difficult the learning curve is.

A third reason is that you challenge yourself much more than in club racing. No two regattas are alike so you have to adapt and evolve. If you believe that going outside your comfort zone is a good way to grow or even to experience life itself, then regattas promise that opportunity.

Yet a fourth reason is that regattas introduce you to new people and new places. There are a great many smaller regattas in the Midwest each summer for Sunfish, Y's and many other classes of boats. Lots of choices.

There is a lot to be said for staying home and most of us spend a lot of time on Acton Lake. But if you have never been to another lake and raced in a big fleet, it is quite an experience.

Introducing New Members: Bob and Doris Taylor

Bob Taylor moves fast. He likes speed.

He just decided last year to get into sailing. Less than a year later, he has a Precision 16, a MacGregor 26S, and a Y-Flyer and has already been to a regatta in the Y. "After sailing the MacGregor 26S, I was wanting to go faster and faster... the Y-Flyer is very popular in our area and is a very fast sailing dinghy."

The Taylors came to the area in 2016 after Bob was relocated to Eaton, OH where he is the engineering manager for the software and hardware team at Henny Penny. Wife Doris is now the director of strategic sourcing at a company in Mason.

After acquiring the MacGregor, he found a Precision 16, which he plans to put in the water at a slip this summer. The MacGregor he launches near Davis Islands in Tampa, Florida. "I keep her in dry storage in Clearwater Florida near a marina with a ramp, and I sailed her at Pine Island Sound and Hillsborough Bay."

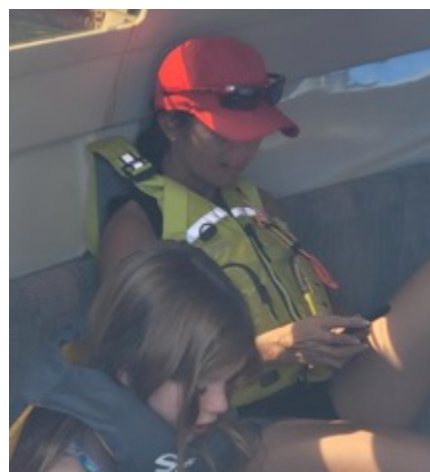
The Y came to him in March of this year and within a week or so, he was sailing it in Atlanta in the Y-Flyer Midwinter Nationals.

"I was terrible and kept making mistakes. The whisker pole snapped on the second leg and that was the end of any chance to do well."

"I like to work on my own equipment," he said, so learning how to rig the Y-Flyer

and experimenting with the layouts and designs and testing them on the water is interesting to me."

As a new Y skipper, Taylor was interested in having input from other Y racing sailors and to look at their rigs. The Y Midwinters was the place to do that but the racing was not without incident. He and acting skipper Chandler Owen were first at the windward mark in one race. "I was terrible and kept making mistakes. The whisker pole snapped on the second leg and that was the end of any chance to do well." (continued on page 8)



At left, Bob's wife Doris and one of their grandchildren enjoy the shade of the cabin. Above, Bob and half of his family on the MacGregor in Florida recently.

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7. Safety

This is obviously important. Sailing is fun but it's more fun if you're all squared away in the realm of safety. Make sure you have all of the mandated safety equipment and that everything is fully functional. Sure you have a fire extinguisher, but the needle has been pointing in the red for 3-years – don't be that guy. Check local boating organizations about free vessel safety checks. An onboard situation can either be a nightmare or just a blip on an otherwise great day if you're prepared. The coast guard auxiliary has this solid list (<http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=v-dept&category=virtual-safety-check>). However, one thing not on that list is a complete first aid kit – definitely, make sure you have one of those too.



A successful spring season for HSA means careful attention to hull integrity, safety equipment, rigging on the committee boat, and here, making sure the 'iron genny' is going to perform well.

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Cold Water Survival

From Practical Sailor Magazine
by Darrell Nicholson

January 2021



Editor's note: First of all we should say we have never lost anyone at Hueston Woods (knock on Woods). This article from *Practical Sailor* (used with permission) is worth looking at to remind ourselves that our long safety record is no accident. Take a peek and see if you know how to survive.

Spring sailing in temperate climates still carries the risk of cold water shock. With the water temperature in the low 50s, true hypothermia sets in at about 30 minutes. Swimming can be difficult after about 20 minutes. However, 50 degrees is well below the accepted threshold of shock. Most likely, when the icy water slams into a person's face it causes an involuntary gasp. It's hard to recover from inhaling water, even for a strong swimmer.

Originally known as sudden disappearance syndrome, cold water shock has been known since the 1970s. Different from true hypothermia, which results from the body core temperature dropping over a period of 20 minutes to hours, cold water shock is immediate. Being cast headfirst into icy water is one of most severe shocks a human can face, with deadly effects. It is estimated that 20 percent of victims die within 2 minutes. (continued on next page)

Cold Water Survival (continued from page 6)

Physical Effects

The instantaneous reflex is a violent gasp, totally unlike the one scary movies strive to cause. This results in a massive inrush of air, which can be fatal if you are underwater. Unlike the controlled plunges of the local polar bear club, where participants walk in via a beach and are attended by rescue swimmers in dry suits, MOB sailors plunge in head first, the result of tripping over the lifeline.

Even with an automatic vest, your head will plunge 6 feet underwater before popping to the surface. If the first blast of inhaled water doesn't drown you, you'll arrive on the surface gasping and unable to swim and swallowing more. Drowning will typically occur in less than a minute. The initial gasp is followed by several minutes of hyperventilation, making any physical effort nearly impossible. Consequences include the inability to hold your breath or think clearly.

Instantaneous and massive increases in heart rate and blood pressure can cause heart failure in otherwise healthy individuals. Clear thought is impossible. Panic is likely, only serving to increase problems with breathing control and heart rate.

These reactions may appear to an observer as nothing more than panic. Flailing, spastic breathing, muddled thinking, and a racing heart fit the pattern. But victims include experienced sailors and strong swimmers who are not at all prone to panic. If you fall overboard in warm water and reasonable weather, your first concern might be embarrassment over screwing up the race, and later whether the boat would be back in the next half or hour so. It wouldn't have felt life threatening.

If you survive the first critical seconds, then come the more traditional challenges of cold water exposure. Cold incapacitation and swimming failure begins in 5-20 minutes, the result of failed muscle control. In the absence of a PFD, drowning follows. Death from true hypothermia (cold core) takes considerably longer, at least 30 minutes in very cold water up to a few hours in cool water.

How do you keep this from happening to you? If sailing a smaller boat, prone to capsize or swamping, dress for full water immersion. In cool water either a thin wetsuit or dry suit is effective. Once the water temperature drops below about 50F, only a dry suit is suitable.

(Dry suits) are our favorite foul weather gear for stormy conditions in cool weather; more agile than heavy foul weather gear and nary a drop of water will go down your neck.

Unfortunately, once the air temperature gets above about 55F, dry suits get steamy, tempting the wearer to open the zipper and defeating the whole purpose. As the water temperature rises into the 50s, we like paddling jackets and dinghy smocks, with snug fitting wrist, neck, and waist seals. Water will sneak in pretty quickly, but shock is reduced and the seals reduce the exchange of cold water. The wearer is also more mobile than in conventional foul weather gear.

Soft shells may also have possibilities. Once our tester found himself in 35F water, with ice around the edges. (continued on page 8)



Cold Water Survival (continued from page 7)

He was dressed not in foul weather gear or dry suit, but in Wind Blocker fleece tops and bottoms. The saving factors were that the wrist, waist, ankle, and neck closures were all tightly secured; not all soft shells have effective closures. Although very cold, it was more survivable than ordinary foul weather gear.

CONCLUSIONS: The last 12 months have been hard on ocean racers. It is more than coincidence cool or cold water was a common factor. In the UK, cold water shock is considered to be the root cause of most drowning, including non-boating accidents.

We like certain features of manual inflating PFDs; they don't go off inadvertently and climbing back aboard is easier. But cold water is different. Because of the high probability the wearer will be incapable of action for a minute or more, auto-inflation is the way to go. We would like to see the makers of foul weather gear take a long hard look at what can be done to improve cold water shock resistance. Conventional jackets and soft shells could be fitted with effective internal neck seals. Wrist and waist seals could be upgraded.

We would like to see race committees post cold water warnings. It is common to require PFDs be worn above a certain wind speed. The race committee should at least recommend that protective gear such as a wet suit or drysuit be worn if the water temperature is below about 55 F. Our level of caution around the rail varies with the risk we perceive, and that level of caution goes way up when the water temperatures go down. Most importantly, sailors need understand what being thrown face first into cold water feels like and how their body will respond to it. A diehard for traditional foul weather gear? Don't fall off the boat in cold water, and don't expect to survive more than a few minutes if you do. Its tough out there.

New Members: Bob and Doris Taylor

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The winds at the Midwinters were unstable, high and gusty, he told us. Several Y's capsized. "I was glad to get the beginner stuff out of the way and realize how much work I have ahead of me. Watching how everyone launched, setup for the start, raced, and recovered their boats was a real learning experience."

Since Bob works in Eaton, Hueston Woods is a short drive and he says he will often drive to the lake after work and sail four or five times a week.