



The Beetle Sheet

New England Beetle Cat
Boat Association

N.E.B.C.B.A.

Winter 2005

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From The Helm

With the 2005 season now behind us we can all look back at some of the accomplishments made by our association, its members and member clubs. The 2005 Leo Telesmanick New England Beetle Cat Boat Association Championships were hosted by the Barnstable Yacht Club in conjunction with the club's 100th year anniversary this past August. Local Beetle Cat racer Peter Eastman took command of his home waters and captured an outstanding two days' of racing, in which the Barnstable regatta committee, race committee and McGruder family did an outstanding job. As the NEBCBA Chairman, I would like to thank the Barnstable Y. C. for their hospitality.

The FRMEA / Low Tide Yacht Club hosted a Single Handed Regatta endorsed by NEBCBA. Despite sailing conditions of eighteen knot winds and Buzzards Bay's big waves, all those who attended had a great time. New board member Bob Clarke of Fairhaven, MA 'took' all three races despite extremely rough conditions.

Our new NEBCBA handbook has been completed. All members in good standing will receive a copy this spring. As chairman of our handbook committee, I would like to express my thanks to committee members Harvey Pentleton, Charlie York, Roy Terwilliger, Bill Womack and Michelle Buoniconto for their

major contributions in putting the revised book together. Additionally, a special thank you goes out to Jen Kano, a member who worked tirelessly in putting the handbook together with professionalism, exceptional computer skills and devoted patience.

The sail committee, headed by past NEBCBA Chairman Peter Clapp, once again worked hard at checking sails and gathering data needed to make decisions as to the direction NEBCBA and Beetle Inc. should take regarding sail makers making Beetle Cat sails which do not meet specs. Through Peter's hard work we now have a sail measuring process that can be used to measure our sails. This system can be found on our web site. With all the data compiled by our sail committee, the Board of Directors voted to rescind the 3-year sail compliance plan and also rescinded the sail plan rule passed at our spring 2005 board meeting. By removing these rules, our association will abide by the *Rules of Racing 2005 - 2008* regarding sails.

Mark Thornhill, Chairman

Beetle, Inc. Report

Beetle, Inc. is finishing up another exciting year at its new shop in Wareham. We have seen a dramatic increase in visitors to the shop and appreciate the support of the Beetle Cat boat community. Our fall schedule focuses on repairs and the making of Beetle Cat parts. That sets us up for new boat production and boat maintenance

over the winter and spring. The build out of the shop is just about complete with the addition of a new wood shed, and racking of the remainder of the barn for increased Beetle Cat storage capacity.

Beetle, Inc. was invited to the Chatham Yacht Club for "Beetle Day" on July 9th. Bill, Charlie and Jonathan were cordially welcomed and spent the morning answering questions such as proper rigging of the boat, racing techniques and maintenance of the boat. We look forward to visiting more Yacht Clubs next year.

Beetle, Inc. showcased a new Beetle Cat and debuted the new "Willy Potts" rowing skiff at the Wooden Boat Show in downtown Newport, RI in August. The attendance was twice that of last year and many of you stopped by to chat with us. We also enjoyed watching the NEBCBA championships and the Hog Island Race Series.

In appreciation of the support from our customers and vendors, Beetle, Inc. held its 2nd Annual Open House on Saturday December 10th. Despite the snow storm the day before, over 250 people came by to share in the celebration. NEBCBA and IYRS were on hand to provide information and promote membership, both organizations being strong supporters of the Beetle Cat boat.

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Bob Clarke, winner of New Bedford's first annual Single Handed Regatta.



2006 Spring Board of Directors Meeting

The spring board of directors meeting will be held Sunday, **April 2, 2006** at the Low Tide Yacht Club at 1 p.m. We encourage members of NEBCBA to attend this meeting. Information about Low Tide can be found at their website: www.lowtideyachtclub.org

Mark Thornhill

"There is nothing- absolutely nothing- half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats."

Ratty said to Mole in Kenneth Grahame's beloved 1908 classic, *The Wind in the Willows*.

"Land was created to provide a place for boats to visit."

Brooks Atkinson

"The cure for anything is saltwater — sweat, tears, or the sea."

Isak Dinesen

Hog Island 2005

On the first Sunday after Labor Day, Sep.11, the annual Hog Island series began in West Falmouth harbor. This series brings out some of the best Beetle Cat sailors every Sunday to sail in one, usually long, race in the harbor. After the race there are refreshments on the beach provided by one or more of the contestants, and the camaraderie developed by this group is something to behold. Although the plan is to sail every Sunday morning until the end of October, usually there are a few days missed because of the weather. This year there were five races sailed out of a possible total of seven.

The first four races were held in fairly light wind, and brought out as many as twenty-three boats representing at least five different yacht clubs. It is a family affair as exemplified by Jane O'Connor sailing with her four-year old daughter, Julie, and in at least one race, both Tim Fallon and John Ross had their mothers as crew. Many other boats throughout the series were crewed by family members. Two

races were cancelled in the middle of October because of the weather, and the final race was held on Oct. 23 despite the high wind; only four boats showed up.

The mainstay of the Hog Island races over the years has been 94-year old Sloat Hodgson, who lived on the harbor. Although Sloat had not been running the races in the past couple of years, he usually was able to come out to the end of his pier to wave at the sailors as they went by. Unfortunately, Sloat died this year and his memory will live forever in the hearts of Hog Islanders. (See related article about Sloat.)

The final activity of the Hog Island series is a "Tea" party, held at a local home of one of the participants. This year it was held at the waterfront home of John and Martha Ross on a beautiful day when everyone said "we should be sailing". One person did, in fact, sail, and that was Tim Fallon who sailed his Beetle Cat over from Wild Harbor. His arrival was clearly announced by the firing of an old

cannon (very loud). In addition to the usual hospitality and socializing, the highlight of the Tea was the awarding of the annual trophy. The trophy, once an old loving cup, was donated by Sloat, but it was retired and given in honor back to Sloat a few years ago. The group was pleasantly surprised when Sloat's son, Tom, graciously gave the cup, suitably mounted and engraved, back to the group at the Tea.

Winner of this year's Hog Island series was Jane O'Connor, with her daughter Julie as crew. Jane and Julie sailed all five races and won two of them. Jane had previously sailed as crew with her father, George Kirk, who has won the cup many times. In accepting the cup, Jane said that it was while sailing in the series that she learned the true Corinthian spirit of good sportsmanship.

Roy Terwilliger

See additional Hog Island photos on pages 5 and 6.

Beetle Day at Chatham Yacht Club

Shortly after Bill Womack bought Beetle, Inc. he made offers to the Beetle Cat fleets that he would be willing to bring his experts to meet with owners and discuss various aspects of owning a Beetle Cat. Chatham Yacht Club took him up on this offer, and on Saturday morning, July 9, 2005, twenty-two members of the fleet met at the club with Bill, Charlie York and Jonathan Richards. It was an excellent way to start the season and for

three hours there ensued a lively discussion about Beetle Cats. Many questions were asked and answered. Some of the subjects that came up were: Why boats (particularly Beetle Cats) leak, gaff roll and breakage, sail measurement, weight distribution, centerboard location and speed tips.

After the meeting in the clubhouse, the group went to the beach to look at various boats where Charlie answered

specific questions about individual problems. He also visited people's homes to inspect their Beetles, and one of the highlights of the day was a visit to the Cary/Sampson household to look at Jolly 3, built in 1926 and Jolly 2, built in 1976, fifty years apart!

It was a very valuable day for the members of the Chatham fleet, and we can't thank Beetle, Inc. enough for their help and cooperation. **Roy Terwilliger**



Sloat Hodgson: An Appreciation

The Beetle Cat community lost a dear friend with the passing, in October, of Sloat Hodgson. A full life of 96 years is bound to have many phases and cover many aspects. This was certainly true for Sloat. The reason that he is mentioned here in the Beetle Sheet is that he was the co-founder, the driving force, and the soul of The Hog Island Races.

After Labor Day in 1970, Sloat and his friend Dr. Paul Magnuson decided that there was still plenty of good sailing to be done in West Falmouth Harbor, known in the mid 1800s as Hog Island Harbor. From a small beginning with a few friends, the series, sailed on Sunday mornings in September and October, has grown into a powerful and unique two month annual regatta. Under the gentle yet firm guidance of Sloat, Hog Island has attracted terrific sailors, many of whom have moved on to great success in larger boats but who love to come back and compete in the boats in which they first learned to sail.

Gratitudes:

To Martha Martin, for dedicating a decade sailing summers, and waiting winters, as volunteer editor of *The Beetle Sheet*.

To Mark and Ginny Thornhill, for single-handedly running the first annual Single-handed regatta in New Bedford this summer; you are such gracious hosts!

To Nancy Rodgers, for labels and so much more.

To the many volunteers of NEBCBA, whose payoff is the continuous promotion of beautiful Beetle Cat boats.

Photo Insert

Our beautiful photo insert was created by Emily L. Ferguson.

Look for more of her photographs: New England landscapes, wooden boats and races, press photography at her website: www.vsu.cape.com/~elf/
You can also send e-mail to her at: elf@cape.com

Sloat always insisted that there were to be no protests heard after the weekly race. The sailors were expected to maintain the Corinthian ideals of our sport. For the most part, this worked pretty well. When the rare exception did occur, the unrepentant transgressor would be exposed in Sloat's fabulously written account of the race in the next Friday's edition of the Falmouth Enterprise. Another nice feature of Hog Island is the post race picnic on the beach immediately following each race. Everyone takes turns bringing refreshments and the post mortems of strategies, both failed and successful, make for some great discussions among all levels of sailors. An added bonus for the participants is that there has never been a fee for any of these races.

As Sloat was the governing body for this series, he could do whatever he chose to do. No one ever complained, because Sloat knew what was right. It was he who decided who would take home the trophy

each year. While race results were certainly considered, the yearly winner was whomever Sloat felt was worthy. To be handed the Great Loving Cup on the last Sunday morning in October by Sloat Hodgson was truly a great accomplishment.

Sloat also loved to foster enthusiasm for sailing in children. An eight year old summer neighbor, whose family recently got their first Beetle, was welcomed daily into Sloat's home to learn all he could about sailing and racing. They continued to correspond with each other over the winter months. It was wonderful to see how the love of Beetle Cats could bind two friends born over eight decades apart!

In his later years, as his health began to deteriorate, Sloat often commented that it was the friendship and spirit of Hog Island that gave him the strength to go on with his life. Well, it was certainly a two way street: Sloat made all who knew him wiser and

Restoration Nearly Complete, Need Items:

Does anyone out there in Beetle Cat land have a reusable centerboard that needs a hull to wrap around it? May come from a boat that has been damaged beyond repair, or perhaps too tired to keep going –and– longs to be retired. I'm also still searching for a mast, boom and gaff in usable condition. If you do, or know of someone who has one, please contact:

Jim Kittredge
250 Straightway
Hyannis, MA 02601-3627
Phone: 508-862-2772

Web Site

A reminder that you can find almost any information you need about NEBCBA and Beetle Cats at our web site: www.beetlecat.org. Check out everything from the history of the Beetle Cat, to the by-laws, the sailing rules and much more. **Mark Thornhill**



**Small Family's 5-Star Beetle Cat;
Leo Telesmanick Winner: Peter Eastman**





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2nd Annual Open House at Beetle a great success!



To our readers:

We would really appreciate your input. What would you like to see in *The Beetle Sheet*? We would love to hear your ideas -and- your stories. Perhaps you know someone who can contribute too? We would be happy to collaborate thoughts and information to create future articles. They can be informative, humorous, photographs, drawings, remembrances/ back in the day, etc. The easiest way to do this is by sending an e-mail to: thebeetlesheet@yahoo.com. We soon hope to have *The Beetle Sheet* as a reference on the NEBCBA website.

PLEASE send us your e-mail address too! We want to share Beetle Cat news with as many people as possible! Thanks:)