



# WCTSS

## NEWSLETTER

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Ron Hoddinott Editor

### Lake Harris in February

We were all so spread out on the Lake during this daysail, that I didn't get a complete count of our boats until just now! The fishing and motorcycle crowd took over the Hideaway, and a couple of pontoon boats took up most of the space on the docks. We still managed to cram eight of our boats in by rafting up, but I should have stayed out and ferried people in from anchored boats. A few boats didn't get in for lunch and I'm very sorry about that.

Three of us stayed overnight on the water - Don Montplaisier Jr, Doug Engh, and myself. Two boat crews stayed at the nearby campground, Lowell and Dee, and Dennis and Carol.

We had 13 boats at Lake Harris!  
Here's my count.

Pete Harrison (New Member) - Victoria 18  
Lonnie Black -Lil' Salty  
Rex &Kathy Payne - Kathleen- Caledonia Yawl  
Doug Engh - Gatito -SunCat  
Ted Jean - Bay River Skiff  
Kevin Riley - Sea Pearl 21  
Don Montplaisier Jr.- WW Potter 19  
Dennis & Carol Marshall- Duckling  
Chris Behnke - Precision 16.5  
Steve Kingery - Princess Sail Canoe  
Pam King & Becky Combs - Quickstep 14  
Lowell & Dee Stephens -OhSeaDee- SP Tri  
Ron Hoddinott - Nomad - Suncat

### Everglades Challenge - March

The EC as the Everglades Challenge is known, is a week long event that starts (usually) on Ft. DeSoto's East Beach on the first Saturday of March. This year the Coast Guard shut down the start because Small Craft Advisories were up and they wouldn't let the race cross the shipping channel. So everyone packed up their boats and started from different locations on the opposite side of Tampa Bay. Most just went on down to Check Point One and started from there the next morning.

I had committed to being "chase truck" for JF Bedard's new racer/cruiser - the ROG, which stand for River of Grass. In addition to ROG, Several other WCTSS members were also in the race this year, including Meade Gougeon, Roy Edwards in his SeaPearl, Eddie Mack, Josh Murphy, Bill Fite, Channing Boswell, and Jim Collins. Bill Fite decided not to restart after the aborted Saturday beach start.

Good friend Richard Hopley from long ago in college decided to hang out with me as we chased JF down the coast. It was a great week! We stopped at all the checkpoints and got to know some of the illustrious EC veterans better, while waiting for JF to come in. Yes, some long nights and lost sleep, but it

was always great to see the little green cat ketch, ROG, come sailing in to the checkpoint. Especially at the finish line!

Now that the EC is over, it still amazes me that JF was able to get the boat built, tested, and entered in the Challenge in such a short span of time, and that his design performed flawlessly! JF would like to thank all the Squadron Members who helped him by providing equipment, advice, and even help with the build!

I brought the trailer to each checkpoint along the way in case something broke, or he was physically ready to toss in the towel. But neither of those things happened. JF sailed an almost flawless race, not making any obvious mistakes, and not taking chances when he could choose a safer course. He got some sleep most nights, and on the last night out decided to "savor the moment" anchored in the lee of Lignumvitae Key when he could have pushed himself the last 20 miles to the finish. Amazing job, JF!

### Cayo Costa - March 17-19, 2017

Twenty five boats sailed to the Squadron's gathering at Cayo Costa's Pelican Bay on Friday. Boats sailed from several launching points from as near as 3 miles to as far away as 20 miles. I made a different choice this time - Punta Gorda's Lashley Marina. I love Bokeelia to launch from, but the restricted parking always made me want to come a day early and I couldn't get away on Thursday this year. Ed and Becky Combs and Jurgen and Connie use the Lashley Marina complex in Punta Gorda but that makes for a long sail or motor, usually both, at 20+ miles. Another good feature of Lashley is that parking and launching is totally free. That's an incentive to spend some cash at the excellent Lashley's Crab House. They even have docks for parking while you eat dinner! Eldred's Marina at Placida usually has plenty of parking in the back section, but that puts you right on the ICW south of the Boca Grand Bridge, and you stay there, mostly, all the way to Cayo Costa. With all the boat traffic we've been having with Spring Break and good weather coinciding this week, I imagined a gaggle of huge powerboats washing Nomad left and right, creating unpleasant sailing. So I decided to try a long sail mostly away from the ICW traffic. It was worth it!

Sailing out of the Peace River town of Punta Gorda is more pleasant than being right on the waterway. Yes, there were some boats on Friday, but once they leave the river, they head in a dozen different directions. Ed and Becky's Hunter 23.5 and Nomad had a good broad reach for a couple of hours averaging about 5 knots with the wind out of the NE. As I approached Cape Haze the wind began to die, and the tide turned against us at about the same time. We both began motoring. Ed using the 4 knot rule. If you can't sail at 4 knots, start the engine. I don't always follow that rule, but with over 10 miles to go, I wanted to get there while we had daylight at least. Never having been that close to Cape Haze, and not having my charts with me, due to a certain EC participant borrowing them last week, I bumped the rudder a few times. No harm done, I edged away from shore and discovered that that mark way over there is called the "Cape Haze Shoal" marker. Who knew!

The tide is always a big factor when planning a passage of Charlotte Harbor. It can shoot you along your way, if you're running with the tide, or slow you to a crawl and impede your progress if you're bucking a foul tide. On Friday, we caught the last of the ebb out of Punta Gorda and met the beginning of the flood around Cape Haze. Making good time made sense since the tide's current increases exponentially the first three hours of the flood. So the trusty Yamaha 4 HP was cranked up and we soldiered on toward Pelican Bay, which came into view in within the hour, and in another hour we entered the sheltered cove on the north end and was greeted by the sight of about 15 Squadron boats anchored stern to the beach. By the end of the day 25 Squadron boats were there! First I spotted the sexy black carbon fiber spars of the RoG in which JF Bedard recently completed the Watertribe Everglades Challenge. JF brought along his 7 year old son, Joshua named after the ketch that Bernard Moitessier sailed around the world. Then I noticed that Billy VanDeusen was there with his SunCat. As a SunCat owner, we always look for other SunCats! Dan Roeder and Roger Sanderson were there with the Wayfarer and Roger's new boat, a Core Sound 17. Russ Blagg was anchored way up near the NE corner with his WW Potter15 Meryln. Ricky Aguilar and Scott Birdwell were also up that way with a Windrider 17 and Astus 20 Tri respectively. Scott had invited Ricky to attend, and he was of course welcome! Ricky had an awesome tent that he adapted to fit the forward cockpit of the Windrider. Tom Steinmetz brought his white home built cruising boat. I looked inside when he wasn't looking, and it's really roomy in there! Coming back down the beach I noticed another Sun Cat coming in, and it turned out to be Larry and Cathy Rickett, with Indy-Anna. A lovely two tone SunCat of 2002 vintage about the same as Billy's. Later on Jack Dirkes sailed in with About Time, making it a three Sun Cat day!

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It seemed like I was running back and forth along the beach to greet all the new arrivals. Lonnie Black and Pete Harrison sailed from Bokeelia with their new Puddleduck Ocean Explorers complete with cabin and lug rigs. They had worked together to build them in 3 and a half weeks, and to a very high level of finish! One was red and one was blue, and they sailed in unison like two swans on a lake. Great work and they look like a lot of fun! Marty Worline sailed his SCAMP Fat Bottomed Girl a long way from the bottom of Sanibel Island with a friend aboard and arrived in good order taking a spot on the beach right next to Nomad. Later Capt Gerry arrived with his aluminum canoe sporting black sails and a Jolly Roger - his first theme canoe rig. Channing Boswell later sailed his Minto dinghy into the cove from his cruising ketch anchored in Pelican Bay. Channing is a Watertribe elder sailing Finger Mullet a trimaran of his own design. One of the last to arrive on Friday was Fred Ebinger of Bokeelia, who turned up in a long lean New Haven Sharpie with one mast - sleek and fast.

With daylight savings time in effect it didn't get dark until after eight o'clock, so everyone had time to get some food cooked and everything put away before dark. Almost everyone brought a chair, or some wood, or some starter logs, and I brought along a packet of chemicals to throw in that made the fire look green. A bit of magic for St. Patrick's Day. As usual, the campfire was a hit, and before long the cool temperatures made everyone long for the warmth of their bunks and sleeping bags.

On Saturday it was cold at 6:30 and I had to force myself to leave the comfort and warmth of my bunk to have breakfast and greet the day. I managed to have some coffee and oatmeal which warmed me up while the sun was rising warming up the day outside the coziness of Nomad's tiny cabin.

Sadly I had to abandon this happy band on Saturday and head back, hoping to catch the start of the flood tide around noon. I managed to do this but didn't see the wind shift to the west which resulted in a long 4.5 hour motor back to Laisley Marina in Punta Gorda. The Yamaha performed flawlessly however and having an autopilot made the trip bearable. I read a little, kept track of progress and course with my hand held GPS, and kept a watch for Ed and Becky's sugar scoop stern on their Hunter 23.5. I arrived in the marina just as they were hauling out. After tying up at the dock, I cleaned up a bit and took myself to the Crab House for a fine shore dinner of Conch Fritters and Crab cakes. Connie and Jurgen helped me haul out after dinner, and I took my time preparing Nomad for the road. The longer I took, the less traffic I would experience. That was my plan, and it worked out pretty well. Light traffic helped me make a safe return trip in 2 hours from 7:15 to 9:15 pm. Another great Squadron trip completed.

### **Florida Gulf Coast Traditional Small Craft Festival At the Sarasota Sailing Squadron**

Great outing at Sarasota Sailing Squadron for the Gulf Coast Traditional Small Boat Festival. Thanks to Mike Jones and Rex and Kathy Payne for organizing, a great lasagna dinner last night, and a fantastic talk by JF about his RoG design and his EC performance!

Dom Romer took lots of photos. We added two new memberships also! Roger and Wendy Edson who sail a green SeaPearl with gold sails and Tom and Lynn Barrett of Bradenton who sail a ComPac Legacy. Tom and Lynn have extensive blue water experience in the Pacific Islands and in the Pacific Northwest. Welcome aboard!



JF Bedard's RoG Design at Sarasota.

# Events Schedule

**NOTE:** Joyce and I are going north again this summer to escape the heat and explore the Maritime Provinces of Canada, specifically Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island. We now plan to depart in our truck towing our Fifth Wheel on July 4th, and return around the middle of September. This is our first long trip away from Florida since 2015 when we circumnavigated Lake Superior (on the roads). It's a little difficult to be away so long, and there's a lot of planning and preparation that goes with that. Wish us good luck on the road.

We're leaving the Squadron in good hands during the summer - **Rex and Kathy Payne** have agreed to be the contact persons for the Squadron, and will try to be at most or all of the events, and to take notes on who attends.

(Summer events are all day sails due to the heat, and likelihood of afternoon storms. Don't be caught out if you can help it.)

- 1. May 5th, 6th 7th (Friday - Sunday) - CEDAR KEY SMALL BOAT WEEKEND!** Line up your reservations at the many hotels, condo's and B &Bs for the big gathering of Traditional Small Craft, canoes, kayaks, and daysailors (mostly). Some larger shallow water craft can make this trip, but there are a lot of sand bars and some oyster bars (the kind you can scrape your bottom on) to be aware of. Got a small boat? Bring it! Go to the Cedar Key Chamber of Commerce Website for accommodations to line up yours today! **Friday dinner in the back room of Tony's at 5:15. Saturday Potluck dinner at the Community Center -809 6th St. -7:30- Cost \$12 donation Guest Speaker Mike McGarry - EC winner, Atlantic crosser, advanced multihull skipper and hydrofoil expert.**
- 2. May 20th- Lake Tarpon and the Turtle** - Sail to lunch with the Squadron - or just meet us there! Put in at Anderson Park just off US 19 in Tarpon Springs, and sail to the north west end of the lake to the Tarpon Turtle Restaurant. Good food and sometimes good service. Sail back in the afternoon. Usually head toward the restaurant docks about 11:30 to just beat the crowds.
- 3. June 10th - Meade's Island - Three Rooker Bar - Caladesi Island Marina.** Rendezvous at Meade's Island just north of the Honeymoon Island Causeway, Picnic on the beach, or sail out to Three Rooker Bar. If the weather looks bad, shelter at the Marina at Caladesi Island. You can spend the night there, or just hang out for a while before going back. Launch at Seminole Street Ramp, Belleaire Ramp, or Sutherland Bayou Ramp - all Pinellas County Ramps - \$6 per day.
- 4. July 15th - Lake Harris - Hickory Point and the Hideaway** - Take a break from the beach and head inland to the hidden gem of Lake Harris in Lake County. Launch at Hickory Point Rec Area just south of Tavaras off of SR 19. The deeper water ramps are all the way to the west. Set up your mast(s) after you come around from the staging area due to untrimmed trees. Sail from Hickory Point out into the lake and up the east side of the lake to the Hideaway, also known as "the biker bar." Actually has good food and sometimes good music. Outdoor seating picnic style. Love the honey stung chicken. If the docks look crowded come in anyway. Raft up and if you can't get in anchor out and one of the early birds will come get you.
- 5. August 12th - Lake Seminole** - A hot steamy summer day on the lake. Bring sunscreen and floppy hats! Picnic with the Squadron after a sweet sail on the lake in the morning. Launch at 9am if possible.
- 6. September 23rd - Ft. DeSoto and Shell Key** - Squadron Reunion! Folks coming back from summer trips will meet again at Fort DeSoto Park on the southern most point in Pinellas County - Great (11) ramps, and swift currents (sometimes). Sparkling waters and dolphins. White sand beaches and smiling faces. Swim suits to soak in the water for a cool off at lunch time on the beach! Sound like fun? Make your calendars.  
Joyce and I may be back from Newfoundland by then (hope so) !!
- 7. October 20th - 22nd Cayo Costa Cruise** - Launch from several sites all around Charlotte Harbor and meet at Cayo Costa State Park's Pelican Bay (north end cove) on Friday October 20th.
- 8. November 17th - 19th - WCTSS at Cedar Key !** Not the Small Boat Meet (that's in May), but usually a good turnout! Friday evening at 5:15 at Tony's Chowder House - back room reserved for just US!
- 9. December - TBD**