

# TN SAILS

The monthly newsletter of Tamil Nadu Sailing Association



APRIL 2007

VOLUME : 5 ISSUE : 4

FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY

## GOVERNING COUNCIL

**Mr. K. Suresh**, I.A.S.,  
Chairman, Chennai Port Trust

**Mr. G.A. Rajkumar**, I.A.S.,  
Secretary, Govt. of Tamilnadu,  
Sports and Youth Welfare

**IG Rajendra Singh T.M.**  
Commander, Indian Coast Guard  
(Region East)

**Commodore P E Van Haltren** VSM,  
Naval Officer in Charge, Tamilnadu.

**Commodore U.N. Chitnavis**  
DDG, NCC, Tamilnadu, Pondicherry,  
Andaman & Nicobar Islands

## COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

Commodore

**Mr. Ashok Thakkar**

Vice-commodore

**Mr. V. Chandrashekar**

Honorary Secretary

**Dr. Mushtaqh Ali**

Captain of Boats

**Mr. Munna Jamal**

Treasurer

**Mr. Ajit Diaz**

Official Handicapper and Measurer

**Mr. Ashish Mehta**

Committee Members

**Mr. Bijoy Pillai**

**Ms. Nilma Shah**

**Mr. Patrick K. Vetrivel**

**Capt. Ravikumar Manian**

Special Invitee

**Commander J J K Siga**

*Regd. Office :*

83, East Mada Church Road,  
Royapuram, Chennai - 600 013.

Tamil Nadu, India

Tel. : 044 - 2538 2253

Email : tansail@gmail.com

web : www.tnsa.in

*Edited by*

**Dr. Mushtaqh Ali**

*Formatted & Printed at*

**Pio Printers Pvt. Ltd.**

Chennai - 600 013.

www.pioprinters.com

## Chennai Sails

The deluge started at 6.30 in the morning on that fateful Monday. Entrusted with the Press duties by the TNSA committee, with a newbie's enthusiasm, I had approached my friend at The Hindu to publish an article on the 'Day Out At Sea' programme that we have been conducting for Cognizant and ABN AMRO. With a naivete that is hard to believe in an undeniably (sigh!) middle aged and supposedly hardened-by-life's-experiences woman, I cheerfully acceded to Doc's suggestion that I put in my name and number for contact. The intended target audience was corporates who might want to follow in the footsteps of the above-mentioned companies and pamper their employees with the said programme. Somewhere between me and the final article that appeared, all mention of corporate went missing, with the result entire Chennai ended up calling me. Well, maybe I am exaggerating, but on that Monday, it certainly felt so!

If I claimed that the fiftieth caller was attended to with the same warmth and

detailed response that the first caller was, I would be misleading the reader, but I did continue to be polite. After the tenth call I had stopped saying no, we do this only for corporates; an idea had started blooming, why not make a group of the callers and give them a taste of the sea. After a brain(!)storming session with Munna and Ravi at an oft-frequented sea-side venue, the idea took root and a template for a response took shape. Next day onwards, the callers started receiving a crisp 'please send a mail to the given address for further details'. Mails poured in with request for information and with my simple-mindedness, I saw enough scope for us to be doing 'Day Out' on 2 consecutive Saturdays. Munna, Ajit and Ravi humoured my highs and lows with exceptional tolerance and when 17 turned out to be the final number of participants, gently comforted me that it was to be expected.

Any trepidation we might have felt in handling a motley group of people vanished five minutes after we met them, they were a charming lot of people who mingled and

became a cohesive group in a very short period of time. Ravi handled the morning session with his usual aplomb and the afternoon session had only me and Ashwini on the lasers, Ravi, yogesh and Linges on the Ents and Munna on the launch.

The lasers' capsizes for that day went into double-digits, one participant actually believed me when I told her, "But, we HAVE to capsize".



*Chennaiites who loved the day out at sea*

*Continued on page 6*

# An Experience to relish

## Time and situation:

It was around 3.00 pm, on Saturday March 24, 2007. The inner harbour of the Chennai port was busy as usual with the ships berthing and departing, powerful tow-boats pulling a giant naval ship towards a wharf, a petrol vessel of the Coast Guard rushing out at great speed and a deafening roar of a plane circling the area for the airport landing.

## The scene:

A small single-handed sail boat had capsized. A young girl was desperately pulling at the centerboard of the boat to right the upturned boat, whose sail had gone under water. All in the group of 17 water-sports-enthusiasts of age 11 to 70, following in the two rescue launches had their faces writ large with anxiety. Some murmured a short prayer that nothing untoward should happen. A sprightly member of this group, who had volunteered to be the first to sail, had her head jutting out of water, two meters from the sunken boat.



*The youngster is having a ball*

Mr. Munna Jamal, the captain of the club was cool and smiling. All others were perplexed at his composure. He announced over the hand-held-speaker "this is what any sailor should expect while at sea". He followed this up by saying that this was part of the training and not an unexpected mishap. After some tense moments to the group members, the boat regained its original position, the sail hoisted and the trainee sailor cajoled to climb to the boat all by herself. In a matter of 10 minutes she

had become a hero and the group hailed her with applause. Mr. Jamal continued "the most important thing to do in such events is to remain calm. The life jacket will ensure that you remain afloat. Our strength would double in such crisis situations and would make us accomplish seemingly impossible things."

It was pure fun thereafter with many capsizes one after another, each one boosting the confidence of the group. There were three types of sail boats. The Enterprise class had two sails where as the smaller ones, the Laser and the Optimist had one. With the trainer sailor giving operational instructions for manipulating the sail to go forward when a favorable wind was behind you, take zig zag movement to advance when the wind was blowing in the reverse direction, to take an about turn when nearing a big obstruction, all had learnt some precious little techniques. Even the trainer had some worrying moments when we had in our anxiety, pulled the "sheep" when told to release it.

We were taken on a cruise in a motor launch in the pre-noon session. The cargo yards for the different items of import and export, the latest in the huge handling machinery, the variety of ships were all shown. Thereafter the launch got out through the mouth of the harbour in to the open sea. All the members listened with attention to the running commentary given by Captain Ravikumar. Chennai coast line from deep down the sea was a dream sight. A 90° shift of the neck was all that was necessary for a view from Ennore on the north to the Light house down on the south. Captain had explained the theoretical aspects of the sailboat and sailing before the grand lunch.

A photo session followed and the adventure of the Day out at Sea had ended with all earning for a similar experience soon. The Tamilnadu Sailing Association had become very dear to all the participants.

- Balakrishnan

## TNSA hosting Two Nationals

The Tamil Nadu Sailing Association will be hosting two national events next month - the Optimist National Coastal Sailing Championship 07 from May 4<sup>th</sup> to May 11<sup>th</sup> and the Laser National Coastal Sailing Championship 07 from May 25<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>. The officials have all been confirmed for the event. For the Optimist event it will be Lt Col K Srinivas of EMESA who will be the principal race officer and will be ably assisted by our own team of sailors and members on the water most notably Capt of Boats Mr. Munna Jamal and Capt. Ravi K Manian, the measurer for the event is the Class Measurer Mr. Sheri Bamboat. The Principal Race Officer for the Laser national will be Col M P Jaggi, who ran the event with distinction and holds a few decorations for merit in promoting the sport of sailing. The Chairman of the Jury for both the events will be none other than Mr. C. S. Pradipak, Arjuna Awardee and regular visitor at the TNSA every year since we took on the role of hosting National Championships in Chennai. May is the month for this signature event and this year Chennai will have the distinction of being host to two.

Look forward to all round action next month.

## Summer Sailing camp

The Tamil Nadu Sailing Association will be conducting a one-week sailing camp for new comers to this sport from April 16<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> 2007. A fleet of Optimist class boats will be utilized for the coaching conducted by experienced sailors of the TNSA. The camp will include theory classes along with sailing sessions within the waters of the inner harbour. It will be open to boys and girls from the age of 7 and above. A complimentary student membership to the TNSA will also be extended as part of the package. Starting 16<sup>th</sup> till the 18<sup>th</sup>, Classes will be between 06:30 am and 11:00 am. From 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> they will be between 2:00 pm and 6.00 pm in the afternoon. The sailing camp will conclude with a regatta for all beginners on Sunday the 22<sup>nd</sup> afternoon.

# ABN AMRO sails with TNSA



Shantha takes a banker sailing

Whoever thought bankers were staid old people will surely change their opinion if they meet the young and exuberant bunch of bankers who were at TNSA for a taste of adventure. Following closely on the heels of the software professionals, the Funclub members at the Dutch Bank decided to check out the sailing scene at TNSA. Well, historically sailing is close to the heart of this bank, they sponsor several international events including the prestigious Volvo Ocean Race, so the interest they showed isn't surprising.

Even though the day was to start at 11AM, the participants were still trickling in at even 11:30, which I must admit we were warned about, so the presentation on sailing that usually kicks off the programme was axed. This did turn out to be a good idea since all were impatient to get on to the water immediately. After a brief introduction to sailing boats by our Hon. Sec in the slipway, everyone boarded the launch for the harbour cruise except for a privileged few who joined Doc and Nilma on the Viking Pride. The difference in sailing inside the harbour and out in the ocean showed up starkly as the launch pitched and rolled in the waves and all were duly impressed that we sail out in the ocean in our little dinghies, including our youngest sailor Nicholas, all of 8 years old.



A la Titanic, what



Varun finds room for a banker on his Optimist

Back at TNSA for lunch, there was excited conversation as everyone relished the excellent vegetarian spread (Thanks Ajit!). The afternoon session had three lasers and 4 Enterprises ready for rides with 3 Optis and a Maxi also pitching in. Initial nervousness and cautious stepping soon gave way to unbridled enthusiasm and we sailors gritted our teeth and got ready for the capsize routine. While a laser capsize is simple enough to handle, the bailing one has to do after an Enterprise capsize is not exactly pleasant, but it is evident that for a first-timer this is fun too. Tired but happy, hot tea and snacks never

tasted better as the one day sailors prepared to leave vowing to come back.

- Shantha Ravikumar

## Import of Optimist Boats

It was only last year that the TNSA sought and received Yachting Association of India assistance in importing six lasers with appropriate duty exemption. This year, the follow up has been that the TNSA is importing almost ten boats - five of them new and five refurbished IODA 95 hulls from two Internationally renowned builders of IODA Optimists. It was after perseverant representation at the Optimist Council that the TNSA could get the issue of import of boats cleared. The convincing fact has been the difficulty of getting IODA 95 hulls from the Indian Manufacturer and the quality of accessories like buoyancy bags have left much to be desired. As the spars and foils manufactured in India by Morris Marines are of International quality, and the sail which is cut by the Naval Sailing Club, Mumbai compares with some of the better ones abroad, it was decided that IODA 95 hulls would be permitted to be imported from builders abroad but that spars and foils for such boats would have to be locally sourced as there was no difficulty in getting these in the local market.

So, check out how the boats look and perform and if your ward is interested in a boat for himself then maybe you could pick up one for him or her. It cannot get any better than this!

# Cognizant comes calling again



*Cognizantes, all dressed up and ready to go out*

After a couple of months break, Cognizant was back at TNSA, hungry for more action. Experienced as TNSA is by now, everything moved smoothly like well-oiled machinery as various members volunteered to take part in making the event a success. Ajit, being the co-ordinator was there on hand to receive them and the morning saw Ravikumar, Bijoy and Nilma turning up to lend a helping hand. Having realised from previous experience that people wanted to spend most of the time on water, an abbreviated presentation was made by Ravi. This was followed by Ajit talking to them in the slipway, explaining the various classes of our saillboats, their parts and how everything worked.



*Ajit briefing the visitors before going out*

By now everybody was eager to get on to the water, the big jolly boat with 20 of them and 2 TNSA launches with the rest set off on the harbour cruise. However familiar the harbour might be to the TNSA members, the fresh enthusiasm of a first time visitor infects them too and everyone has a good time oohing and aahing over the immensity of the ships and the port operations. One must record here that the software professionals seem to have developed their sealegs as not one breakfast made its way out as the launches rocked on the waves.

Back at the club, as lunch settled down, the team was entertained by tiny Nicholas trying with all of his 10 pound might to capsizes the boat. With the low wind, only he fell into



*On the water change over*

the water, his opti refused to follow suit, but determined as he is, eventually succeeded in capsizing and righting the boat. Munna had also joined the show by now and armed with his trademark megaphone shouted instructions as sailor after sailor capsized his Opti at his command, to lusty applause from the watching techies. It is quite remarkable that it is capsizes that impresses a novice lots more than good sailing. Soon everybody was back on water in the inner harbour, the visiting team on the launches, except for a crew each with Ajit, Bijoy, Linges and Yogesh on Enterprises and Venkatesh and I on lasers. If I had the faintest hope of being on a touristy kind of sailing, gently reaching up and down before returning for the next rider, it was dispelled quickly by an order from Munna to capsizes. Well, everyone only wanted to capsizes after that, one particularly enthusiastic wannabe sailor jumped off my boat before I could complete the sentence 'Would you like to swim from my boat to the launch?' Some of them were small enough to take a ride even in the Opti and a lot of them just jumped off and swam around.



*Between Bijoy at the stern and Nilma at the bow, there is a lot of IT*

Hot tea and snacks awaited all of us at the club and the visitors handsomely appreciated our efforts, making us forget how tired we were after half a dozen capsizes each. Their day out experience has generated a lot of interest and the Cognizant programme is expected to be a regular feature at TNSA.

*- Shantha Ravikumar*

## Commodore Van Haltren donates a Launch



*Comm Van Haltren sharing a lighter moment at the TNSA*

When the new Naval Officer in Charge of TN, took over from Comm Thayi Hari, VSM, we were ringing in the New Year 2007 and soon we had the Anniversary Regatta which is traditionally sailed in the third week of January. Comm Phillip Van Haltren who had just then taken over as the NOIC, INS Adyar, kindly consented to preside over the prize giving ceremony and joined us for dinner that night. TNSA was very keen on getting a few photos of our new Governing Council Member and looked forward to circulating them through our newsletter. However, due to a malfunctioning battery charger these plans were scuttled and we were left just carrying the story in our February newsletter without any snaps. This issue, we have corrected this anomaly and present you with a snap of the new NOIC at the TNSA when he donated a launch with a 15 HP Suzuki OBM to our stock of launches and OBMs. The TNSA is slowly moving towards self-sufficiency in logistic operations as far as training and rescue operations are concerned.



*NOIC gives away new launch to the TNSA*

Thank you sir, for your support. The Indian Navy has been a great benefactor to the TNSA.

## Swift being done up

The TNSA is becoming more involved with not only sailing but also in the makeover and maintenance of ocean going yachts. Viking Swift, one of the Maxi 77s belonging to Viking Marines, is being completely done up with new interiors, plumbing, electrical fittings and deck fittings. Included is a job of designing and fixing a moving platform that would raise and lower an Out board motor without causing much change in structural and sailing profiles. Carpenters and liners sourced locally have been briefed on the job and from the way things are going, it looks to be shaping up pretty well.



*Vaidyeswari, Lionel, Murugesan and Martine on the Bay*

As materials for the repair and resurfacing of fiber glass surfaces and woodwork were not very familiar to the TNSA, Frenchman, Mr. Lionel Mallard joined us one Sunday with his wife Martine and children Vaidyeswari and Murugesan. Mr Mallard's passion is making wooden yachts for the French market. He was kind enough to pass on critical information on materials to be used and the correct method of using it. Not only that but the dealers and the marketing agents for the various items have been identified for procuring them.

The TNSA is thankful to Mr. Mallard and Martine for their great help. It is people like them who through their thoughtful inputs help further the cause of sailing and boating for the interested public.

For those of you who wish to find out more about Mr. Lionel Mallard and his firm Ultramarine Boat builders Pvt. Ltd his web address is [www.ultramarine-yachts.com](http://www.ultramarine-yachts.com). Mr. Lionel has other interests in the development of the local community and it is these that keep him from expanding any further. You can e-mail him if you wish at [lionel.mallard@ultramarine-yachts.com](mailto:lionel.mallard@ultramarine-yachts.com)

Thank you Lionel and Martine. We value your help and advice.

## Call for volunteers for the Nationals

No organization can run an event without the help of volunteers and many of you are aware that for events like Asian Games, Olympics etc, an army of volunteers run the logistics of the event. Similarly, the TNSA too has been very lucky in having a committed group of members who come forward to help at such times and it is this body of volunteers who give us the strength to even propose to host it. There are various areas of management of an event, like on the water, social events, press, sponsorship, dignitaries, office, participants' needs etc that need to be addressed.

The prestige of organizing an event is representative of all its members. So, come forward in large numbers and give your time to the Association. It can only help your Association grow. Call Ashish at 98410 49331 or Mushtaqh at 98842 41920 for volunteering.

## ...Chennai Sails

Special mention must be made of the sprightly seventy year old Mr. Balakrishnan whose advancing years hardly deterred him from trying out an entirely new adventure sport. He was agile enough to crew in the Enterprise and wrote a heart-warming article on his experience which you will read elsewhere in this newsletter. Mohan who was delighted with himself for mastering his hydrophobia, and then there was Natasha who chose to spend her birthday with us. And Ashok Bhagat who had me in splits as he carelessly uprighted the boat with one hand over the rim even before I could tell him what to do.

We ended up having a wonderful day and it felt good that TNSA had touched the lives of this group of people significantly that day and I mentally thanked my friend at The Hindu. My day was complete when our sweet lascars took a look at my dozen-capsized look and ushered me away volunteering to unrig. Naivete has its points, I tell you!

- Shantha Ravikumar

## Bonne Bouche



### Saying it with flowers

A new business was opening and one of the owner's friends wanted to send him flowers for the occasion. They arrived at the new business site and the owner read the card,.... "Rest in Peace."

The owner was angry and called the florist to complain.

After he had told the florist of the obvious mistake and how angry he was, the florist replied, "Sir, I'm really sorry for the mistake, but rather than getting angry, you should imagine this: somewhere, there is a funeral taking place today, and they have flowers with a note saying,.... 'Congratulations on your new location!'"

### Need some information please

A woman called a local hospital. "Hello. Could you connect me to the person who gives information about patients? I'd like to find out if a patient is getting better, doing as expected, or getting worse."

The voice on the other end said, "What is the patient's name and room number?"

"Sarah Finkel, room 302."

"I'll connect you with the nursing station."

"3rd floor Nursing Station. How can I help you?"

"I'd like to know the condition of Sarah Finkel in room 302."

"Just a moment. Let me look at her records. Mrs. Finkel is doing very well.

In fact, she's had two full meals, her blood pressure is fine, to be taken off the heart monitor in a couple of hours and, if she continues this improvement, Dr. Cohen is going to send her home Tuesday at noon."

The woman said, "What a relief! Oh, that's fantastic... That's wonderful news!"

The nurse said, "From your enthusiasm, I take it you are a close family member or a very close friend!"

"Neither! I'm Sarah Finkel in 302! Nobody here tells me a thing."

### The mightiest

A lion woke up one morning feeling really rowdy and mean. He went out and cornered a small monkey and roared, "Who is mightiest of all jungle animals?"

The trembling monkey says, "You are, mighty lion!"

Later, the lion confronts an ox and fiercely bellows,

"Who is the mightiest of all jungle animals?"

The terrified ox stammers, "Oh great lion, you are the mightiest animal in the jungle!"

On a roll now, the lion swaggers up to an elephant and roars, "Who is mightiest of all jungle animals?"

Fast as lightning, the elephant snatches up the lion with his trunk, slams him against a tree half a dozen times leaving the lion feeling like it'd been run over by a safari wagon. The elephant then stomps on the lion till it looks like a corn tortilla and ambles away.

The lion lets out a moan of pain, lifts his head weakly and hollers after the elephant - "Just because you don't know the answer, you don't have to get so upset!"