

TN SAILS

The monthly newsletter of Tamil Nadu Sailing Association



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Auroville Visits TNSA



Opti sailors with their guests

They came they saw and they fell in love. With TNSA, Ravi, Munna and all our young Optimist sailors and staff. It has been hanging fire for a long time and finally got to happen on the weekend before Pongal. Fredrick - Fred to all of us, lead a troop of wanna be sailors from Auroville starting from eight years of age to almost sixty, that is if you don't count Fred, who is past that milestone and doesn't look it one bit.



Fred with Lingesh in an Enterprise

As many of them had overseas passports getting them in to the port took a whole day and they came with their own stuff for cooking and eating. A completely equipped bunch looking for some action on the water and they invaded the Port Trust Guest house's kitchen taking over it at mealtimes so that the hungry mouths could be fed after a full day's action on the water. They brought along with them Auroville products, like bread, jam, juice, cheese, biscuit, dry goods.

Continued on page 2

Sappers Make History at Sea

"The sea washes away the ills of men."
Euripides

The sea with its daunting expanse, minatory mysteries and mystical might has forever beckoned adventurers down the ages. The lure proved highly enthralling for the young enthusiasts of the Corps of Engineers and this in turn resulted in a unique and defining outcome - undertaking two offshore sailing expeditions concurrently in two conspicuously different classes of yachts to the same destination via two different routes - a first in the Country.

Destination Kavaratti embodied the elements of challenge, risk and uncertainty in their truest form. A miniscule island of merely 3.62 sq km size that lies deep in the Arabian Sea is an intimidating challenge for any seafarer, particularly if the passage is to be undertaken in puny sailing boats like the 'Seabirds'.



One set of young seafarer's set sail on yacht 'Trishna' of the legendary 'Around the World Expedition' fame on a direct route from Mumbai to Kavaratti to traverse over 2250 km across the waters of the Arabian Sea while making two way passage to the island. 'Trishna' is a 37 feet long 'Swan' class yacht, which braved the oceans to make history when it circumnavigated the world during the mid eighties. The yacht weighs 10.5 tons and carries a keel made of pure lead that weighs six tons. Maj SB Vachali led his team of eight sailors on this eventful expedition that saw 'Trishna' plough the waters on a long passage after many years.

Continued on page 3

...Auroville Visits TNSA

On Friday they went out on motor launches and surveyed the harbour where the practical sessions were to be held. Come Saturday the TNSA was invaded by our regular Optimist sailors who rigged up their boats and taking some of the newcomer kids in their boats showed them the rope. There were some who took to the boat like a cook takes to a kitchen. A couple of teens were shown the ropes in the Laser 4.7s captained by Lingesh and Fredrick, though Fred looked like he would take any chance to get at the tiller of a sailboat. Yogesh helped with the Enterprise sailing. On Saturday it was a satisfied bunch that went back to their quarters in the Chennai Port Trust Guesthouse.



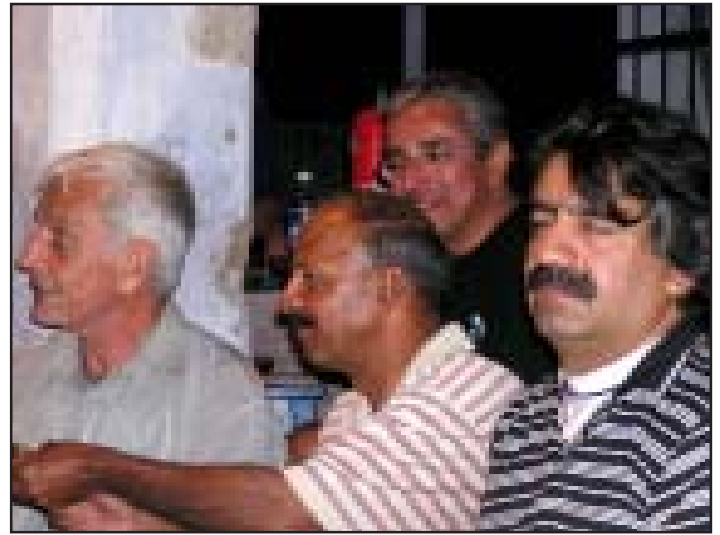
Comm Ashok gives out T shirts and caps to Auroville visitors

Starting early on Sunday, there was a repeat of Saturday's program followed by racing in the afternoon, where the newcomers had to helm the boat with their instructors on board assisting them if they needed help. The mood was enthusiastic and the wind good to the beginners as sailors who had watched others sail in their countries at home got an opportunity to helm a sailboat in their adopted country. Auroville as you know is run by the Auroville society, and is full of volunteers from all over the world.



Arun sails his laser

There was one other gent, a member of the TNSA who is a scion of an old Industrial house, who got to sample the ropes of his laser. Arun as he is known to his friends, is an avid wind surfing enthusiast who loves to sail in new venues all the time. As sailors get older they find slower and boats that are less demanding. Arun Vasu has moved over from the windsurfer to the Laser.



Fred, Ravi, Munna and Ashok share a lighter moment

There would be another time when he would move further down the lane and get on to the Maxi keelboat. But that is another story...

I had the opportunity of helping a young man to the helm of an Enterprise and goaded him on to pointing higher, hiking out all the time. Suddenly, I toppled over with the jib sheet still in my hand making the boat turn into the wind and start to heel. The bloomin' hiking strap had split into two throwing me overboard. Clambering on, I asked Jothi, a Hungarian by birth whose wife is expecting their first child sometime this month, looked doubtful and said, "maybe another day!" Only on seeing the ruptured hiking strap did he compose himself.

Anyway, Jothi's other talent is in the kitchen, while his friend Danny Mergui an Israeli, whose two kids sailed exceedingly well could ruffle up a mean spaghetti and batter fried cauliflower. It was interesting to see the independence of these children while at the same time their concern for the environment and the people amongst whom they lived.



Aurovilleans and TNSAwalabs make a colorful gathering

Fredrick announced that a new Adventura Action Club was being started at Auroville and invited the TNSA over to join the sailing division of the Club.

And as part of the goodbye greetings at the TNSA, everybody was treated to some great spaghetti and given personal gifts by the vesting sailors. At the end of the two-day sailing experience it was a satisfied bunch who returned to Pondicherry.

..... Sappers Make History at Sea

The second set of seafarer's embarked on the passage to Kavaratti in two 'Seabirds' christened 'Seagull' and 'Skua' in a roundabout passage that would carry them over 2650 km off the coastal waters of the Western peninsular. The 'Seabird' is a diminutive boat with no cabin (no loo!) and has the most rudimentary features of a sailboat. It is barely 21 feet long and has a freeboard of merely 12 inches when fully laden. It is a harbour sailing boat and braving the seas in a 'Seabird' is indeed a fearsome challenge for even the most hard-nosed seafarer. Maj A Karunakaran, a veteran of such ventures, led his team of 18 sailors, most of whom were new to the sea and the challenges that lay ahead.



The expeditions were flagged off on 06 December 06 by Vice Admiral SS Byce, PVSM, AVSM, NM, FOC-in-C Western Naval Command in a glittering ceremony at the Indian Naval Watermanship Training Centre. It was indeed a historic moment as the yachts set sail with wishes of God speed and good winds on the lips of one and all present. 'Seagull' and 'Skua' made good speed to Goa with favourable astern winds and sailed into the Mandovi Bay, Panaji in three days. A short stopover for repairs and replenishment preceded the commencement of their sail to Cochin. This leg was witness to hostile seas and heavy squalls that made the going extremely tough and at one point the boats were in deep trouble. It was indeed a rude awakening for the crew. Good seamanship and boat handling saw the crew safely overcome these tumultuous conditions and sail into Cochin 12 days after setting sail from Mumbai.

The leg from Cochin - Kavaratti - Mangalore was the most exigent phase of the expedition as it involved sailing 430 km straight out into the sea, an incredible challenge for any hardnosed seafarer. Strong winds and choppy seas added to the woes of the crew who, however, carried on unmindful of the demanding conditions. While sailing northwards to Mumbai, the boats were pitted against the winds and waves and experienced exceptionally hostile conditions.

Meals could not be cooked for days on end as the onslaught of the waves reaching as high as 8-9 feet drenched everything on board for what seemed like endless perpetuity. Bailing out water was a constant chore that could not be halted for even a moment. Fortunately, the crew and boats came through unscathed though the morale of the crew did indeed take a



beating at times. The boats sailed into Mumbai harbour on 10 December 35 days after they had set sail. An expedition to Kavaratti has been undertaken by the Corps after 13 years. The success of the expeditions is surely a triumph of the unfathomable human spirit and a proud moment for the Army. The Army has indeed turned a new leaf in the history of blue water sailing in the Country.

The curtains are finally down on the Mumbai - Kavaratti - Mumbai sailing expeditions. Plans for future expeditions are already on the anvil and we are certain that the pace set up with the series of expeditions successfully undertaken will be further accentuated in the coming months and years.

Cheers to our young seafarer's who have done us proud!

Home is the sailor, home from the seas

- Corps of Engineers Sailing Club

Sailing Quiz

A boat is not required to anticipate that another boat will break a rule. When a boat acquires right of way as a result of her own actions, the other boat is entitled to room to keep clear.

Summary of the Facts

AS, a hull length to leeward and a hull length ahead of BP, tacked as soon as she reached the starboard lay line. Almost immediately she was hit and holed by BP traveling at about ten knots. The protest committee disqualified AS for breaking rule 15. It also disqualified BP under rule 2, pointing out that she knew AS was going to tack but did nothing to avoid collision. BP appealed, asserting that she was not obligated to anticipate an illegal tack.

Answer on page 6

It's Birthday time at TNSA!

TNSA has turned five posting a robust growth in her fleet of sailors as well as boats, if not in equal proportion. The optimist fleet boasts of 20 sailors who are preparing to participate in the upcoming nationals in May in Chennai and the laser class, particularly the 4.7 is proving to be the most popular class for the children growing out of the Optimist. In the three laser classes put together there is a fleet of 15 sailors raring to go at the Laser Coastal Nationals to be held in May. After five years of hard work, TNSA has established itself firmly on the map of sailing in the country and after the armed forces has the largest active fleet of sailors in the country. With dedicated efforts from members, and strong support from the Navy, Coast Guard and the Port Trust, TNSA should hopefully start a trend of boosting civilian interest in the sport.

The TNSA's anniversary coincides with the birthday of Capt. of Boats, Munna Jamal and we started off the day with a loud off-key rendition of the traditional birthday song much to his embarrassment. Well, what better way to celebrate birthdays than to race and rejoice in the commune with the winds and the water? We sailors did just that on the 21st of January and had two races for all the classes of boats, sailing under the Portsmouth Yardstick Index. With most of the laser team giving their board exams and supposedly hard at study, the laser fleet was depleted to just four, with two 4.7s, one standard and one radial. But the optimists were present in good strength and there were the three enterprises to add colour. Special mention must be made of our Commodore Ashok Thakkar who also enthusiastically jumped into the fray and crewed for our Secretary Doc Mushtaqh. And they did quite well too finishing first among the enterprises.



Ashok and Doc in the Enterprise

A triangular course was laid out in the inner harbour, the first race with two triangles and the second with one. The Optis sailed the same course, though as a

class by themselves. In both the races the laser standard and radial finished first and second on the water, with the Enterprise bearing the aforementioned nabobs finishing third. Applause also goes to the young entrants Rahul and Krish who made their racing debut in the second race. The optis were dominated by the veteran sailors Hussain, Nishanth, and Rufus in the leading positions. However, our second line of less experienced sailors, including the Fisherman's children under the SDAT scheme, showed they were no less in their competitive spirit and come May, we are going to have a really big fleet. A bigger fleet could have been fielded if the Opti fleet's growth could have been helped by the Sailing Schools project.



Hussein is all concentration as he rounds the windward mark

Back on shore, the Hon Sec huddled in front of the monitor completely oblivious to the noisy sailors and computed the race results. Predictably, Venkatesh with his standard rig had won the first race and then suddenly Doc Mushtaqh's voice rose and eyebrows shot up as he yelled out, "Hey, Shantha won the second race!" TNSA is always full of surprises. The Anniversary Trophy went to Venkatesh and the Viking Trophy was awarded to me. In the Optimist class, the Pio Trophy for the race was awarded to rising star and the man to beat in the Optimist fleet, Hussain Bhavnagarvala.

Apart from that it was also time to give the two other trophies that had been raced over last year but had not yet been awarded. The Swift Trophy was won by Hussain Bhavnagarvala while the Metexim Trophy was cornered by Venkatesh once again. The SDAT Challenge Trophy for best SDAT sailor was won by Kumaresan, while the Little Theater Trophy for the best Optimist Sailor was given to Hussain Bhavnagarvala for his overall position in

all the Optimist Sailing events held in the TNSA and nationally.

As a special honour to TNSA on its anniversary, the new NOIC Commodore Philip E Van Haltren had consented to preside over the Prize distribution and join in the festivities. Trophies were lined up on the table and a dais was set up for the visiting dignitary, as the sailors got into their fineries for the evening. Well, in the sailor world, it is finery if it is not wet with seawater or black with coal dust.

With the punctuality that defence officers are known for, Commodore Van Haltren made his arrival on the stroke of the hour. Our own commodore Ashok Thakkar welcomed him with warmth and even while thanking him for all the support the navy gives us, pressed him for more in his inimitable style. Commodore Van Haltren then addressed us, fondly remembering his visit 25 years back and commented the place looked exactly the same! Even though he had grown up in Chennai, this is the first time he has been posted here and we wish him the best. Since then we have come to learn he has been awarded the VSM, his Chennai stint has started off really well. Congratulations, sir!

Finally, it was time for prize giving, the moment the children have been waiting for impatiently. As Doc Mushtaqh called for the winners, our sailors had the privilege of receiving their trophies from the NOIC to the reverberating sound of enthusiastic applause.

One thing must be said for us, we may not be great in number, but we make it up with the decibel level. The ceremony ended with the captain of boats, Munna Jamal expressing TNSA's gratefulness to Commodore Van Haltren for gracing the occasion and for the Navy's continuing munificence.

As some of us slaked our well-earned thirst, our manager Anthony, with his recently unveiled culinary talents, whipped up delicacy after delicacy for snacks. With great camaraderie members pitched in to help in the kitchen as well as in serving the dishes. Music was added to the fare thanks to Ashok Thakkar's car stereo. A lot of new members also attended the function and made the evening merry.

TNSA is thankful to everyone present there making its anniversary memorable, and banks on the support of all its members as it sails gloriously into the future.

- Shantha Ravikumar

ISAF Multidiscipline Clinic

The Clinic started with Measurement instructions on 8th under the direction of ISAF Instructor (Measurement) Barry Johnson (AUS). The venue of the clinic was at sprawling surroundings of the Army



mastering the opti sail

Yachting Node under the guidance of Col. Shekar and his team. There was a total Twenty nine eager participants for this measurement clinic. This clinic was focussed both on the theory and practical side of what sailboat measurement/inspection was about. The morning session of day one focussed on the role of the measurer/inspector and requirements of such. Pre/Post event inspection was covered in an easy but comprehensive way in order that all attendees gained a better understanding of both requirements. The organisers had arranged for a number of tools to be made available for the instructor and participants throughout the clinic. A rigged Optimist, 420, 470, Laser and sailboard was also at the clinic's disposal for ease of explanation when speaking on spar bands, illegal hardware etc.

Day two focussed on the fundamental measurement of sails and with many sails being made available all attendee's had the opportunity to undertake the measurement on a variety of ISAF class sails. During the clinic wrap up it was evident that those who had participated had listened and observed very well as the rigged classes were modified during the morning of day 2 and the attendees were asked to inspect and report on any findings that may have noted being non class compliant. The response was exceptional.



ISAF judging clinic by Mr. Owens

The Judges clinic was held on 10 to 12th January under the able guidance of Mr. Graeme Owens, an accomplished International Judge with over 50 years of active involvement in this sport. The Clinic took the form of a Racing Rules Workshop at which the participants undertook two days' study and instruction of the racing rules, commencing with the foundations such as the definitions and building up to embrace advanced racing situations. there was a total strength of 36 attendees who were present on all days and took active part in all the sessions on all the three days. Kudos to Col. Shekhar and his team for the excellent hospitality and arrangements.

- Ajit Diaz

SAYR Blues

How does one relate the story of an event that was supposed to have been? The TNSA, its young sailors and their parents have faced suspense similar to a thriller and we heard the cry 'wolf' called twice till now. It is our motto to take inspiration from the politics of Aristotle, who said that "politics is a master art" and used thus will improve conditions for all concerned.

Getting back to the story of the SAYR: All of us know that this is a sailing event organized between India, Pakistan and Srilanka on a rotation basis and is sailed in two classes - the enterprise and the Optimist. The current edition of the SAYR - SAYR 2006 came into the news sometime in Sep, when the YAI announced the event and requested that the NOR be prepared and circulated to all concerned. When it finally came it was around November 13th - just before the National Inland Optimist Championships 2006 at Khadakvasala. As the event was going to be conducted at an Inland venue, namely Bhopal where the first Sailing School of the YAI has been set up. The TNSA quickly pointed out that the results of the NIOC 2006 could be used to generate the list of participants in the Optimist Class. However, since the NOR for the NIOC 2006 had been silent on this it was pointed out that this would not be correct. The fact remains that an amendment to the said effect could have been issued then and there. But considering that the SAYR was an YAI event, the NOAI felt that it was the YAI's prerogative to decide on conducting a selection trial for the SAYR. The YAI decided to go ahead and conduct the selection trial in Mumbai in Dec just before the start of the SAYR in Bhopal which was scheduled to start after Christmas 2006.

'Best to bend when you are a twig' is a good enough maxim to follow under such circumstances and our Association sent our five best entries with boats *et al*. Our children missed their half yearly exams so that they could attend. It is to our credit that two of them made it immediately to the squad representing India at the SAYR in the Optimists. All the while there was a storm brewing in the dark: the foreign teams had not contacted; the new boats from Praaga Marine to Bhopal Sailing School had not been delivered; the measurer and race officer had not been decided. The strain eventually showed as the event was cancelled on the ground that visas for the Pakistani team were not issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs. In the meanwhile sailors who were all of twelve and thirteen years of age waited at Mumbai chewing their nails anxiously as they did not know which direction to head: Bhopal or home. Some of them had bought both tickets. And finally that episode of the SAYR ended with the cancellation and our kids came home.

Soon came news that the SAYR 2006 was rescheduled and would be held in Jan from 30th to Feb 5th. So all the hurrying and scurrying started once again as the news came in around the middle of Jan and the dates of the event were less than a fortnight away. Meanwhile, Xerxes Bamboat, Optimist Sailor from RBYC who had qualified for the SAYR found himself past the legal age and the YAI called for the next in line sailor, who was from the TNSA.

... Cont. overleaf

SAYAR Blues

In the meanwhile tickets had been confirmed through *tatkal* bookings, and our children were to depart with one parent on the 28th by Grand Trunk Express at 7 pm. Being a Sunday, all school permissions had been obtained earlier and bags packed along with the rest of the paraphernalia that sailors take when they go for a championship. Out of the blue at half past noon on 28th Jan came the final bolt from the YAI: SAYR 2006 cancelled. The grounds were ostensibly failure of Pakistani sailors to seek a visa even though the YAI had co-ordinated with the Ministry of Home Affairs to keep the Consulate Office in Karachi open even over the weekend. Our children who had been confused about the demand for a selection trial, and the first cancellation of the event, followed by its rescheduling and final cancellation, were shattered. And as for the parents, they were livid with rage at this kind of treatment being meted out to their children.

As far as the TNSA is concerned, we appreciate the efforts taken by YAI in coordinating with the MEA in ensuring that the Pakistani team was not denied a Visa if they did apply.

Despite everything, if there is one fact that can be unequivocally stated here, it is that the TNSA is proud of its five sailors – Hussain, Shwetha, Nishanth, Varun and Rufus who attended the selection trials and especially proud of the first three who qualified for the event. Just keep working hard guys. Nobody can deny you, your future.

Sailing Answer

Decision

When AS passed through head to wind, BP became the right-of-way boat and held right of way until AS assumed a close-hauled course on starboard tack. At that moment AS, having just acquired right of way under rule 10 was required by rule 15 to give BP room to keep clear. BP took no action to avoid a collision, but what could she have done? Given her speed and the distance involved, she had perhaps one to two seconds to decide what to do and then do it. It is a long-established underlying principle of the right-of-way rules, as stated in rule 15, that a boat that becomes obligated to keep clear by an action of another boat is entitled to sufficient time for response. Also, while it was obvious that AS would have to tack to round the mark, BP was under no obligation to anticipate that AS would break rule 15, or indeed any other rule. BP broke neither rule 2 nor rule 14.

Appeal upheld. BP is reinstated.

From ISAF case book

From the Rule book

Rule 2, Fair Sailing

2 FAIR SAILING

A boat and her owner shall compete in compliance with recognized principles of sportsmanship and fair play. A boat may be penalized under this rule only if it is clearly established that these principles have been violated. A disqualification under this rule shall not be excluded from the boat's series score.

Rule 14, Avoiding Contact

14 AVOIDING CONTACT

A boat shall avoid contact with another boat if reasonably possible. However, a right-of-way boat or one entitled to *room* (a) need not act to avoid contact until it is clear that the other boat

is not *keeping clear* or giving *room*, and (b) shall not be penalized under this rule unless there is contact that causes damage or injury.

Rule 15, Acquiring Right of Way

15 ACQUIRING RIGHT OF WAY

When a boat acquires right of way, she shall initially give the other boat *room* to *keep clear*, unless she acquires right of way because of the other boat's actions.

Bonne Bouche



Intelligence

One day, two men were digging a ditch in the hot sun, when one said to the other, "Why are we down in this hole digging a ditch in the hot sun, when our boss is standing up there in the shade of a tree?" "I don't know, but I'll go ask him," replied the other.

So, he climbed out of the hole and walked over to his boss. "Why are we digging in the sun and you're standing in the shade?" he asked.

"It's called 'intelligence'," the boss replied.

"What do you mean, 'intelligence'?" asked the man.

The boss said, "I'll show you. I'll put my hand on this tree and I want you to hit it with your fist as hard as you can." The ditch digger took a swing and tried to hit his boss' hand, but the boss removed his hand and the ditch digger ended up hitting the tree instead. "That's intelligence!" said the boss.

The ditch digger went back to the hole. When his friend asked what the boss had said, he replied, "He said we are down here because of intelligence."

"What's intelligence?" his friend asked.

"Here, I'll show you," the ditch digger replied, as he put his hand over his face. "Now, take your shovel and hit my hand as hard as you can."

Smart Sardarji

A Sardarji comes up to the Pakistan border on his bike. He's got two large bags over his shoulders. The guard Iqbal stops him and says, "What's in the bags?" "Sand," answered the Sardarji. Iqbal says, "We'll just see about that. Get off the bike. Iqbal's guards take the bags and rip them apart; empty them out and find nothing in them but sand. He detains the Sardarji overnight and has the sand analyzed, only to discover that there is nothing but pure sand in the bags. Iqbal releases the Sardarji, puts the sand into new bags, heaves them on to the Sardarji's shoulders, and lets him cross the border.

A week later, the same thing happens. Iqbal asks, "What have you got?" "Sand," says the Sardarji. Iqbal does his thorough examination and discovers that the bags contain nothing but sand. He gives the sand back to the Sardarji, and crosses the border on his bike. This sequence of events is repeated every day for three years.

Finally, the Sardarji, doesn't show up and one day and the guard meets him in a 'dhaba' in Islamabad. "Hey, Buddy," says Iqbal, "I know you are smuggling something. It's driving me crazy. It's all I think about...I can't sleep. Just between you and me, what are you smuggling?" The Sardarji, sips his Lassi and says, "bikes"