

TN SAILS

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Meet DP World...

Our Corporate Friend in Port

When we have visitors sailing with us, it is customary for us to take them around the harbour and point out the interesting sights and the bustling activities that go on. One of the favourite sights that never fails to draw sharp breaths of amazement and awe is the container terminal, where the huge containers are handled by monstrous looking gantries moving up and down, loading or unloading from the massive container ships. The organization that handles the container traffic in and out of the Chennai Port, DP World Chennai, is a well-known multinational with a major global presence in the shipping world, operating 42 terminals in 22 countries across the world.

Chennai Container Terminal, was the first one in the country to be set up in 1983. When Chennai Port Trust decided to privatize its operations, the license to develop, operate and manage the Chennai Container Terminal for 30 years was awarded to P & O Ports in 2000. After their merger with P & O Ports, DP World took over its operations in November 2001. Catering to the needs of the fast industrializing Chennai which has seen tremendous growth in this past decade in various fields with



Mr. Ganesh Raj, Senior VP and MD, S. Asia, DP World with CEO Mr. Karunesan at a felicitation function

multinational giants setting up manufacturing facilities here, DP World grew alongside. By 2007, container traffic had more than doubled and DP World Chennai now has joined the elite top 100 ports in the world with movement of a million plus TEUs in 2007 from about 390,000 TEUs in 2001 when it took over. With improved infrastructure and modernization, more mainline vessels started calling in at the Chennai Port. Now, from being predominantly a feeder port, Chennai has transformed into a Mainline Port with direct connectivity to 58 ports globally, garnering 60% of the market share in South India's container volume.

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TTK Trophy

The races for the TTK trophy were sailed on Jan 27th outside the shipping channel near the sunken ship. This is an event open only to the IODA 95 class of Optimist boats and the winner would receive the TTK Trophy, instituted by Mr. Arun Vasu, in memory of his grandfather, Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari, an Industrialist and Cabinet Minister in Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's cabinet.

The day started out early as sailors gathered at the TNSA by 10.30 and after checking the rake and rigging up their boats, a short session in the classroom was held where strategies on starts and the importance of physical



Bala rounding the mark in his full rig

fitness were discussed and highlighted. The sailors cast off by 12.45 in about six to seven knots of Easterly wind.

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...Meet DP World

One of the chief movers in the growth of the Chennai Container Terminal is Mr. Ganesh Raj who now is the Senior Vice President & Managing Director of DP World for the Subcontinent. A Mechanical Engineer from Bangalore, he studied Port Management in Rotterdam before joining Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust in Mumbai in 1988 but in a matter of 2 years moved on to the A P Moller group with whom he worked for 10 years. The challenge of developing a freshly privatized Chennai Container Terminal was too good to pass up and he joined P & O Ports as their Chief Executive Officer in 2000. With his keen interest in Profit Centre Management, Personnel development and Enterprise Resource planning, Chennai Container Terminal expanded rapidly under his leadership to post a growth of 50% in just 2 years. In 2004 he joined DP World Dubai and soon after their acquisition of P & O Ports, he was entrusted with the responsibility of the Subcontinent region, one of the seven regions of DP World, which at present he continues to carry out from Mumbai with much passion.

With a teenage daughter Kavya and son Keshavn aged seven, his wife, Merlyn who used to be a maritime professional herself, elected to take charge of the home front. Which gives our man of various interests, the time to indulge his passion for gizmos, home tooling, bike riding and the like. And amidst all this, he also finds time to support and encourage our fledgling TNSA's growth in the sailing world and DP World Chennai has become our first institutional member. With his Harley Davidson luring him away during his leisure hours, we seldom see him sailing, but dinghy sailing surely has enough adventure to have a fighting chance against Harley riding, perhaps one day sailing too will be added to his other pursuits.



Mr. Karunesan launches an Optimist at the OCN 07

The man who currently heads the operations in Chennai, Mr. Ennarasu Karunesan is disarmingly friendly and hospitable. As we chat over a hot cup of coffee, he

hands me a sleek looking brochure. I open the brochure for a casual look, with expectations of pictures of mighty cranes, immense ships and statistical information of inconceivably high numbers that come with a multinational giant with huge operations. Right enough they are all there but even as I turn the first page an involuntary squeal of delight escapes me, there is a lovely picture of our Optimists right on the inside cover page! Mr. Ennarasu twinkled with amusement at the effect it had on me, but for me after that everything else in the brochure got entirely eclipsed. But then that is the kind of relationship we have with this organization, which has given us much support over the years. CCTPL DP World has been so much part of our growth and the good friends that they are, have never failed to extend a helping hand whenever we have required it. Of course, it is the people who make the organization.

Armed with a Mechanical Engineering Degree and Master's from the Jammalal Bajaj Institute of Management Studies, Mumbai, a young Arasu landed at IIT Chennai as a research scholar. Soon he joined the Indian Ports Service and worked at the Mumbai Port for about 10 years. Here, making a lot of procedural changes, he worked at modernizing the port. Always looking for more challenges in life, in 1996 he joined Westport, Malaysia as Operations Manager and helped set up the facility, eventually heading all its operations with a movement of 3 million TEUs annually. In his early thirties, he was the youngest to head the operations and the only Indian in the team. But Indian waters were beckoning and in 2004 he moved to Chennai Container Terminal and became its CEO in 2005. "Managing 3 million TEUs is easier than managing a 300 strong workforce" he smiles, reminiscing about his early experience in Chennai.

Movement of close to 3000 trailers in and out through a single gate, mutinous labour force, overcoming delays due to poor inland connectivity, variable sea conditions, customer relations are all in a day's work for this dynamic young CEO. All this would not have been possible without excellent teamwork and the freedom that the management allows him to innovate, he avers. He firmly believes that the future lies in good management of people and talent. "In the new millennium, employees would increasingly seek personal and professional satisfaction, besides quality in life. Managements should be proactive about employee relations and work should be carried out in a spirit of mutual respect and teamwork. End of the day, we have to drive the system."

Besides this he also regularly speaks at several fora on various aspects of management. Where does all this leave him time for his family, I can't help wondering. He laughingly admits it is difficult, "my wife has gone back to college!". An engineer too, his wife Umamaheswari, after a few years break to take care of the growing children,

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...TTK Trophy

There were twelve IODA Optimists apart from Ashwini, Mrinalini in Laser Radials and Balachander in the full rig. Bala is a fresh convert to the sport and like any newly enrolled is totally enamored of the sport. A Laser that came in from Goa donated by the Indian Navy was in pretty poor shape but has been done up in successive layers of FRP and made seaworthy once again. It is this boat that Bala has adopted and he can be seen on the water come Saturday or Sunday, while his children ten-year-old Janaki, six-year-old Mahesh and three year old Nitya, go out in the older Optimist class under the watchful gaze of our sailing instructors. The TNSA policy on training ensures that sailors who are in the coaching program pay just Rs. 500 per month and can go out and sail as many times as they wish. Not only is rescue close at hand but instructions are also given to newcomers whenever they may choose to come. The idea is sailing and more sailing. With the aim of improving skills and making people take up this beautiful sport as a part of their life. It IS an uphill task, given the Indian obsession with big cars and bigger houses, but eventually the glass ceiling that keeps sailing out of sight must break and like Atlantis that rose from the sea, the sport will surely capture our brethren's imagination. Till that day, the words of Robert Frost come to mind... Miles to go...



Calm sea and steady wind in Race 1

Getting back to the TTK Trophy races, it was decided to hold a minimum of six races in a triangular windward leeward course. The idea was to hold more than that and give sailors a chance to discard their worst scores with an idea to promote consistent performance. The oldest were the Team A sailors some of whom had already sailed in International Championships and the youngest amongst the boys was Nicholas Israel, while Varsha Gautam was the youngest girl on the water. The lasers were to start separately and sail a different course heading out further to sea to the sunken ship buoy. It promised to be a great day as out at sea, the water was calm and gently undulating ripples stretched all the way to the horizon on three sides as an Easterly blew at a leisurely pace. The Sun was hidden from view by a haze and it was purely through hindsight that it became clear what was happening. The elements were in a huddle to throw up a surprise for the

festive bunch. All the same when the racing started it was a real peaceful scene that prevailed. The first race was sailed easily and the sailors who had all come out to the start line on the dot, found the time to check out the start line bias, and the tack that paid by doing split tacks so that they could refine their strategy for racing and get ahead in the fleet.



Wind picks up in race 2

By the second race the wind was showing signs of freshening up and it was during the third race that the plans made by the elements came in to their own. Last year, Capt Ravikumar Manian our Captain of Boats informs us that the wind shifted south on Jan 19th and reassured us that global warming and climate change did not have much effect on the monsoons, reading off the dates from his meticulously maintained diary of wind and weather over the past years. The wind however, shifted all the way to the North as if to cock a snook at all those predictions of the shift of the Wind from North to South on Jan 20th by the met sites of the likes of BBC, CNN weather etc.

Suddenly the sea was dotted with white caps everywhere, as it picked up from a sedate six to seven to almost twenty and the sky clouded over in a deeper haze. The ships out at the anchorage, looking East swung North. Every car and bike manufacturer will never fail to state how good their product is by displaying the acceleration that the product can develop in a short time. Zero to sixty in under six seconds says an ad for Porsche Carrera, or zero to sixty in about eleven secs screams the ad for the Ford Fiesta inviting prospective buyers to *go fida*. If motion is a human obsession – you can be motionless yet marvel at something moving; you could describe a figure of eight on the ice as you skate and be overcome by the beauty and grace of the movement; the list is potentially endless – then, acceleration is flaunted as human creativity. But compare that to what the elements are capable of and you are left whistling slowly. If you can find your breath that is. Getting back to our story, the white caps were the pretty part of the picture as the rippling water broke into deep frowns, and waves galloped in all directions like wild horses in a stampede! Hiking hard, Optimist sailors like Varun, Gerad and Nishanth hit the crests at top speed raising a trail of spray like manes on the fast receding waves.

A sight to see, it was and it is only natural that if you are ten years old or less than 30 kg, you just hang on. Survival becomes the primary objective. Sometimes even that is difficult as the bow digs in and however much a youngster tries to ward off a capsize, the rolling sea unmindful of human sensitivities empties itself into the boat continuously. The boat fills up and the buoyancy bags of a few sailors, which do not have the wherewithal to weather such a storm, start to rise like bloated fish. In all this melee, some of them break free of their polyurethane moorings and freed of any restraint bob along setting you an impossible task if you are trying to retrieve them from your motorized launch, while trying to secure the boat whose buoyancy now reduced, causes it to sink with a passion that seems out of place for something that seems to be made out of plastic. The centerboard in the meanwhile is into its own thing, and can be seen cruising down one large wave about one hundred and eighty degrees away.

Out on the boat suddenly you wish that you were like a chameleon with eyes that move independently. You can designate one eye for the centerboard and one for the buoyancy while you grapple with the resisting boat that is tugging you down. People who have played in lively surf on the beach will easily understand the helplessness of being human, human industry, creativity and what have you. It is just like that. You are getting tossed around, your knees scraping the sand, and when you finally come gasping for breath you find that when you try to get up, a truckload of sand has entered your shorts and promises to defrock you by its very weight. Sometimes, I wonder why we go out sailing, only. Jeez, if only the shrinks knew, they could start up thriving practices near sailing clubs.

In the meanwhile, near the rocks and very much further away you see a sight that would probably make you laugh on a Tom and Jerry show. A laser sail comes up briefly, flounders upright for a short while and then flops back in with a conviction that baffles you. Like Tom being dunked by a revolving fan blade of a windmill, run by the prankster Jerry. But there is no time to lose and somehow you reach for the mobile and yell "Rescue! Help!" so that officials who consider Sundays as tension free days can hear your agony. Those relaxing in the confines of the premises, savouring Chicken fried rice and batter fried fish jump into action and strapping a life jacket take a running jump into launches to assist the rescuing. Meanwhile some of the intrepid Optimist sailors have capsized at the leeward mark and can be seen furiously bailing out so that they can make it to the finish line before the race gets abandoned. The fourth race of the series saw only Varun and Hussein cross the finish line. Hussain, to his credit it must be said, never capsized once and he is no hulk of a sailor. Soon the chief coach could be seen out with a diminutive member, whose other accomplishments apart from ocean swimming and forward rappelling are sailing a laser and they can be seen crisscrossing the heaving sea pulling out boats, sails and masts. But there is just no place for sailors on the rescue

launch and so sailors whose boats have been retrieved can be seen breaking the waves their mouths open like gold fish as they desperately hang to a line trailing from the stern of the Chief Coach's rescue launch. Like I told you earlier, it is madness all the way. The rescue seems to ask: You need succor? Then with unabated glee it says: Here have some more, sucker!" And veers off with the sailor in tow, like live bait for a great white! When you go sailing, the possibilities are endless I tell you!

Back in the harbour, tried and bruised, sailors wondered how it could be just ninety minutes of action as it felt much longer and looked forward to berthing and getting into dry clothes. Read what Balachander has to say about his experience on that day:

"I should first thank Deepak, Ashwini and Peter for helping me on Sunday. Deepak for helping me right my boat after unsuccessful attempts to right my boat after three consecutive capsizes, Ashwini for shouting instructions and encouraging me and Peter for helping me retrieve my mast and sail after my final capsize.

Having sailed for only 6 months, I gained quite a bit of experience last Sunday. The wind was so strong and the waves so high righting the boat only invited another capsize even before you could climb on board. Some one said the wind speed was more than 25 knots. But the waves were about 10-12 feet tall. It all added to the thrill and to some extent frustration. Frustration of having to waste time righting the boat after a capsize and not taking advantage of all the conditions. At last, my ego was soothed when I heard that experienced laser sailors had a few capsizes of their own.

When we reached the club house the time was about 4.30. I thought Munna & Doc had decided to call it a day given the rough conditions. I was surprised to hear Munna say lets go out and finish the races after I do chu-chu, which got a few giggles and moans from Opti sailors."



Back in the harbor racing

In the end they all went out once again and finished seven races, the only sailor who was absent in the last four races was little Nicholas, whose buoyancy bags needed to be traced much like baggage that goes away somewhere when you fly.

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Anniversary Regatta 08

One more eventful year passes and TNSA now is a healthy and energetic six-year old. The year 2007 saw a huge growth in TNSA's fleet of sailors and boats. Several new members have joined the Association and their fresh enthusiasm is infectious as more are bitten by the sailing bug. New talents are emerging and Sundays at TNSA are awaited with keen anticipation.



Trial of starting strategies

This anniversary Sunday, January the 20th saw several sailors at the TNSA clubhouse getting ready to race for the Chennai Port Trust Trophy. There were a total of 26 boats, Optis, Enterprise, lasers et al. Four of the young Optis who were not ready for racing yet, however were brave enough to sail alongside of us near the sunken ship. 15 Optimists, 6 Lasers and one Enterprise, a total of 22 boats sailed 3 races for the Trophy under the Portsmouth Yardstick Index.



Laser 4.7, full rig, radials, Enterprise and Optimists race for the Anniversary Trophy

It was a beautiful clear day made pleasant by a steady easterly wind of about 8 to 9 knots. With a calm sea and mild breeze, the sailors didn't have to work too hard physically, so good starts and judicious tacks were most important. A triangular course of about 20 minutes had been laid and the first gun went off at quarter past three. The sailors discerned a port bias and as all boats fought for the dream start towards the pin end, loud squeals of 'windward keep clear!', 'penalty!!' and 'starboard' issued from the Opti squad.

Those of us in the lasers who got mixed up with the Optis tried not to show our exasperation at being caught behind the slower moving boats. Soon the lasers broke free and a fortunate sailor in a laser radial forged ahead of the rest to round the



Eventual winner, Shantha leads the pack of Lasers after windward mark rounding

windward mark first eventually finishing the race first too. The Opti fleet kept more or less together with the senior sailors in the forefront and the rest following in more or less their expected positions. In the first race Nishanth finished first among the Optimists with Shwetha following closely behind for a second position and Ganapathy bringing up the third.

When the whistle went for the second race, several sailors overshot the start line and the race officer had to issue a general recall. A stern warning and threat of disqualification saw a rather tame restart of the race. Having missed the first race, Doc Mushtaqh with Abarajitha as crew joined in an Enterprise and got off to an excellent start and raced enthusiastically to finish second on water while Abhimanyu on a laser radial was the first to finish this race with Ganapathy, Hussain and Shwetha among the Optis finishing in first, second and third positions respectively. The wind held more or less constant during the entire afternoon except for a mild shift of about 5 degrees and back during the second race. Third race once again saw lasers finishing ahead on water and Nishanth, Hussain and Ganapathy in the top three Optimist positions. Special mention must be made of Bala, a month old rookie on a laser standard racing for the first ever time, finishing at a commendable 11th position.

With the day still bright and inviting, we continued to race once more though this wasn't counted for the regatta results. Sailing under the Portsmouth Yardstick is always a tricky thing, particularly for the bigger boats like lasers and enterprises, you think you have finished ahead, but the Optis quietly sneak in with their handicaps and suddenly you find yourself relegated to a position well behind them. Abhimanyu, who finished 2nd and 3rd in Race 1 and 3 on water but found himself in the 8th position finally, will surely vouch for this with undisguised chagrin. Thus one is always chary about exulting too much and one never fails to add the operative 'on water' to one's position. Once we reached the clubhouse, Doc huddled over the computer working away the results while the rest of us unrigged and tried to pretend supreme indifference to the outcome.

Calculations over and mists cleared and the winner of the regatta turned out to be Shantha in Laser Radial with 6 points, while Ganapathy came in second position with 11 points and Nishanth finished third with 13 points.

While the results tell you that the top Optimist sailors need to be less complacent and work harder on their boats, they also give hope to all aspiring sailors that at one's optimum wind conditions it is possible for anyone to put in a halfway decent performance.

TNSA Sailing Calendar – first trimester’08

The new calendar of the TNSA has been designed to address the aspirations of the different class of boats sailed at the TNSA. As described elsewhere in this Newsletter, the Anniversary Regatta is an open class event and the winner is decided with the help of the Portsmouth Yardstick. However, to keep the competition in each class keen, the Official Handicapper and Measurer of the TNSA, Ashish Mehta, has devised a sailing calendar that would address the aspirations of each class separately. Not only that but newcomers too, members who generally join the TNSA attracted by the sport of sailing and its twin promise of adventure and leisure have also been addressed where they will be welcomed and accommodated in sailboats of different classes. It is an event fixed with the idea of welcoming the community of members and allowing them to enjoy a day out at sea. The first such day for friends and family is slated to be Feb 17th. All those of you who had always wanted to come sailing, look out for days like this, when you can go out in a keelboat or a dinghy or just cruise along in a logistic motorized launch for a fill of the aquamarine environment. You can bring friends along to enjoy an afternoon out at sea with you.

Apart from having a great time, you can never tell what you will spot, out in the open. Maybe a few dolphins or as our member Bijoy had the good fortune of spotting it – a Manta Ray!

...TTK Trophy



Last race inside the harbor as the sun goes down

A great day, it was, racing for the TTK Trophy for the Optimist sailors. For all of us, Munna, Abaa, Deepak and the laser sailors, it was deeply satisfying.

To such days, one can raise an enthusiastic toast! Cheers!

...Meet DP World

is now preparing for her entry into the corporate world, with an MBA in Operations and Finance at Anna University. Studying in Chettinad Vidyashram, daughter Varshini is in the 8th and son Ajay is in the 4th. Ah a nine year old, my eye gets that gleam at the thought of a new sailor, and he obligingly promises to find time to bring his family sailing.

“Running an organization like this is not difficult where the hierarchy and systems are in place. Running an association like TNSA where individuals get together because of a common interest is lots more difficult. I have great respect for the way you all have worked together to bring up the sport of sailing in Chennai” he ruminates. Remembering their contribution when we ran both the Opti and Laser Nationals in 2007, I remind him, with summer approaching it is that time of the year again when we will be expecting their support. Looking out of his office, which commands an expansive view of the harbour and the ocean beyond, he says, “of course, DP World will always be with TNSA”.

Bonne Bouche



That’s Indian thinking

After 48 years of marriage, an elderly Sindhi man in Bombay calls his son in New York and says, “I hate to ruin your day son, but I have to tell you that your mother and I are getting a divorce; 45 years of misery is enough!”

“Dad, what are you talking about?” the son screams.

“We can’t stand the sight of each other any longer,” the old man says. “We’re sick of each other, and I’m sick of talking about this, so you call your sister in Hong Kong and tell her!”

Frantic, the son calls his sister, who explodes on the phone.

“Like heck they’re getting divorced,” she shouts, I’ll take care of this.”

She calls Bombay immediately, and screams at the old man, “You are not getting divorced. Don’t do a single thing until I get there. I’m calling my brother back, and we’ll both be there tomorrow. Until then, don’t do a thing, DO YOU HEAR??” and she hangs up.

The old man hangs up his phone and turns to his wife.

“Okay”, he says, “It’s all set. They’re both coming for Diwali and paying their own airfare!!”

Dead Certain

One day three women were at a beauty parlor talking about their husbands. The first woman says, “Last night my husband said he was going to his office, but when I called they said he wasn’t there!”

“I know!” the next woman says, “Last night my husband said he was going to his brother’s house but when I called he wasn’t there.”

The third woman says, “I always know where my husband is.”

“Impossible!” both women say, “He has you completely fooled!”

“Oh no,” says the woman. “I’m a widow.”