

LOFT LINES

August 2004

I apologize for omitting our July Newsletter. Not only has the loft been extremely busy the last two months building sails and servicing our customers, but I have also been off sailing my Star in two regional regattas, and working nights and weekends on Minute Hand, my little 21 foot wooden sailboat, trying to finish it's restoration in time for the LYRA course races.

There are many regattas over the past two months, and there are several reports for this newsletter. To lead off, I have a report on the Brockport 100th Anniversary Regatta, the 12th District Star Championship, the J-24 Great Lakes Championship, the J-22 Levels at Youngstown , The Ensign Region II and II Championships, and lastly, Minute Hand's rise from the dead to sail in the LYRA course races.

Finally, a brief rant on my part regarding the many advantages a competent, high tech sailmaker brings to their local market.

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BYC 100th Anniversary Invitational Regatta: 7/17/04

Report by: Doug Burtner

This regatta consisted of one beautiful day of racing and many wonderful people. Jon Faudree and I took this weekend to sail with two customers in this momentous regatta. The weather was great, the wind was fair, and the sailing was awesome.

I was sailing with Erik Grape and his father Tom on "Dolly", a Pearson 26. We were racing in the GO fleet with two other boats and for the overall 1st in the regatta against a handful of other Pearson 26's and many other boats. Our game plan was to get good starts (big shocker, I know), do what we had to do to stay in clear air, and let the new Tri-radial Pentex Mainsail and Genoa do their job. We played a few shifts throughout the day, but usually looked for the better breeze and sailed to it. Erik did a great job sailing the boat. He had 4 great starts out of the 5 races we had. He was focused on those telltales the whole race and took a little breather down wind as we sailed wing on wing.

We felt fast and walked all over other Pearson's and even boats that should have been faster than us. We knew that we won every race in our division, but would have to keep our fingers crossed for the overall after all the numbers were crunched. I'll let Eric's wonderful letter recount the final results:

"Doug and everyone at Haarstick:

It is with great pride that I write to you today. I have been racing with my Dad since the early 1970's, and for the most part, we have gotten the crap beat out of us from year to year. We have never won anything "big" at BYC, although we have fought for 2nd and 3rd places in our division throughout the years, winning an occasional race or two. Last year, we (finally) switched to a used Pearson 26 named Dolly, so that way we could race head-to-head with the other ten Pearson 26 yachts at our club. While I did fairly well in the non-spinnaker division last year (2nd), I was not competitive overall with the other Pearsons. The winner of my non-spinnaker division was also a Pearson 26, who had bought new sails from a Haarstick competitor the year before.

We made the decision for this sailing season to go with Haarstick. What won us over was your attention to detail. You had a representative come to the club to discuss sails. You also had a representative come and look over Dolly, figure out the best sails for the rigging we had, and worked with us financially to get the best material for the limited budget that we had. You kept us informed of the status of our order for a new 153% Pentex genoa and new Pentex mainsail, and let us come to the shop to look them over before we accepted them. When we had a problem with the sail slugs not fitting quite right on the mainsail, you fixed them in one day, at no charge.

The spring series is now over at Brockport Yacht Club. Of the seven races that were run, I came in 2nd in the first two in my division, and WON the last five. The other Pearson 26 that is in my division that bought sails from your competitor has not beaten me once in a division series race this year...not once. But the ultimate was the recently held BYC invitational regatta. Not only did Dolly with her Haarstick sails and fine crew (of which Doug Burtner from Haarstick was a fantastic help) WIN EVERY single one of her five division races, she also WON two of the five races at the regatta, and was the OVERALL 1st place winner of the whole regatta.

I firmly believe that the biggest reason we have been consistently winning this year is Haarstick. The biggest reason, BY FAR, I might add. I am on cloud 9 today, and I have Haarstick to thank for it.

Thank you!

Eric Grape
Owner, Dolly, Pearson 26 #893"

I would like to personally thank Erik Grape for his nice words and having me aboard "Dolly". His dad, Tom and crew member, Debbie Trout were also great to sail with and did a great job on the boat.

Everyone at Brockport Yacht Club made Jon and I feel right at home. Thanks to Larry Beneway and Patricia Brantingham for running a great regatta. I only wish that I would have discovered this beautiful club years ago. I will be back soon.

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12th District Star Championship: Royal Hamilton YC July 9-11, 2004 .

Report by: Steve Haarstick

Although I towed my Star to the Seneca Yacht Club this past May for the summer races, I never got it in the water before I had to go back down and pack it up for the trip to Hamilton . The restoration project of my 21' sailboat, Minute Hand was bogging me down, and I had been working on it after work and every weekend as the LYRA course races were looming on the horizon. However, the 12th District Championship is the top event in the Star class for the region that extends from eastern Canada , New York State from Buffalo to Lake George , including the Finger Lakes , and Northern New Jersey . While the number of fleets has diminished over the years, the level of competition has intensified, as Olympic classes always attract the best sailors, especially in an Olympic year.

I have only sailed in one District's since I competed on a regular basis in the mid seventies. While I won the districts twice before, (1969 - Ithaca , 1971 - Greenwood Lake) those were literally a lifetime ago. Having spent absolutely no time in the boat since this past February, I didn't have high hopes. If I had to trade off the LYRA course races in Minute Hand in order to sail in the Star Districts, so be it. I have enjoyed sailing my Star over the past few years, more than any other sailing I have done, as it has renewed my burn for racing against some of the best sailors around, and, just as important, it has renewed old friendships from years past. It is amazing to see how many Star sailors from the seventies and eighties have never left the Star, and are still out there racing today.

As I setup my Star Thursday evening, my regatta expectations began to fade, when I realized that I had put the new jib I made for the Masters in Miami in the wrong bag. In it's place, was the other "experimental" (slow) jib in the "new sail" bag. This left me with a two year old version of the Master's jib. At least I managed to bring my still fast four year old Dacron/Pentex Triradial Main! Starting a big regatta with old sails, in a class that regularly puts on brand new sails for big regattas is not a good omen.

It got worse. On Friday, the first day of racing, the wind was out of the northwest, a direction that "never happens here". How many times have you heard that at regattas? This forced the committee to set a course across the harbor, which helped make the variable wind even more unpredictable, especially near the shore at the weather mark. At the first start, we lost track of the time and found ourselves in the coffin's corner above the committee boat at the gun, and made contact with Larry and Ted who also had no where to go. As the fleet left the starting area, we were doing our 720 behind the line. After sailing the rest of the race in the cheap seats, we finished 20th out of 26 boats.

The 2nd race of the day started better, as we got a clean start and “lead”, smartly tacking up the middle on the shifts, looking good for ¾’s of the 1st beat! But two minutes later, 15 boats came out of the right side on a big puff near the weather mark and put us back in the cheap seats again! On the final run to the finish, we stayed low, real low of the mob scene of 10 boats clumped to weather, and passed them all to finish just in front of them in 7th. However, those 10 boats in the mob crossed the line at once, with two of them tangled up on the pin, creating a real mess. When we checked the board Saturday morning, we had been bumped back to 10th, with 3 boats ahead of us on redress.

Even with a drop race, a 20th and a 10th doesn’t bode well for a good regatta in a 26 boat fleet. On the plus side, there’s no pressure now! When we went out to the start the wind had changed direction, and was filling in from the east, becoming very steady, in the 8 –10 knot range. This is my best condition!! Clean start, great speed off the line, tacked and crossed the fleet, no problem!! In the lead!! Only we didn’t check the course flag. As we reached off towards the “weather” mark, Brian Cramer suggested that we would do much better if we rounded the weather mark before rounding the reach mark!! What an idiot I was!! This bonehead move put us back in 4th for the remainder of the 3rd race.

Finally, we got off clean for the start of the 4th race, and, having checked the course flag this time, sailed to the correct weather mark, rounded second, and finished 2nd. Not a bad day, but certainly not a threat for an overall finish in the top 4 or 5. There were lot’s of boats ahead of us.

Sunday morning, the wind was east again, and had filled in earlier than yesterday. Pumped up, we left the dock early and sailed to the course area to check out the wind. Today, we were not picking up the shift off the shore, as we did the day before, and the wind seemed stronger in the middle of the course. This pre-race observation paid off, as most of the regatta leaders went to the shore on the first beat, while we sailed up the middle. We rounded the weather mark first with John Finch in close pursuit, while they came in deep. We covered John for the rest of the race, but on the last run to the finish, let a boat slip ahead of us both, and we took another 2nd. Still, it was our best race of the regatta. It felt good to end up on a positive note.

However, it got better! As I was packing up my Star, Rick Burgess came over to congratulate me on our beating him by one point for the championship. Unbelievable!! After 33 years, I actually won my third 12th Star District Championship with a 10, 4, 2, 2 and an 18 low point score in a 26 boat fleet! I can’t think of any other regatta where that has happened. What a rush!! Have to thank my crew Dan for a great job up front, and the club for a terrific regatta.

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J-24 Great Lakes Championship at Oswego : June 12th & 13th 2004

Report by: Jon Faudree

This past winter, we talked with Kirk Reynolds about a J-24 campaign for this season. Kirk visited the loft this winter to discuss our current J-24 designs, and what changes he thought might be made to improve them. After reviewing the photos we had, and looking at the sails, Kirk suggested we reduce the pre bend of our main, and flatten the foot area slightly. We both decided not to touch our current genoa or Maxi-Runner spinnaker (the fastest runner in the class!). This May, we had the opportunity to test our new mainsail design at the J-Daze Regatta in Canandaigua. We were hoping to improve the heavy air performance with the new main design, and we did!

Our crew for the Great Lakes consisted myself, Colin Ranney, and Drew Tompkins (A member of the Haarstick Ensign Mid-Winter Championships winning team) on Saturday, and Dan Mather (A Oswego J-30 skipper and Haarstick customer) on Sunday.

Going into this regatta, the mainsail still hadn't seen light air and we were not sure how fast it would be. After all, there are no free lunches! Usually gains in one set of conditions are offset by losses in another. Saturday's conditions were light and shifty, with wind in the 5 to 8 knots range. To our relief, we were able to power up the main up for the light winds and sometimes-lumpy conditions. We had excellent speed and finished the day with a 1st, 2nd, and 6th.

For Sunday, the winds were 12 to 15 with gusts to 18. Just like J-Daze, we flattened the main and we were able to fly the #1 the whole time even though we were over 120lbs light. Our finishes were very similar to day one, with a 2nd, 8th, and 1st. Both days together gave us the overall regatta win. 1st Overall in the Great Lakes Championship!!

Good luck to our J-24 customers for the rest of this summer, and we'll look forward to seeing you again on the water. For complete regatta results go to:

<http://www.haarsticksailmakers.com/sails/One%20Design%20Sails/J24%20Sails/J24%202004%20great%20lakes.html>

We would also like to congratulate Alfie Merchant on his 4th place regatta finish. He was using Haarstick up-wind sails for the first time. With the help of our tuning guide, he got up to speed quickly. Alfie commented after Sunday's racing, "I should have switched to Haarstick 10 years ago."

The new Main design now rounds out the fastest set of sails Haarstick has ever built. Kirk's comments after the regatta: "I've tried just about every other sailmakers' J-24 sails, North, Doyle, and others. Your J-24 sails are the easiest to set up, and go fast over the entire range of conditions. Their proven durability is an added bonus."

It's not too late (but don't wait too long) to order a new sail in time for the J-24 Districts at Rochester on the weekend of September 11th and 12th. We can deliver your new sails at our best **FALL DISCOUNT! That's a 15% Discount FOR ONE SAIL, 20% Discount FOR TWO OR MORE SAILS!**

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J-22 Level Regatta at Youngstown : July 24, 25 2004

Report by: Jon Faudree

Last fall when Kirk Reynolds and I were talking about J-24 sails, I had mentioned how much I loved sailing on J-22's. We talked sails on the phone almost every week throughout the winter and every time, I mentioned the J-22. In March, Kirk called from Florida to tell me he had just bought a J-22, hull #980, and wanted to race it in the Levels this July.

Similar to the J-24, we checked over our current designs, but decided to stay with the same designs we had been making for the J-22. However, as we rigged up for the Levels, our expectations were not high, as we had only raced the boat one other time in a PHRF fleet with no other J-22's, so there was no way to tell how fast we were. Our only advantage was how much we'd sailed together, Colin Ranney was on the bow, and I was trimming, the same team we've had all summer on the J-24.

Friday night before the races started I had a great conversation with Tim Booth, who trims one of our spinnakers on *Alternative Girlfriend*, out of Niagara on the lake sailing center. He told me that in lumpy conditions he was raising the spinnaker pole higher than normal to help push the shape into the top of the sail. It turned out to be a great tip.

The conditions for the weekend were ENE 10 - 18 kts, with chop, very shifty, and with changes in velocity. This made for some very tactical racing. We tuned the rig for the conditions using the Haarstick tuning guide and we were off. Great starts, great tactics, and awesome downwind speed, thanks to our Maxi-Runner, gave us two 2nd place finishes. In spite of one major glitch, when we lost our jib halyard up the mast on the run, with a bareheaded hoist at the leeward mark, we won the last race on Saturday, and ended up the day with a three point regatta lead over Kevin Doyle.

While it was looking good, we knew that it would be tough to hold onto this lead, as each of the Doyle brothers has over ten years of J-22 experience. They are also great competitors and we appreciate their willingness to answer our many questions, and help us get up to speed.

Sunday we had the same conditions and nearly the same results. Although we rounded 6th at the 1st weather mark, once again, our maxi-runner passed boats and moved us into third, behind Chris and Kevin Doyle. Upwind we were able to stay close enough to Chris to attack and pass him on the final leeward leg. Kevin won, bringing our overall lead down to two points. All we had to do for the last race was finish right behind him. We had a good start and headed to what we thought was the favored right side. Half way up the leg a big shift came in from the left, and we rounded in tenth, with Kevin was in forth. Another great downwind leg got us into 4th, and Kevin had moved up to 3rd. Chris Doyle was winning with a large lead, and Peter Doyle was 2nd. Somewhere on the final weather leg Kevin passed Peter who put a tight cover on us. It was just enough to hold us off on the leeward leg.

After five races we were tied with Kevin at 11points each, but with his three 1sts to our one, he won the tie-breaker. Chris Doyle ended up with a third, followed by Peter in fourth. We were thrilled with the

regatta! The racing was tight and exciting, and to finish right in the middle of the Doyle family was a huge thrill. We look forward to more races in this fun class!

27 boats

Kevin Doyle/Vic Snyder, 11pts. 1st on tie-breaker

Kirk Reynolds, 11pts., 2nd

Chris Doyle, 18pts., 3rd

Peter Doyle/Pat Whelan, 18pts., 4th

It's not too late to order new sails in time for the J-22 Lake George Open on the weekend of September 25th and 26th. We will also deliver your new sails for this regatta at our best **FALL DISCOUNT!**
That's a 15% Discount FOR ONE SAIL, 20% Discount FOR TWO OR MORE SAILS!

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Ensign Region II, III Championships: New London , CT July 23 –25, 2004

Report by: Doug Burtner

When Ensign 856, "The White Lady of Irondequoit", out of Canandaigua YC, made the trip to New London CT for the Ensign II, III Regional Championship, I was sad to miss Levels (a large annual regatta at Youngstown YC on Lake Onatario). Even more disappointing, we blew our transmission on the way there and had to finish the trip with a U-haul. We almost threw in the towel, but I am certainly glad we didn't. We got there late Thursday, launched the boat, but didn't have time for our usual shake down sail that we do before every regatta.

Hank Williams of CYC (Past Member of RYC), Doug Burtner of CYC and Haarstick Sailmakers, Greg Hunt from Rochester NY and Nancy Wood of Northport NY made up the crew for the White Lady.

We raced in the Long Island Sound between the mainland and Fischer Island . The wind was SE 10-15 knts on Friday and we had a fleet of 16 on the line. Hank drove us off the line nicely for the three races that day. We stuck to our game plan and banged the left side to use the incoming tide to our advantage. We won the three races that day and had Charlie Shoemaker right behind us with three 2nd place finishes.

Saturday clocked around to the NE with winds around 10-15 again. The current was not as much of a factor and we were racing more inland. We had another great start the first race and punched out early. We covered Shoemaker the whole race and took another bullet. Race 5 we had a bad start and had to fight off a few boats in the beginning while Shoemaker just extended his lead. We were fighting the whole race to get him back but could not close the gap by the end of the second lap. He got the gun and

we got the horn right behind him. Race six, I don't really know the details but we got a 1 with Shoemaker taking a 2. There were too many races this weekend to keep track of them all. But, I do remember getting completely dumped on with rain on the way back in to the Thames YC in New London

Sunday they stuck us with three more races. This was a bit much considering we had to de-rig and leave that night. The wind was about the same as Saturday with a little less, and they got us going at 10:30 . Charlie Shoemaker was only 4 points behind us going into the races and he was going to be the boat to stick with all day. The next boat was about 15 points out. We had another great start right above Charlie and we played with each other the whole race. I think there were a few lead changes but we ended up taking the bullet with him right behind us. Race 8 is also a blur but we took a 3 with Shoemaker taking a 4. Race 9 I remember very well as we were in 7th place at the windward mark with Charlie in 1st. If we finished the race in this order we would have lost the lead in the regatta. We knew that we had our work cut out for us and we had to be completely focused. The wind died down to 5-10 knots and we were struggling down wind with all the boat chop. We jibed to the fresh air on the right as soon as we could and passed a few boats down wind. The next upwind leg the fleet split with Charlie going right to the better breeze. We had no choice but to follow until we got to the better breeze. We powered up the rig and sails and just went fast. We got to the right of Charlie eventually and got in phase. We played the shifts as best we could while sticking with Charlie. The boats that banged left made out and the boats that banged right made out. While we played the middle of the course with Charlie, the boats on either side made out. Go figure. At the windward mark we got ahead of Charlie with some great tactical decisions from Hank and rounded 4th and 5th. We were able to keep him behind us downwind and win the regatta.

It was a total of nine races this weekend and we ended up with 1-1-1-1-2-1-1-3-4. We had two new people on the boat for this regatta and for one of them it was their first regatta ever. Nancy Wood grew up on Ensign's and now drives her own in Northport. She did a perfect job on the bow and didn't miss a beat. Our game plan was to play it conservative and just have fun. The National's are coming up in Newport in a month and we wanted to keep getting used to the boat. Hank Williams did a great job driving and starting. He had 8 perfect starts out of 9 races. He was also doing most of the decision making as well while racing. So my hat's off to Hank. He is always fun to sail with and is one of the best sailors I know. I always learn from him when we race together.

-Doug Burtner

Haarstick Sailmakers

From the Ensign Class Website Regatta write up:

<http://www.ensignclass.com/2004Region2and3Writeup.pdf>

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MINUTE HAND MAKES THE LYRA COURSE RACES!

Report by: Steve Haarstick

The week prior to the LYRA course races, I pushed night and day to finish the restoration project on Minute Hand that I started back in February. By Thursday afternoon, I was ready to put the mast in the boat so I could check the shrouds, runners, and backstay to make sure everything fit before packing it up. My son Chris had recommended Matt as a hard worker, and could help me work on the boat this summer. Chris had coached Matt, the starting Nose Guard for the past two seasons at the University of Rochester. Matt is incredibly strong, and, as an added bonus to all the work he put into Minute Hand, I don't think anyone else could have controlled the 35 foot long mast without a hoist or a "gin pole" while standing on the roof of the workshop and lifting it vertically 7 feet off the ground and into the boat.

I want to thank Skip Shumway for offering us the use of his "gin pole" at the Ideal 18 hoist area, as there would have been no other way to get the mast up again Thursday evening and get the boat ready for Friday's races. After a minor mishap, where we dropped the gin pole and mast on the first attempt, we finally got the rig in the boat Thursday evening. However, Friday morning, we noticed that the jib and spinnaker halyards were twisted around the jumper wires. Our first two attempts to fix this failed, as neither I, or Dan (much to his chagrin) could manage to climb up the tiny mast high enough to untangle the mess. The only solution was to rig the gin pole again, and take the mast down. By the time we got the rig straightened out and reset in the boat for the third time, it was obvious we were not going to make the first start. I wasn't even sure the 1965 two hp Evinrude would start.

It started, and ran, sort of, and we arrived at the course in time for the second race. I have to admit that I was shocked that there were so few boats in our class. What happened to all the local boats from RYC and GYC? Where were you guys? There were only 4 boats in our class Friday! What a disappointment, to have worked so hard, for so long, and have only 3 other boats to race against! We could have raced against more boats on a RYC Wednesday night race. I know the weather forecast wasn't great, but LYRA is supposed to be a major regatta right in our back yard. I couldn't believe it.

Saturday's forecast was even worse, but two J-24's showed up, and we got to give them a tussle off the start and up the 1st beat. But Minute Hand is no match for the J-24 upwind in a breeze, especially in a chop. This little boat sails through waves like a snow plow, and virtually stops dead on every tack. The boat has less keel weight (300 lbs) than any other boat I can think of, and is extremely hard to steer upwind. I sailed with Todd Schumaker and Dan White, who repeatedly told me how they found crewing on my Star to be decidedly more comfortable.

With only three people on board, and a mast that really needs runners to avoid falling down, I had originally planned to put all 68 sqft of the tiny jib on a whisker pole downwind and take the 12 second per mile credit for no spinnaker. However, when I discovered that PHRF still gives you the same rating credit as long as the maximum girth of the spinnaker is less than 123% * J, I decided to give it a try. After all, it's got to be better than the tiny jib. I'm not sure how Todd managed to handle this tall narrow

spinnaker, as it was really unstable. It was hard to fly, hard to hoist, as it always got caught between the main and the spreaders going up, and I have no idea how he made the runners and flew the spinnaker while Dan was gibing the pole. I don't think this type of spinnaker will start a trend in PHRF!

The two days of racing with the J-24's was fun, as we pretty well split up the races. I got them twice, and they beat me corrected 3 out of the 5 races we sailed together.

I'm glad I got Minute Hand back together again, and I'm looking forward to some Wednesday nights, the Hospice, and the fall weekend series. Todd and Dan are great to sail with, and we had a lot of fun together. They were indeed the all Star crew.

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I would like to congratulate our customers for their fine performances in both the Levels and LYRA regattas. For a list of the full results, please e-mail us with the race and course results you would like to see, and we will e-mail them back. We should have these on our web site within the next week.

I have received many very nice comments about the quality, durability, and performance of our sails from everyone I have talked to this season. I was especially pleased when Tim Kinsella who told me Sunday afternoon after LYRA how pleased he was with our sails and that he appreciated the fact that we met and exceeded every support promise that we made this spring. Thanks, Tim, I really appreciated that!

In fact, ask any of our customers that have bought our sails, racing or cruising over the past years. It makes me wonder why anyone in Upstate NY would do business with other sail lofts that are hundreds of miles away. Do you really think the "big name" lofts are that much better than us to put up with the lack of support and service? At best, you have to rely on a local "service rep". He's not the one that built or designed your sail. He has no idea what the design details or the cloth choices are, and if the sail's not right, does he even know what is wrong, will he even admit to a problem, or how it should be fixed? You could spend the entire summer going slow! Even if the problem is recognized, you will have to send it back hundreds of miles and wait (how long?) for it to return. Even worse, you can attempt to explain the problem over the phone to someone who will never see the problem or the "fix" first hand. Is it really worth putting up with this kind of lousy service, just to have the "right" label on the sail? Any objective look at our racing results and the support we have provided our customers over the past 34 years we have been in business will prove otherwise. Our service personnel are all trained sailmakers. They know how you sails were built, and are seconds away from checking the design and finishing details. We keep complete records on every sail we build, right down to the exact lot and roll number of the cloth. The fact is, our sails are the best, and we back them up with the kind of superior service and support that only a local quality loft can muster. If you have a problem, we will not pretend it doesn't exist. We are on it immediately, and will do whatever it takes to make it right. Not three weeks from now, but right now!

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