



IN THE BREEZE

January/February 2009

Happy New Year!

2009 should prove interesting for most of us. If you listen to the news reports you've got to wonder what the future holds. There's one constant that I think we can all count on..... If you have a chance to go windsurfing, take it - because you're going to have fun!

Sure, you can go sailing anytime you want and you probably do. Do you sail with others? Sometimes yes and probably sometimes no is my guess. That's where the NTWR comes into play. NTWR.org is a great resource for finding out what's going on in the area (by the way - Thanks Fred!). Calendars, social networking even a sailing area guide! Check it out and see what's going on this season. If your looking for an excuse to get out and Sail, I'll bet you can find a few at NTWR.org!

Windsurfing is total freedom, that's what many of us like about it. In my opinion it may be the purest form of sailing. After all, you are actually a part of the rig! You are involved at the "base" level. You're not just controlling the action,

you ARE the action.

This year our club is fortunate. We have always benefited from the dedicated volunteer spirit of our members to organize and implement NTWR Events and Goals and this year will be no different. At the end of last year, no new windsurfers were able to step up and take the helm of our Club. That would spell the end of many organizations like ours. Here's where the fortunate part happened..... Bruce Moore said "I'll do what needs to be done for NTWR, but I'll need some help." Most of you know that Bruce has already done his part, 2 years as president and plenty of volunteer work before that means he should be able to take it easy with a clear conscience. His commitment has inspired me to say..... OK, me too. Then Guess what happened, Bob McCord said..... ME TOO! Well my math may not be too good but that's 3 out of 4 of our past presidents getting together to make certain the NTWR will thrive in 2009. Please consider getting involved at any level you are comfortable with this season, I think you will find it very rewarding.

Don't forget to pat Roberta Stavely (our dedicated treasurer) on the back next time you see here. Jim Downes deserves a nod for broadcasting e-mail notices too. And how 'bout Barb Marino - editor in chief of *In the Breeze*, her gentle reminders about content and deadlines have helped keep us on track more than a few times (this being another!). All of these members have volunteered at these positions for more than a couple of years and have made quite a difference. Thanks also to the countless members who have made our Regattas and Intro to Windsurfing events successful for almost 2 decades.

So, to recap.....

For a good time.....
join NTWR !

Hoping to see you on the



Upcoming

"GET ACTIVE IN YOUR CLUB TODAY"

UPCOMING EVENTS:

6/6/09—LTW—Windsruf Bay

6/20 - Summer Solstice Party and LTW Practice

7/11—LTW—DCYC, Lake Lewisville

8/08—LTW—Windsurf Bay

9/12—Summer Race—Location TBA

10/17—10/18 Pumpkin Cup

Stay tuned for further information!

Club Website:

<http://www.ntwr.org>

Support Your Club

Remember to renew your membership at our website: NTWR.ORG or at TSC or in person at Mariner Sails to stay informed of upcoming events.

FINS 101

By Ken Merten

I don't think I have written about fins before, probably because I have been somewhat of a skeptic for a long time. However, board performance most definitely is enhanced with the proper fin. The reason I have been a skeptic is related to the word "enhanced". How does one know that their board needs enhanced performance? Well, if you are a beginner or an intermediate sailor, you may not be able to tell the difference between a good fin and a bad fin. You basically just need something at the back of the board to keep it from sailing sideways. More advanced sailors should be able to recognize the benefits of a quality fin, and may find that the investment is worthwhile.

Here are some basic principals -

1. Long fins (big) - must be proportional to the tail width of the board. Wide boards require big fins if you want good upwind performance as well as a quicker planing response (a fin that is too small will handicap upwind performance and may "spin out" more easily). Sail size also plays a role too, which pretty much parallels the concept of big sail = big fin.
2. Short fins (small) - must be proportional to the tail wind of the board. Narrow boards necessitate small fins for control and speed (a fin that is too big will cause the board to "turtle" or turn over if there is enough speed (they act like a plane wing and will try to fly up to the surface of the water).
3. Thicker foils - provide better lift & quicker planing (power), but create more drag and are slower.
4. Thinner foils - opposite of the above.
5. Soft fins (more flexible) promote earlier planing, but can pose control problems with too much speed (almost all fins will flex or bend a little while under way if the board is moving fast enough and there is enough pressure on the fin from the sailor's back foot). Soft fins typically are the bigger / longer fins for large light wind free ride or slalom boards and Formula boards.
6. Stiff fins (less flexible) - opposite of the above. To give you a sense of how far fin offerings can go, Debouchet, a French manufacturer of custom slalom and Formula fins offers several styles of 70 cm Formula fins with flex choices of S, S+, M-, M, M+, and H (soft, medium or hard, + & -). They also come in various "rake" angles too, which makes the fin selection process pretty confusing. Basically, you just ask the experts. I own a Debouchet: R13 70 M, with a +6 rake.
7. Fins that sweep back or are curved improve turning, but don't point as well as more vertical fins (bump and jump and wave boards).

Fins that are more vertical enhance pointing ability and speed. (Formula & slalom boards).

Fin spin out (cavitation) is something that everyone hates. If you haven't experienced it yet, you will at some point. If you put too much back foot pressure on your fin (pushing sideways) or if you are bumping over chop at speed, it's possible for air to get sucked down to the upwind side of the fin, producing a negative pressure, which causes it to slide side ways as if you didn't have a fin on the board at all. This can happen with any fin, but some designs are a more susceptible to spin out than others. There is no way to know in advance which fin will or will not spin out, it's just trial an error. All fins will spin out at some point with enough back foot pressure. I just purchased a new fin for my new slalom board even though it came with two "good fins". The new fin just doesn't spin out like the others, plus it feels faster and offers greater control.

Top of the fins are costly and can run between \$200 and \$400. One custom fin builder in Virginia, Dave Kashy is making Formula fins for \$800 and they are selling for double that on the secondary market. These are fins that are used by the pros and the top amateurs for Formula and slalom racing. If you are a committed racer, there is little reason to go this route. There are plenty of good fins below \$200 and some occasional great deals at swap meets. You just need to know what you're looking for. It's not unusual for pros to have "quivers" of fins for the same board, which are changed out as wind and water conditions change.

The best way to become educated about fins is to ask questions at Mariner, talk to other sailors on the beach, or visit the various forums hosted by Starboard, Maui Sails Gaastra Sails, Neil Prude Sails, etc.

I haven't mentioned anything about construction methods or materials, which can get complex. I will try and cover all these in another newsletter.

Pay for your 2009 Membership Online

Breaking News: The club steps more into the electronic age with online payments...

This should make it more convenient for you and for Roberta. All you have to do is go to our registration page at <http://ntwrmembership.eventbrite.com/> and enter your information. All major credit cards and PayPal are accepted. Also, you do not have to create an EventBrite account by entering a password; this is optional, but would save you time when you sign up for later events.

There will be new registration pages for all of the club races and Learn To Windsurf classes.

So if you haven't renewed your membership yet, now is a great time since you're online already (unless your reading this on paper).

