



## IN THE BREEZE

May/June 2009

### Upcoming Events

#### Youth Sailing Camp Windsurfing Opportunity

Hi sailors! DCYC hosts a youth sailing camp from June 22<sup>nd</sup> thru June 26<sup>th</sup>. They have suggested that we come out for one of those days and introduce their young sailors to the sport of WIND-SURFING. I think it could be a good opportunity to grow some new windsurfers.

I am tentatively suggesting that we go out on Wed. the 24<sup>th</sup> with Mariner's School trailer and show these youngsters a little about windsurfing. If you are interested in participating please contact Aris by e-mail [aris@mariner-sails.com](mailto:aris@mariner-sails.com) or phone 972-241-1498. We have not committed to being involved or to the date so any feedback will be appreciated.

On another note, I have decided to get a little more casual on our Wednesday Evening Sailing program for the clubs young sailors. Starting

June 3<sup>rd</sup>, we will have our gear available on Wednesday evenings from 6-8pm. It will be available for use, on loan, by club member's children under the supervision of their parents. Parents will be responsible for rigging and loading the gear for their kids. Of course, I think the kids should be involved in rigging and gear care whenever possible. If any of you are interested in offering something more structured, please feel free to let me know and I will be happy to provide gear for your effort!

Bruce and I are happy to offer instructional tips during these times. This will not be a full blown lesson program. You may find us "On the Water" honing OUR sailing skills when you arrive, in that case the trailer will be open and available for your use. Please check the NTWR.org site for Learn to Windsurf opportunities thru the season. Our goal will be to offer your youngster the opportunity to improve their sailing skills

while offering new young windsurfing family sailors the equipment to give it a try!

I'll see you on the Water!  
Aris

#### Don't Miss any of These

The NTWR Summer Solstice Party will be Saturday 06/20 beginning at 4:00 at Windsurf Bay Park. Before the party we will have a practice day for our LTW students from the previous week. That starts at noon. More details to follow.

If the 06/13 LTW is called off because of weather we will use 06/20 as a make up date.

Please plan to attend our club meeting on 05/19 at Mariner Sails at 7:00. We have some other activities to plan as well.

Bruce

#### "GET ACTIVE IN YOUR CLUB TODAY"

##### UPCOMING EVENTS:

6/6/09—LTW—Windsurf 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.

## The US OPEN

By Ken Merten

Once again, I made the drive to Corpus for my 21<sup>st</sup> consecutive year at the Open. I told myself that I would not go if it was going to be too windy, so I carefully watched the forecast and decided to go when it looked like it would be blowing 19 – 21 mph for the four days of the event.

Epic Sports bought the rights to the Open two years ago, but decided to cancel the event one week before it started. However, Chad Allen from Corpus put on the event anyway using the Corpus Christi Yacht club as home base. A great deal since they hosted free finger food and beer every evening as well as providing the race direction and committee boats. The event also included kiteboard course racing, with windsurfing scheduled between 10:00 am and 1:00 pm and the kiteboarding after 1:00.

The idea was for formula to race in the lighter morning winds with the kites in the afternoon, sharing the same upwind / downwind course.

So much for the forecasting, it was blowing 30 when Mike Blann and I arrived for registration and some sailing on Tuesday afternoon. I went out on my bump and jump board and a 4.5, avoiding getting killed on my formula gear.

Then the forecast was updated to 20 – 30 mph winds for the next four days. I know that a few Dallas sailors have experienced the “voodoo” chop in the bay, so you know what 3’ – 5’ chop is like on a formula board. It’s survival for many of us and not much fun. The event was again held at McGee beach, between the Holiday Inn and the Marina on a big sand beach. Adjacent was a nice grass rigging area, but a bit of a walk across the road, down the seawall steps and across the beach.

13 were registered for the racing, and all but Chad Allen were on the water (he got stuck running around making sure that things went off well). We had 11 formula races over the four mornings, with winds in the 20 – 30 mph range most of the time. Mike Blann and I only went out when the winds were below 25 mph. As a result, I only raced in 5 of the 11 races, choosing to stay on the beach when things got out of hand. John Jay Earnst took first, Enes Yilmazer took second (a pro sailor from Turkey, going to Texas A&M Corpus) and Guy Miller third.

Speed trials were scheduled the afternoon of the first two days. Chip Ducrest “CC-19” hosted the trials behind the breakwater in the harbor. He provided new Doppler GPS units that were capable of averaging top speeds over a 10 second time period. Jon Jay from Houston took top honors with a run of 33.27 knots (38.2 mph). Second was Enes (32.61 knots) and Chad Allen third with 31.62 knots. We only got two runs and that was it. Yours truly managed 29.66 knots, using a 6.6 sail and an iSonic 111. Winds were blowing 25-30.

Downwind slalom racing was scheduled on Friday afternoon as the winds gusted to over 40 at the airport. Only four brave souls gave it a try with Jon Jay in first, Guy second and Enes third.

It was essentially a Texas event with only John Van Savage (JV1) from out of the state (Louisiana). Also participating was Kirk Simmons (TXN), Tim Marvin (TM-1), Brian Shepherd (1F), Charles Allen (US 56) & Chip Ducrest (CC -19).

Nice trophies were presented to the top three in each event, plus a drawing was held for additional prizes. Chip won a Maui Sails TR-4 7.6, John won a pile of Maui Sails t-shirts and Mike Blann won a week’s stay on Maui with the Prichard brothers with free use of their equipment and a 2-hour lesson. Mike also won the Sportsmanship award, just because he is such a good guy. I think he was glad that he stayed for the entire event.

It was a well run and fun event, although lighter winds would have allowed more time on the water.

The Maui Sails web site has some photos and a write up ([mauisails.com](http://mauisails.com)).

## Stuff Happens

By Ken Merten

Over my last 25 years of windsurfing, I have found myself in a variety of predicaments on the water. None turned out to be too serious (broken booms, broken masts, lost fins, board / sail separations, no up-haul, broken outhaul line, broken harness lines, broken harness hook, ripped sails, broken foot straps, crunched board, broken mast extension, sudden storms, lightning, high winds, and no wind).

I managed self rescues in every situation except for three boat rides. Two were for sudden high winds during races where sailing home was not possible, and the other occasion was a race where the wind died to 0 and it was a long swim to shore. A boater offered a ride and I accepted.

All of the other situations were resolved by me, either through ingenuity, swimming or walking. The reality is that there is a direct correlation between the amount of time you spend on the water and the number of predicaments you encounter. STUFF HAPPENS, so it's best to plan ahead and consider your options because it WILL happen. I covered some of this in a previous article called Safe Sailing & Self Rescue, so I won't repeat all of it again.

However, there is one basic rule to sail by, especially if you sail alone or around people that may not recognize that you have a problem. The rule says "What will I do if I breakdown in the middle of the lake?" Before you head out, think about: Wind direction (what shore line will I drift to if I break down?). Water temperature (am I going to die of hypothermia if I have to swim or float for an hour or two?). Air temperature (same deal as water temperature). Wind speed / wave action (can I hang on to my rig and not get beat to death for an hour or two?). Traffic (will there be passing boat traffic that I can flag down if I need help?). This rule is especially important if you are sailing at a new site or you are experiencing a new wind direction at your normal sailing site. A year ago on a very windy (north wind) and cold spring day on Lake Grapevine, a local lady sailor was overcome by the wind and waves and was drifting straight for the dam. Making a landing on the large rocks in waves up to 3' would have been pretty risky at best. As I recall, the concerned spouse sailed down to the distressed sailor and helped her to shore before she reached the rocks of the dam. This wasn't a breakdown, but a significant increase in the wind that caught all of us by surprise.

Most of us can head off some of the STUFF if we pay attention to our gear and surroundings. I don't check my equipment as often or as thoroughly as I should and possibly could have prevented some of the failures that I mentioned above. Just a few weeks ago I encountered an example of this very thing. I was at Ray Hubbard on my short board and a 5.0 sail in 20-30 mph winds. While reaching away from shore, my harness line let go and I had to resort to arms only. It took about 3 seconds to consider my option, which was to jibe and head back to shore using the one remaining harness line. The problem – a knot came untied. A simple thing, but when I checked the other knots I found a second one near failure too. If I had checked before going out, I could have prevented the problem.

Always keep an eye on your windsurfing buddies. If someone is having a problem, do everything you can to assist. You will want them to return the favor one day.

Not only does STUFF happen on the water, but from my experience, the beach can be somewhat of a risky place as well. The vast majority of my windsurfing injuries have been on the beach, including many bumps, bruises, scrapes, cuts and strains. While I have experienced some injuries on the water, they have pretty much been same type of things I just mentioned but none were so incapacitating as to keep me from sailing back to shore.

Outside of hypothermia, I think the greatest risk that most of us may encounter would be a hard bump on the head and unconsciousness. Although I don't recall hearing of this actually happening to anyone, wearing a helmet is something to consider. I wear one when on my slalom or bump and jump boards, but not on my formula board. It's rare that I get tossed off the big board, but it does happen on the smaller ones from time to time. One real threat is getting clobbered by your own mast, and another is colliding with another sailor or a passing jet-ski or boat. Thank God no one windsurfs while talking on a cell phone, but you never know when a passing boater may be texting a friend so keep an eye out.

Have fun out there, be prepared, and be safe!

