

# Humble Beginnings for AYC's Annual Birthday Regatta

By Joe Motil, Vice Commodore

Looking back to past birthday regattas and the people involved in them paints a picture of humble beginnings. I contacted some former club champions Dan Schott (1989) and Martin Lorch (1988/2009) to ask them what they remembered about the birthday regattas back in the 80's.

The venue then was Lake Pleasant as it is today but these were the days before the New Waddle Dam raised the water level to its current configuration. A dirt road provided access to the lake that is today is now restricted access. You pass by it when you drive below the dam to cross to the west side entrance.

The race was a much simpler affair than today's event, yet the number of boats registered was significant, around the 60-boat range. The fleets represented in the early days were Lido, Thistle, Interlake, Catalina 22, M-Scow, Santana 20, and PHRF spin and non-spin fleets.

Dan said, "They used to draw sailors up from Southern Arizona who would participate in the event."

The race course was placed in the lower portion of the lake, simply because that was where the water was deepest!

The dinner was either a pot luck affair or was held in the parking lot of the Overbeck concession at the base of the old dam. Entrance fees for daily access in those days ranged from 25 cents to \$1.00. Martin says, "When they decided to raise the price to \$2.00, well everyone was up in arms over the high cost of lake access!"

One of the common themes that comes through over the years is that the Birthday Regatta represents a celebration, (this year a celebration of 50 years of sailing in Arizona) by people who each year come together to demonstrate their passion for the sport of sailing and sailboat racing, and share with each other the fun of this great tradition.

*"Everyone was up in arms over the high cost of lake access!"*

## Upcoming:

*January 2010*

*3 TTL Race & RC Training*

*5 AYC BoD Meeting*

*10 TTL Race & RC Training*

*12 Membership Meeting*

*15-17 Leukemia Cup and*

*Birthday Regatta*

*24 TTL Race & Race Training*

*30-31 LP Race*

# Figuring Out “Ollie,” Our Automated Race Starting Gadget: Two Rockers and a Toggle

*The following is an excerpt from an e-mail discussion regarding the complexities that race committee members some times face when taking the initiative to volunteer. This shows the persistence of the race committee and its dedication to providing great race management. Thought you might enjoy it. —Ed*

**N**ot to take anything away from Phil Newell (who, by the way, volunteered to come out for no other reason than his good nature and also the Viper ride I promised Laurent would provide...), but figuring out the PRO timer was a collaborative effort. First, a little history:

We tried using it on Saturday, and it wanted to do three minute starts. Unable to figure out the myriad (Really? —Ed) of switches and dials (see attached picture), under tremendous pressure, and lacking sufficient beer, we decided to do the timing manually. Except for one mistake, it went rather well.

One of the first commands Laurent gave Sunday morning was “you guys figure out the timer.” Phil Newell took the initiative and started reading the manual. I’m sure something in the manual prompted him to ask “What is that switch?” referring to the toggle above the after-market placard with words and letters and stuff on it.

“I dunno,” I replied, thinking to myself “what do RDR, EIU, CNL, and these other acronyms/abbreviations mean?” Looking at the toggle relative to the placard, I figured out that the placard was to be read TOP TO BOTTOM, not left to right. So I asked, to no one in particular, “what do RECALL, DINGHY, and RULE26 mean?” Dennis chimed in “Rule 26 is a five minute start.” So, we flipped the toggle to RULE26, started the timer, and all was good.

Please note the attached picture shows the timer configuration panels in the correct configuration for a five minute start. Perhaps we should print this picture and put it in the football?

Thank you everyone for helping, and for a fun weekend



## The All-Knowing Ollie

If you’re confronted with this puzzling panel, all you need to know is that it’s rule 26 and you trigger the red rocker switch ten seconds before you want the five-minute start sequence to begin. After that Ollie keeps time, blows the horn, beeps warnings for you to prepare to flip boards and move flags and hands you a cookie. Ollie keeps perfect time and never blows a short horn when a long one is called for.

We have David Rawstrom to thank for this marvelous instrument. He found it, bought it, and mounted it on the new RC boat in the face of some doubters on the board. Now we all love Ollie.

# Home-Brew Race Marks for TTL

By Joe Motil, Chief Mark Maker

**A**nyone familiar with sailing and racing at Tempe Town Lake knows about the fluky wind conditions, so for the last year we've added drop marks to the fixed lake marks that we've used since day one.

Rather than buy marks, I decided to see if I could build something, beginning with a prototype built of swimming pool foam "noodles." Each was built with 14 pool noodles lashed together with nylon rope and large zip ties. The pendulum weight required to stand the bundle up was surprisingly heavy: two cement blocks lashed together and secured to the bottom end. Though the noodle marks worked, they were very heavy to put in and take out of the water and place on the deck of the safety boat, which discouraged moving the marks to chase TTL's famous shifting wind.

So onto generation two. New target: marks that will stand up and are light enough to be lifted on or off the safety boat.

Thanks to Peter Schweitzer's generous donation of eight-inch PVC pipe, the mark in the picture began to take shape. The pipe and half a boat fender (the suggestion of Rube Goldberg himself, David Rawstrom), circled by a stabilizing inner tube, made the pipe float vertically.

The key to the design is the weight used to cause the pipe to float upright: sand. The sand sits in the bottom end to keep it upright, but also helps keep it from rolling on deck when carried on the RC boat.

The final piece is the anchoring weight secured to the bottom end of the fender to hold the floating mark in position. Result: the new mark is much lighter than the Mark I version, which should make placing them and moving them simple.

On Sunday, January 10, the new marks, painted in orange and bright green, made their debut on Tempe Town Lake. They floated. They were vertical. They were easy to see. And the RC crew reported they were a snap to deploy and retrieve!

## *Pirate Latitudes: Action-Filled Page-Turner*

By Katherine Motil

Ahoy, mates! Here's a good read to keep you out of the doldrums – *Pirate Latitudes* by Michael Crichton. Step back to the days of privateers, rum running and Spanish galleons loaded with gold and silver, when England and Spain kept a wary eye on each other's possessions in the New World.

Plenty of action, interesting historical details and a likable ruffian for its hero, *Pirate Latitudes* kept me turning pages. If you liked the "Pirates of the Caribbean" movies you'll enjoy this easy read. Take it along on your next sea voyage.



*The humble-looking Mark II lake mark, since brightly painted and deployed for Tempe Town Lake racing.*

# The Bitter End: Goodbye *Windshift*

By Al & Sandy Lehman

The dictionary defines the bitter end as the conclusion of a situation. In our case it is the end of our cruising lifestyle and boat ownership. *Windshift* the trawler has been sold.

An old saying goes “the two happiest days of a man’s life are the day he purchases a boat and the day he sells it.” Certainly we were happy when we purchased the trawler, but selling the boat is bittersweet. We have many happy memories of our time with it, but the excitement of new places and people, watching wildlife, fishing, crabbing and prawning no longer outweigh the discomforts and inconveniences of living on a boat for extended periods of time.

We’ve been talking about selling her for about two years. At the end of the season in 2009 we made our decision to sell and listed the boat with a broker. Just before Christmas we accepted an offer. The survey and sea trial were Monday, January 4, and after adjustments for items found during the survey we reached an agreement Monday evening. The actual closing was Friday, January 8 and the new owners have taken possession.

The memories and experiences of boating will be told many times to friends over a beer or two, and will last a lifetime. We have done things that most people only dream about. As *Windshift* motors over the horizon with a new owner at her helm we turn inland and look for a new dream to follow. I guess we are no longer “boat bums.”

## Club Officers and Contacts

Commodore	<a href="#">Greg Jackson</a>
Vice Commodore	<a href="#">Joe Motil</a>
Rear Commodore	<a href="#">Bryan Dunham</a>
AYC Racing Fleet Captain	<a href="#">Skip Kempff</a>
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