
❖ CR 914 NEWS ❖

Issue 41

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Howie McMichael Photo

Larchmont Model Yacht Club's 8th Spring Invitational was the best yet

By Buttons Padin

On the last weekend of April, forty radio controlled model boat sailors converged on Larchmont Yacht Club for what has become arguably the biggest and best single-class model boat event in the country – The Larchmont Model Yacht Club's Spring Invitational. In addition to the usual suspects arriving from Annapolis, Marblehead, Boston and Essex, we had sailors come in from Illinois, Florida, New Jersey, Ohio and Missouri. Combined with our local sailors, this was quite

a fleet.

Starting with practice races Friday afternoon, the event committee knew they were in for a wild weekend as the winds blew strongly out of the east. Saturday morning's forecast of 25-30 knot breezes unfortunately came true.

This event is raced as a three-part regatta. The fleet was first divided into four even divisions, each comprised of a combination of skill levels. Following the tradi-

tional canon shot signaling the harbor start, the first two divisions loaded into launches to be taken to the pair of racing docks in the middle of the harbor. This year the docks were moved further east into the harbor to insure the shoreline wouldn't hinder the winds should they come from the west. Not to worry. As the two course circles were set, the wind piped a steady 20 knots from the east with puffs above 25.

(Continued on page 4)

Inside This Issue

Larchmont Spring Regatta	1
Cow Pond Regatta Report	3
RADIO TROUBLESHOOTING	7
NiMH Batteries Improved	7
Crystals Are Not Created Equal	7
Pertinent Websites	7
New Owners	8
Region 1 Regatta Report	8
Antenna on Mast Doesn't Work	9
Transmitter Fix	9
Radio Quickly Repaired	9
Another Cause of Interference	9
"A Treatise is on the Importance of Smoke"	10
23-Channel Conundrum	10
CR 914 Registration and AMYA Membership Form	11

Class Secretary's Report

New Class Secretary

There has been no change since the last NEWS.

Registrations

This month there are over 1160 boats registered. About 300 copies of the NEWS will be distributed this month. New owners totaled 20 since last issue.

ALWAYS LOOKING FOR GOOD PHOTOS

Action photos, people shots and images that show the local sailing venue are the kind of things that are good. A becalmed boat is not of much interest.

1. Send 4x6 color photo prints, or
2. JPEG digital photos at a file size of 500 KB or more are best but smaller files are often acceptable.

Good sailing,

Chuck Winder

2004 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Norfolk Yacht and Country Club (John Atwood) reported that they can't host the 2004 CR-914 Nationals.

At this time it is probable that there will be no 2004 nationals unless a fleet offers to be the host at this late date.

Chuck Winder

CMYC Midwest CR Racing Circuit

The Cincinnati Model Yacht Club invites CR 914 sailors to our first annual CMYC Midwest CR Racing Circuit regatta. It will be in West Chester, Ohio (north of Cincinnati) on Saturday and Sunday, August 28-29, 2004. This event is part of the Midwest CR-914 Racing Circuit and will be our first Club Championship regatta.

The new Midwest CR Racing Circuit, consists of a series of regattas that will be hosted by CR 914 fleets around our area.

There will be no weighing or measuring, no certified judges, no banquet or other "formal" meals. We are still deciding if there will be a small registration fee to cover drinks, onsite-lunch and trophies.

Our website will soon have detailed information. Registration will be on a first-come first-serve basis.

Send us a guess about how likely it is that you will be able to race with us that weekend (give us your name, hometown, and indicate "definite," "probable" or "possible").

We look forward to seeing you in August!

Pablo Godel
Cincinnati Model Yacht Club
<http://www.regatta1.com/cmcy/>
info@regatta1.com

Join AMYA

Now is the time to join or renew your AMYA membership. Most of you joined when membership expired in December. Use the AMYA application form on the last page of this NEWS. Or call Michelle at 888-237-9524. Make sure you tell her that you have a CR 914 and the sail number.

What you read in NEWS is, for the most part, what your fleet representative has sent to me. If you see no mention of the activities of your fleet, send me some news, Editor



Clovelly's Fifth Annual Cow Pond Regatta

Saturday, April 10, 2004
 At the Cow Pond, Clovelly Farm,
 Chestertown, MD.
 By Amy Hitt

We had a great day with beautiful breezes and yes, 19 registered boats. It started with a few clouds and turned into a glorious sunny day. Many people just came to see the event, have a picnic, or watch the egg hunt.

We got lucky with the channels. Had Dave Ramos not been there, I'm not sure what we would have done. Everyone came with their own channels and we had

to switch out 3 because of overlapping.

In the future assigning channels would probably be a good idea, although there were several newcomers to the group who had no idea how to switch them out. Again, kudos to Dave for his able assistance and incredible attitude.

Overall, it was a fantastic day. During one of the final races, a single goose flew into the pond — about 2 feet over the masts of the fleet. It looked quite surprised to see that his home had been overtaken by a bunch of boats and a crowd of people with antennas sticking out of their chests. The spring calves, too, were quite curious as they leaned against the fence trying to figure out why they had been moved out of their pasture.

Final results (top 10 only):

1. Dave Ramos (#238), Annapolis, MD
2. Bucky Buchanan (#833), Annapolis
3. Steve Mack (#309), Annapolis
4. Scott Graf (#1085), Annapolis
5. David Hitt (#315), Annapolis
6. John Clarke, Annapolis
7. Peter Gibbons-Neff, Jr. (#1152), Philadelphia, PA
8. Henry Colie, New Jersey
9. Runny Colie, New Jersey
10. Tony Gibbons-Neff (#259), Chestertown, MD



Michael Wagner Photos

A woman walked into the kitchen to find her husband stalking around with a fly swatter.
"What are you doing?" She asked.
"Hunting Flies" He responded.
"Oh. Killing any?" She asked.
"Yep, 3 males, 2 Females," he replied. Intrigued, she asked.
"How can you tell?"
He responded, "3 were on a beer can, 2 were on the phone."

(Continued from page 1)

CR-914's deliver pretty high performance sailing characteristics in winds up to 15 – 18 knots; but in conditions beyond that, the sailing gets wild and wooly as these sleek models plane downwind... and often submarine...and accelerate like rockets.

Knowing the winds would be heavy, everyone set-up their boats for heavy weather. During the six-race Preliminary Round races, it was common to see boats knocked-down going up wind or submerging when running. This quickly separated the stronger sailors from the less experienced ones. There were a slew of boat breakdowns throughout the day as rigs failed, electronics got wet or boats ran afoul of each other. Even with bow bumpers, one boat got holed in one of the very first races.



Sailors not used to survival conditions lost out to Mother Nature.

After six Preliminary races, allowing for one throw-out, the top half of each division moved up in the qualifications ladder and the bottom half down. These resorted divisions then returned to the racecourses for the six-race Qualification Round. The wind had not abated; in fact, the puffs after lunch were even harsher than the morning's. When this round was completed, the fleet again was sorted whereby the top ten sailors made up the Championship Division, and so forth.

There has been significant debate over the years with regard to LMYC's dual qualification system. No, you don't get to sail with everyone in the event (and had all 48 entrants shown-up, that would never have happened anyways). What this qualification system does, however, is allow you to sail more races against people of your own skill level rather than always having the big guns working over the less experienced sailors. It is really gratifying to see how the level of competition increases throughout Saturday's rounds as evenly matched sailors find

their own levels and fight it out for their own trophies.

Some interesting comments from the first two rounds:

- Some sailors' boats that had not been sailed regularly or recently tended to have more problems than heavily campaigned ones. Watertight integrity was critical as hatches were taped, batteries and receivers were put inside balloons, and every conceivable trick was used to keep the boats operating.
- Having the mast forward and the jib over-trimmed in this blow helped keep the bow down in puffs while helping offset leeward helm.
- Sailors not used to survival conditions lost out to Mother Nature
- Having offset marks at the both windward and leeward marks allowed adequate separation between up and down wind boats...avoiding collisions
- Avoiding contact with other boats, regardless if you had right-of-way, proved faster in the long run.
- Having multiple weather and leeward marks pre-set in the water accommodated osculating winds and optimized racing.
- Having multiple judges on each float allowed the committee to handle all situations (not one protest was submitted for hearing after the total of 128 races sailed by four divisions).

On that note, the true personality of this class, and this event, was demonstrated over and over again throughout both days. From the very beginning of racing Saturday morning, boats started to have problems. People literally fell over one another to help fix a damaged boat. Goosenecks being fabricated on the racing floats. Electronics being swapped out. Back-up boats being loaned. Servos, transmitters and batteries moving back and forth between competitors. It was an extremely motivating scene for the observer who could take the time to step back and digest what was going on...and a true commentary on the level of commodity this regatta has generated over the years.

The Preliminary Round took about two hours to complete and the same was true for the Qualification Round. At about two in the afternoon, therefore, each of the finals divisions hit the water again and got in four races towards their ultimate results. The wind had eased a touch to the point that the starting flags were no longer being blown over into the water...but it was still a chilly day for the judges and race committees on the docks.

Let's stop here and recognize the role our event volunteers played in the success of this event. Yes, 48 sailors regis-

tered to come but, as the situation played out, only 40 arrived to compete. Regardless, LMYC had a total of 36 event volunteers judging, starting, recording, managing, scoring, registering, launching and setting marks

Manning (and womaning) the docks were our regular and experienced race committee members. With the winds as shifty as they were both days, and with boats often sailing off on their own, the crash boat crews were kept busy.

But there were three people without whom the event wouldn't have run smoothly. Pat Guerin, back for his 6th or 7th time (who can remember back that far) runs the shore-side of the event. Pat makes sure all the sailors are in the launches on time to get to the course, he times the meals, oversees communications and generally keeps the event on schedule. Jaye Kavs, who, with husband Sasha has created the mother of all scoring programs, dutifully ran the scoring of the event whereby racers not only knew their standings, but also what their next division would be and what channels they would sail on. She's absolutely the

Hank Buchanan distinguished himself ...when he forgot to close his hatch...and it almost sank.

best! Finally, Dave Lynn again served as the keeper of the crystals. With loads of boats, AM and FM systems, four divisions split three times, Dave, working with Jaye, managed to keep everyone on channel, on track and on the water.

Thanks to all these volunteers and the staff of the Club.

Oh, yeah, back to the racing. Saturday took its toll on a number of the sailors. Two teenagers from New Jersey, Parker Wells and his cousin Phil, found that the heavy winds were just too much for them. Runyon Collie, from southern NJ, a true veteran sailor, showed that age has wisdom and choose not to try to get to and from the docks with his strikingly

beautiful new boat, and had his grown son sail it for him. And Cottage Park's (Boston) Mike Gahan found his boat problems incurable. As such, these sailors passed on Sunday's sailing.

On Saturday night, a good time was had by all. The Italian buffet, the grog barrel, beer and wine made the seventy partygoers more than happy. LMYC Commodore Buttons Padin made some of his usually entertaining comments and made all feel welcome within this extended LMYC family.

Sunday morning came way too soon for many sailors, but racing began at 9:30 and went through two in the afternoon. The winds had calmed a bit having shifted to the northwest. While still puffy, the sailing on relatively smooth water (compared to Saturday's rollers) was a delight. Each division sailed two heats of six races and then a final, third heat of four. That brought the regatta total to 32 races for every boat and 20 for the finals. All in all, a good test of skill, boat handling, tactics and patience,

Championship Division

In the end, it was long time LMYC friend, Dave Ramos from Annapolis, who won the Championship Division, taking top honors for the second consecutive years. In second was Darren Bolton, an Australian here via Chicago, followed by Chuck Luscomb from Essex. Some of LMYC's big guns couldn't sail that weekend so the champion-

Division A - Blue

Place	Name	Home Port	Score
1	Ramos, Dave	Annapolis, MD	27
2	Bolton, Darren	Chicago, IL	37
3	Luscomb, Chuck	Essex, CT	64
4	Buchanan, Bucky	Annapolis, MD	73
5	Schutz, Harcourt	Essex, CT	77
6	Martin, Dick	Columbia, MO	82
7	Godel, Pablo	Cincinnati, OH	94
8	Kavs, Sasha	Marblehead, MA	113
9	Buchanan, Hank	LMYC	117

Division B - Green

1	Freeland, Ernie	Annapolis, MD	33
2	Olsson, Eric	LMYC	48
3	Padin, Buttons	LMYC	50
4	Horan, Stan	Essex, CT	75
5	Fallon, John	LMYC	78
6	Givens, Ben	Essex, CT	84
7	Spencer, Ted	LMYC	107
8	Campanelli, Rocco	LMYC	110

Division C - Red

1	Jobson, Brian	Wolcott, CT	19
2	Wullschlegger, Sears	LMYC	53
3	Cichowski, Francis	Southington, CT	54
4	Fontanella, Joe	LMYC	67
5	Lynn, Dave	LMYC	74
6	Blanton, Randy	Old Saybrook, CT	78
7	Heath, Gary	Westbrook, CT	97
8	Hodgson, John	LMYC	103

Division D - Yellow

1	Lynn, Doug	LMYC	35
2	Benedict, Mark	LMYC	37
3	Beck, Rick	LMYC	40
4	Clark, Steve	Old Saybrook, CT	62
5	Langone, Nick	LMYC	73
6	Croxall, Julian	New York, NY	108
7	Wey, Tom	LMYC	146

ship division was dominated by out-of-towners. However, LMYC's Hank Buchanan did distinguish himself in the final heat of the Championship Division when he forgot to close the hatch cover on his boat before launching it and it almost sank. Thanks to crash boat drivers Bob Purcell and John Irving for being on the spot to retrieve the boat.

Division B racing was pretty hotly contested as Eric Olsson came out of the blocks with a trio of bullets. Unfortunately for Eric, he ran into some significant electronic troubles mid-Sunday which allowed Ernie Freeland to sting together some

(Continued on page 6)



Harcourt Schutz Photo

Hank Buchanan installed the drain plug but didn't use the hatch cover? Jeez!

(Continued from page 5)

strong finishes and take a commanding lead. In the end, Ernie enjoyed a 15-point cushion and Eric only beat-out Buttons Padin by two points. Having sailed in this group, this reporter can confirm that a good time was had by all. Stan (the Man) Horan (the Man – OK, it was funny on the water!) kept everyone chuckling, John Fallon maintained his sense of humor despite his boat's decided lack of interest in behaving, Ben Givens learned that in matched fleets everyone (including Ben) can win one once in a while, and Ted Spencer virtually rewired his boat six times throughout the course of the racing. Rocco Campanelli's only trouble was that, by not staying on the float during the A Division's last heat with everyone else, he went ashore and missed the entire last heat. (More on that later).

Division C had its own ringer. Brian Jobson missed the cut for the A or B divisions by having breakdowns in the earlier

rounds. While Brian had his way with his division, there was pretty tight sailing among the others. Sears Wullschleger was in the money during the first 10 or so races. Then his trim-servo turning block exploded. Rushing into shore, he had two options. Go home to a warm fire...or get it fixed. The LMYC ER team performed CPR on Sears' boat and, two races later, he was back in the water finishing with top-three places for the rest of the event. This allowed him to nip Essex's Francis Cichowski by a single point for second and third, respectively. The rest of this division shared its ups and down including Randy Blanton and Gary Heath who traveled from Florida for this event (they ranked high on the list for "what do you mean you'll drive/fly a thousand miles to race one of these things?"). To show how balanced this racing was (Brian aside), John Hodgson

took the gun for the last race and we all figured it was time to go home! ☺

Division D was taken by Doug Lynn. Doug, a skilled dinghy and big boat sailor, has a Marblehead he races infrequently but, more importantly, has helped judge this event a load of times in the past. This year Doug decided to compete using a borrowed boat. Borrowed boats aren't always fast but Doug did manage to nip Essex's Mark Benedict by two points to take the D Division. There was close sailing in this smaller fleet (most of the Sunday no-shows qualified in this division and Tom Wey only sailed Sunday). Rick

Beck FINALLY got his new boat finished and took home third place just five points off the lead. And nobody had more fun than Steve Clark, sailing his way around the harbor, and Nick Langone when he got to race in front of his daughter the Judge.

Other Awards

There were three other awards given this year. First, the LMYC Low Gross award (a mounted golf club) goes to the sailor whose performance in this event most indicated a penchant for shore-side activities! This year there was an UNPRECEDENTED tie! Hank Buchanan was pretty much hands-down favorite to win after sinking his boat...but Rocco's missing his last heat of races earned him a place on the trophy as the 2004 co-winner. The LMYC Challenge Cup, sailed between 4-boat teams between MYC's was taken by the CBMRA for the second year in a row. Dave Ramos, "loaner" Darrin Bolton (from Chicago, Maryland) and Bucky Buchanan were all in the first division...and Ernie Freeland walked away with B. This group showed their stuff, especially in the winds we faced both days.

And while the bragging rights of the Challenge Cup and the Low Gross Awards are fun, the most valuable prize is the Hugh B. Fletcher trophy presented by Hugh's parents to the sailor the competitors vote as having most highly reflected the positive, sharing and sportsmanlike characteristics Hugh so often displayed as he sailed with us over the years. This year, the fleet voted to present this award to Dave Ramos. Forget about the fact that Dave out-sailed the fleet, when ashore or on the racing docks, Dave spent as much time fixing or tuning boats as he did working on his own. And it was Dave's boat that was holed in virtually the very first race and spent the rest of the regatta with a tape band aid on its topsides. Hugh always got a big kick out of racing against Big Dave and we're all sure Hugh shared the fleet's appreciation of Dave contribution to the regatta's success this year.

In the end prizes were given out, the keg was drained, the last of the chili consumed, boats and gear packed away and sailors headed home after a hard weekend of sailing. While we had a total of 40 sailors, there were 8 sailors who had to pull out at

Hospitality is making your guests feel at home, even if you wish they were.

the last minute or had conflicts. It is our intention to announce the date of the 2005 Spring Invitational in the next two months...so there will be no more excuses for people getting sick and using that as a reason for missing one of the best times anyone can have with a model sailboat...or any sailboat for that matter.

For photos of the event, visit www.LarchmontYC.org and click on One Design Fleets / Model Boats.

See you all next year,

Buttons Padin

NiMH Batteries Continue to Improve

Eight Duracell Accu AA cells purchased at a local Wal-Mart cost ~\$18 (\$2.25 each)! The label capacity was 2050 mAh! The measured capacity was 2057 mAh! There were other brands labeled as high as 2300 mAh.

There was also a package of 4 cells including a charger for only ~\$10.

The above Duracell batteries give Tx life of 12 hours (using the stock radio). Life in the boat would be ~7 hours. In 1995 we used NiCd batteries that would last about ~3.5 hours in the Tx and only 2 hours in the boat.

In 1997 NiMH capacities were 1000-1200 and cost ~\$5 each. Tested capacity was often less than labeled capacity.

The above Duracell batteries lost only 10% capacity in two weeks off the charger. That's excellent shelf life for NiMH cells.

Crystals Are Not Created Equal

Recently a Futaba crystal set was used to change channels in a stock Hitec Ranger 2z radio. They didn't work. The boat couldn't be sailed. With Tx antenna extended the range was only about 5 feet!! Puzzling and unacceptable. However, when using a Hitec crystal, the radio performance was fine.

Dave Collings was asked to comment and tells us that nothing is ever simple:

Hi Chuck,

It really is important to stay with the Hitec crystals in the Hitec Equipment. You can use Hitec Rx crystals in Futaba Rx's as long as they are single conversion or dual conversion and match accordingly. Futaba crystals are not usually compatible with Hitec Rx's and the Tx crystals are definitely not compatible.

Crystals are cut differently between manufacturers. Very few crystals are interchangeable because of several reasons. The first being that they could be cut at the fundamental frequency, or a fifth overtone, or second and sometimes even 4th overtone. In addition to that, the crystals that are dual conversion are cut to the frequency minus the IF frequency. Another problem that you can run into is that the crystals can have a different capacitance when made. They will react in the circuit differently and be off frequency because of capacitance differences. As you can see the problems with crystal swapping is a big deal. If you need more info let me know.

David Collings
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<http://www.dnmelectronics.com>
david@dnmelectronics.com

Pertinent Web Sites

AMYA Web Site,
<http://www.amya.org>
Add "/cr914.html" to go directly to the CR 914 page.

For back issues of the NEWS:
<http://www.amya.us/crnews.html>

Chesapeake Performance Model Yachts,
Dave Ramos, Annapolis, MD
<http://www.rcyachts.com>

Thin Air Model YC
Steve Lang, Evergreen, CO
Steve@ModelSailingCenter.com
<http://sailcr914.com>

Worth Marine,
<http://www.worthmarine.com>

Yahoo CR 914 Club Website
<http://clubs.yahoo.com/clubs/cr914class>

CR 914 Listserve
Sign-up at:
cr-914-subscribe@topica.com

Mid-Missouri Model Sailing Club
<http://www.m3sc.org/>

RC Radio Explained
<http://homepage.ntlworld.com/fast.electrics/> Click on "What happens when I wiggle the sticks" by Neil McGrath.

Radio Repair
Dave Collings
D & M Electronics
1236 Marigold St
Hartville, OH 44632
330 877 1445
www.dnmelectronics.com

"She got her looks from her father: He's a plastic surgeon."

2004 CR 914 Region 1 Championship Regatta Report

At Redd's Pond, Marblehead, MA
Sunday, May 16, 2004

The day started with absolutely no wind and a light rain. Temperature was ~55 F. Despite this all 13 boats that had signed up arrived at Redd's Pond ready to sail. When racing started at 10 AM, a nice NE wind had started but the rain continued all day except at lunchtime and was a little heavier at times in the afternoon.

THE WIND

Redd's always serves up a challenging variety of wind switches and holes, but this time she outdid herself. Huge and rapid headers and lifts occurred all day. And there were many holes with no wind. At times the mist flowing along the water's surface graphically showed the swirling breezes. However no one was able to use the mist to benefit race position.

The NE end of the pond was blanketed so the Pond St. half of the pond was used for all races, twice around.

THIRTEEN BOATS

Thirteen boats on the start line and at marks was a constant challenge for everyone. "THE WIND" added to the challenge. The wind was usually different all along the start line. There were a few pile-ups and tangled boats to add interest. Starboard end was usually favored but Hatch Brown succeeded with one great port tack start across the whole fleet. Often the wind would conspire to group several boats in a bunch approaching a mark. That was always fun.

Lunch and Beverages

Cheryl Emmons and Biff Martin collaborated to bring us an excellent lunch. Chicken- and tuna-sandwiches with chips and great cookies was perfect. They also brought a selection of soft drinks too assure we remained hydrated. On a rainy day the need was not as great compared to a 90 F summer day.

Race Officials

Jaye Kavs and Judy Skerry (who now has her own boat) managed the racing, both of

whom have long experience running model races. Judy made sure each race was started without delay allowing us to have 17 races. She called the start line, which disappointed a couple skippers. Judy and Jaye did the scoring that was challenging when several boats finished close together. Jaye then used her computer and had the results printed out within minutes of the last race. We are fortunate to have these two though soon Judy will be racing her own boat.

Brian Jobson, CT, who drove 2 1/2 hours to Redd's, was our only out-of-state skipper.

per. Despite Tx battery problems he place 4th against three exceptional competitors.

RACE RESULTS

Seventeen races sorted out the order of performance for the championship. The table shows how many firsts each boat managed. By listing the worst finish of the top four illustrates that even the top boats suffered in the challenging conditions. The top four were awarded plaques.

Region 1 Race Results

Place	Name	Home	Score	Firsts	Worst Finish
1	Dooley, Kevin	Marblehead, MA	39	4	11
2	Cruse, Steve	Marblehead, MA	44	4	12
3	Martin, Biff	Marblehead, MA	48	4	11
4	Jobson, Brian	Wolcott, CT	60	2	10
5	Winder, Chuck	Marblehead, MA	87	1	
6	Skerry, John	Gloucester, MA	91	1	
7	Brown, Hatch	Winthrop, MA	98		
8	Kroetsch, Bob	Marblehead, MA	104		
9	Parillo, Matt	Boston, MA	122		
10	Feinberg, Stuart	Swampscott, MA	129		
11	Kavs, Sasha	Chelmsford, MA	132	1	
12	Brown, Peter	Boston, MA	133		
13	Uhl, Steve	Marblehead, MA	158		

NEW OWNERS and BOATS

	First Name	Last Name	City	State	Sail No.
1	Jerry	Bell	Houston	TX	1171
2	Randy	Blanton	Old Saybrook	CT	1163
3	Shawn	Burke	Atlanta	GA	1157
4	Runyon	Colie	Mantoloking	NJ	1377
5	Scott	Coolidge	Mentor	OH	1165
6	George	Dunigan	Annapolis	MD	1162
7	Gary	Heath	Westbrook	CT	1164
8	John	Kuhn	Bay City	MI	1168
9	Jennifer	Luther	Coronado	CA	1170
10	Denise	Messerman	Solon	OH	1166
11	Richard	Messerman	Solon	OH	1167
12	A.	Moritz	The Woodlands	TX	863
13	Rick	Orchard	Duluth	GA	1156
14	Gary	Roberts	Arlington	VA	1174
15	Michael	Rosa	Stoneham	MA	1173
16	Bob	Rosenbaum	Cleveland Hts.	OH	1160
17	Stephen	Smith	State College	PA	1159
18	Todd	Tigges	Lakewood	OH	1158
19	John P.	Villa	Boylston	MA	1161
20	Joseph	Walsh	Hopewell Jct.	NY	1169

BOATYARD

ANTENNA ON MAST DOESN'T WORK

By Steve Uhl

I recently completed my CR-914. The kit and radio, a *hitec Ranger IIz*, had been dormant in a local basement for a few years, but all seemed in place for a successful debut of my new boat.

Alas, launching day brought incessant "jitter", with control unreliable and occasionally massive rudder and winch anomalies. Racing was impossible. I tried the following:

- Changed crystals – no improvement
- Changed batteries – no change
- Changed transmitters – no change

The antenna had been routed up along the exterior of the mast, which seemed to be a good location. Previous tests among the fleet indicated that that location should be sound. After that discouraging first sail, on a whim I disconnected the antenna from along the mast and just moved it around in all directions. As soon as it was away from the mast, the jitter disappeared – and when I moved it back along the mast the jitter reappeared. Whether this is a systematic phenomenon I don't know --- but I do know that antenna location will be first on my "problems-checklist" in the future....

In previous issues of the NEWS it was reported that routing the Rx antenna along the mast was a suitable arrangement. In fact, at least one owner reported running his antenna inside the mast. Testing in the CR 914 Lab erroneously suggested that this was a suitable arrangement. Steve's experience has shown this to be incorrect. Thank you, Steve.

Editor

During the Region 1 Regatta at Redd's Pond, Stuart Feinberg, #425, suddenly had control problems. Without warning the rudder servo function reversed while racing. The Tx was a borrowed Futaba Attack SR purchased in 1997. The condition was intermittent, which made racing somewhat difficult. ☺

The simple fix was to squirt WD-40 into the openings around the servo reversing switches and rapidly cycle the switches. The Tx performance returned to normal for the remainder of the day. How long the fix will be affective remains to be seen.

RADIO QUICKLY REPAIRED

A local owner with a year old boat discovered that his stock Ranger 2N had suddenly failed. Antenna fully extended range at the pond was less than 30 feet. Tested in the CR 914 Laboratory (Winder's backyard) the *antenna-down* range was only 5 feet with the boat on its side on the lawn. Both servos jittered at that limit of range. There was no response beyond ~5 feet. Using the same crystals and a healthy Tx the antenna down range was more than 80 feet.

The owner returned the Tx to Hitec in California. It must have been repaired and put back into the mail the same day, it was back so quickly. In the mean time he had received a form letter from Hitec that a normal repair cycle was 3-4 weeks.

Such a failure is extremely rare; it is the first one I can recall in 9 years racing CR 914s. The rapid repair turn-around gives top marks to Hitec service.

Another Cause of Interference

Dave Collings was again consulted about two incidences of interference.

Case 1. All Tx's were located together on a floating dock in the harbor (at Larchmont). The best course for one leg of the racecourse is close past the float with ~12 operating Tx's. As the boats pass close to the float some boats are momentarily out of control. During this time some skippers on the float move with their Tx's so as to better see their boats. The out-of-control boats finally recover and continue. Radios varied from Futaba and Hitec FM systems to inexpensive AM single conversion radios. There were both single- and dual-conversion Rx's in the boats.

For #1: When the boats passed within a few feet of the grouped Tx's, the Rx's of a few boats were over loaded. The mix of transmitters had a range of output signal strength from strong to weak. For some reason only a few of the boats are affected as they pass at difference distances from the float.

Case 2. At Redd's Pond where the skippers walk along a path to follow their boats along the course, there are occasions when a boat approaches a group of skippers on shore. It experiences brief periods of being out of control. The skipper of that boat with his Tx is a considerable distance from his boat and the other skippers. As always there is a mix of radio models and types.

Dave's response to #2:

Yes, the Rx's front end is being over loaded with stronger transmissions because the controlling Tx transmission is much weaker being further away.

Race Directors should avoid courses that require boats to sail close to a group of skippers and their radios.

23-Channel Conundrum

by Chuck Winder

"A Treatise on the Importance of Smoke"

by Joseph Lucas (1842-1903)

All electrical components and wiring harnesses depend on proper circuit functioning, which is the transmission of charged ions by retention of the visible spectral manifestation known as "smoke".

Smoke is the thing that makes electrical circuits work. Don't be fooled by scientists and engineers talking about excited electrons and the like. Smoke is the key to all things electrical.

We know this to be true because every time one lets the smoke out of an electrical circuit, it stops working. This can be verified repeatedly through empirical testing. For example, if one places a large copper bar across the terminals of a battery, prodigious quantities of smoke are liberated and the battery shortly ceases to function. In addition, if one observes smoke escaping from an electrical component such as a Lucas voltage regulator, it will also be observed that the component no longer functions.

The function of the wiring harness is to conduct the smoke from one device to another. When the wiring harness springs a leak and lets all the smoke out of the system, nothing works right afterward.

This revelation ☺ was contributed by Bob Francis, Minuteman MYC, Needham, MA. He received it from a fellow live steam powerboat modeler. Ed.

Readers of the NEWS will know about the potential of 2IM radio interference that is called **23-channel syndrome**. The puzzle has been: Why doesn't it happen more often? We have learned more about it since it was first mentioned in the NEWS:

1. A single group of Tx's standing together and having 23 channel separations will not cause 2IM interference in their boats. This explains Hitec's Tony Ohm's observation that it is not a problem in model car racing. In car racing, drivers stand together.
2. However, if a skipper standing a distance from the above group sails close to the group of Tx's, he will probably experience 2IM interference.

The reason there is no problem in #1 is that the 2IM signal at 460 KHz is much weaker than the Tx primary signal. But if in #2 the signal received at the boat is sufficiently weakened by the distance of the Tx from the boat, the 460 KHz signal generated by the grouped Tx's can be large enough to cause lack of control.

A simple experiment illustrated #1 above. Two boats were sailed using channels 61 and 84 (84-61=23). The skippers were shoulder to shoulder. There was no loss of control. We have yet to do an experiment to demonstrate #2.

At some sailing venues, skippers walk along the pond to be close to their boats. In this case, if boats are widely separated, the conditions in #2 can occur and interference will be experienced.

At the Cow Pond Regatta (page 3), there were **three** 23-channel combinations for the 19 boats! No loss of boat control was reported. At this regatta the skippers all stood the same distance from their boats. Though it surprised me at the time, #1 above tells why there shouldn't have been interference.

Tentative Conclusions

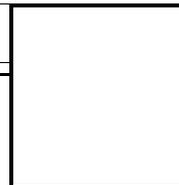
1. At a regatta where skippers stand close together, there should not be 23-channel interference. Regatta management can consider permitting 23-channel separations.
2. At Larchmont, where there are two groups of operating Tx's, there may be a problem but we have no data on it.
3. At a place such as Redd's Pond in Marblehead, MA, the conditions for 23-channel interference can occur since boats and skippers can be spread out over a long distance.
4. If at any regatta the skippers are restricted to remain within a small control area, then 23-channel interference should not be a problem.

Good luck.

The above discussion is derived from information from Dave Collings, D & M Electronics, who continues to help us with our radio problems.

"Sometimes I think war is God's way of teaching us geography."

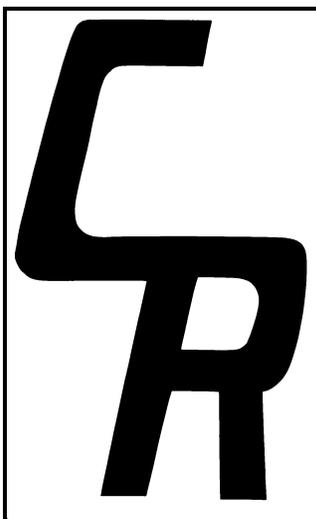
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Articles in the CR 914 NEWS

The following is a list of the kinds of articles that appear in the CR 914 NEWS. What will actually appear depends on input from you owners in the form of contributed material and requests for particular information.

- Regatta results
- Fleet news
- Battery management
- Surviving salt water
- Reliability
- Racing Rules of Sailing topics
- Why do radios "glitch"?
- Class Rules Interpretation
- Maintenance and repair of radio components
- Building and maintenance
- Scoring systems
- Boat switches
- Conduct of a model race
- Skipper Behavior
- Etc.

START YOUR OWN MODEL YACHT CLUB

There are probably some owners who would like to race but don't have a local club. Start your own by getting three AMYA members together. That's all it takes! *(Though it helps to have a place to sail such as a pond.☺)* Ask me for a "NEW FLEET" package if this interests you.