



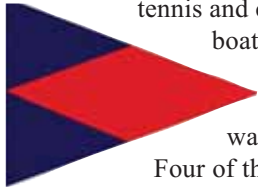
# "See You At The Club!"



by George S. Nammack

This final installment of our series on the 16 member clubs comprising the Great South Bay Yacht Racing Association (GSBYRA) crosses the finish line with profiles of the Westhampton Yacht Squadron and the Wet Pants Sailing Association. These accounts were adapted from the GSBYRA's excellent condensed history prepared by MaryAnn Deering, Glenn Schmidt and associates. Should you have news about your GSBYRA club, eg. race schedules, related social activities, changes in personnel, please send it to George S. Nammack, Editor, Long Island Boating World, 93 Montauk Highway, Copiague, NY 11726 or e-mail it to [libwads@yahoo.com](mailto:libwads@yahoo.com).

**Westhampton Yacht Squadron** was organized in 1890 as the Westhampton Country Club by summer residents who wanted to socialize, play tennis and croquet, and promote sailboat racing. Charles E. Pellew was made Commodore and Joseph Delafield was appointed fleet captain.



Four of the nine Trustees were sailing buffs and frequented the racing dock at Apaucuck Point House on Beaver Dam Cove. Some 120 boats jammed the facility, were raced and wagered upon. In 1892, the ladies started racing in Quantuck Bay. Captain Warren Peterson maintained a small yacht club building and dock on Moneybogue Bay. The dominant group of boats for racing was of the SS class. A new yacht club building at the foot of Speonk Shore Road was constructed in 1922, but was destroyed by the hurricane of 1938.

Harry Growthage held Saturday sailing classes for almost 100 youngsters. Foster Crampton's memory was honored by the erection of a huge flagpole. In 1932, a Star class charter was acquired, and Harold Halstead became its most famous racer. The newly-named Westhampton Yacht

Squadron, Ltd. went into foreclosure in 1941. Members bought land west of the old site and erected a small clubhouse. Shorebirds and M Class sloops became the next major classes. A Lightning Class charter was acquired in 1947. Having watched the Narrasketuck Class perform in Bell-



port Bay in 1948, Charles W. Seiniger introduced the class to Westhampton the next summer.

S.F. Medina brought Sailfish to the group in 1950, followed by Jolly Boats introduced by Robert P. Rice in 1955. Predicted log motorboat races began in 1960. By 1961, the Sailfish fleet

was replaced by the Sunfish. In 1963, Gardner and Bud Simes presented the club with a 60-foot flagpole, and in November, 1969, the present clubhouse, formerly the Cedar Beach Club, was cut in three sections and floated by barge from Westhampton to its present location. Sunday afternoon Sunfish racing, which continues to this day, created the Fall Series in 1964. By 1970, a dozen Y Flyer class boats came in, and in 1976 a new pool and a new all-weather tennis court appeared. In 1999, heat was added to the clubhouse for year-round enjoyment.

**Wet Pants Sailing Association** was born on September 16, 1934, within a group of enthusiasts who wanted to hold weekly races off Sayville. Several basic rules were established: the deal had to be inexpensive and self-supporting, allow boats of totally dissimilar type, size and rig to race on a "more or less" equal footing, and offer inducement to beginners to learn to sail while engaged in racing. Membership was open to



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anyone for a dues payment of \$1.00! Hervey Garret Smith, who designed the club's burgee after an old pair of sailor's trousers, was elected Commodore. The original garment was reputed to have been worn by a crew member of the America's Cup yacht *Columbia*, and was torn, tattered and smelled of pine tar. Nonetheless, the "Sacred Pants" were awarded annually to a member by the Executive Committee and reposed among the lucky person's effects. George Madigan was responsible for Wet Pants' motto: "Short they may be, long may they wave." The club's first regatta was held in July, 1935, off Sykes Beach at the foot of Foster Avenue. The club home became the Shoreham, formerly the Tidewater Inn. The owners, the Frieman family, allowed the Wet Pants Association members to use their dock and run races. Hervey Smith designed an 18-foot centerboard sloop, dubbed the Diaper Class, with an insignia of a diaper pin on its main sail. Eleven of these were built and they raced each Saturday.

Membership grew rapidly, and by 1937, P Class and Interclub boats joined the fleet, now numbering 39 vessels. In 1939, the fleet averaged 70 boats, the largest then on the bay. The ensuing war years affected racing. Fuel rationing cut the number of patrol boats and race courses had to be shortened. Forty Wet Pants members joined the service, yet kept abreast of club news via the mail. It soon

became clear that one-design classes were more popular than handicap classes. In 1942, the Snipe became the largest one-design class raced at Wet Pants. Narrasketuck and Star classes were intro-



duced to the fleet.

In 1950, the Sayville Narrasketuck Fleet established the Asa B. Smith Trophy in memory of Asa Smith, a Patchogue boat builder of Narrasketucks and son of renowned boat builder Gil Smith.

In 1952, Wet Pants began general sailing lessons, and later founded a three-year Junior Sailing program with Seaman, Crew and Skipper levels. The following year, Elinor Norton was elected the first female Commodore on Great South Bay, actually the first of five women to be elected Commodore during the

following years.

On March 5, 1959, the Wet Pants Association joined GSBYRA. Members built 23 Blue Jay class boats in Sayville during the winter of 1960. In 1966 and 1970, the club hosted the Blue Jay National Championship wherein Wet Pants member Bill Pagels won both events. In 1972, the name was changed officially to Wet Pants Sailing Association. The club leased the facilities and grounds at Port O' Call Marina, and over the following 20 years continued to provide access to sailing on the bay for anyone willing to sail through a strong junior program, weekly races and a slate of family-oriented activities. Sunfish, JY 15 and Laser classes replaced earlier ones. The club holds an annual Long Island Sunfish Championship regatta and a weekend regatta for GSBYRA in Sunfish and JY 15 classes. More than 160 families belong to the club. Sailing classes now average between 75 and 100 participants. The club's 2007 officers include: Commodore Mike Hagstedt, Vice Commodore Tom Harris, Rear Commodore Dave Johnson, Secretary Jay Abrams, Treasurer Louis Johnson, Delegate Charlie Huberman, Race Committee Chairman Jim Ryan, Junior Sailing Chairman Katie Taylor. The Association is headquartered at Foster Avenue & Browns River Road in Sayville. Mail to WPSA, P.O. Box 484, Sayville, NY 11782. Telephone 631- 563-1475.

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