

Masthead



The Official Publication of the Shields Class National Sailing Association

Spring 2006

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Shields National Championship

August 9 to August 12, 2006



Hosted By
Buzzards Bay
Shields Fleet #10
and the
Beverly Yacht Club,
Marion, MA



Buzzards Bay Shields Fleet #10 and the [Beverly Yacht Club](http://www.beverlyyachtclub.org/) (<http://www.beverlyyachtclub.org/>), Marion, Massachusetts are pleased to announce that the 2006 Shields National Championship will be held in Marion, Massachusetts on Wednesday, August 9 through Saturday, August 12, 2006. This is a good time of year to race in Buzzards Bay. The weather is warm and the winds blow 10-20 mph most afternoons. Those sailors who wish to tune their boats for Buzzards Bay conditions and spar with the local competition before the National Championship are invited to attend the [Buzzards Bay Regatta](http://www.buzzardsbayregatta.com/) (<http://www.buzzardsbayregatta.com/>) in Marion on Friday, August 4 through Sunday, August 6, 2006. Attending both events would provide you with an excellent chance to have seven great days of fleet racing in a nine day period. For out-of-town boats, launching will be on Thursday, August 3, 2006, and for those attending only the Shields National Championship, launching will be on Wednesday, August 9, 2006. Hauling will be on Sunday, August 13, 2006.

For the *Notice of Race* see:

<http://www.shieldsclass.com/2006/NOR2006.pdf>

For more information on social events, housing, moorings, launch/haul see:

<http://www.shieldsclass.com/2006/>

Launch and Haul - From the Builder

The Goodwins - Cape Cod Shipbuilding

Wareham, MA

Phone 508-295-3550

<http://www.capecodshipbuilding.com>

One of the main things that come to mind when considering attending an out-of-town regatta such as the National Regatta is the launching and hauling process. For this year's regatta in Marion, Massachusetts some of us can simply sail to the regatta, others will have to haul, trailer the boat to Marion, launch, and then reverse the process. We thought this was a great opportunity to discuss the different ways Shields get in and out of the water. Not only is this helpful information as we travel to different regatta sites, but it helps each owner to understand the different options available for yearly launchings and hauls.

Travel Lift: This is the most common way for larger boats to be put in and out of the water. Travel lifts (see picture) need to be operated by fully trained lift operators. For the Shields, slings are placed under the hull just forward and just aft of the keel. All four ends of the slings can be adjusted so the boat remains level when in the air. The travel lift drives out onto pilings extending over the water and lowers the boat into the water. One end of one sling is disconnected so the boat can be pulled out and along side a dock. When your Shields is at a boatyard typically they also have a boom truck to step your mast before the boat is launched. Whether your boat spends the winter on a trailer or in boat stands the travel lift will get the job done.



Hoist: If you have a trailer and are in an area that has a hoist, you can launch your own Shields with a lifting bar (see Figure1). The hoist and lifting bar also provide access to the entire boat bottom for wet

sanding or applying new bottom paint. Always check the capacity of the hoist before lifting; a new Shields weighs at least 4,416 lbs. with no equipment onboard. First prepare your boat by bailing all water out of the bilge and attach bow and stern lines for handling. The lifting bar is custom made for the Shields to be lifted from her keel bolts. Cape Cod Shipbuilding Co. sells lifting bars and some clubs have produced their own variation. To use a lifting bar, remove the floor boards and gain access to the keel bolts. You may also need to disconnect the bilge pump hose from the pump for full access. Thread the lifting ring eye nuts onto keel bolts #2 and #5 (each boat owner is expected have their own set of lifting eyes.). You will notice #2 and #5 stick up more than the rest of the keel bolts so the eye nuts can screw onto them securely. Always properly thread the eye nuts onto the keel bolts to the full extent of the threading. Never leave the lifting ring eye nuts on the keel bolts while sailing or they will seize in place, weaken and deteriorate. It's also important to inspect the keel bolts regularly to assure that the threads are in good condition. To attach a lifting bar, connect the upper shackle to the hook on the hoist. The bottom of the bar has 2 chains with hooks that connect to the two keel bolt eye nuts that are fastened to keel bolts #2 and #5. Once everything is connected, slowly raise the hoist to put tension on the lifting bar chains. One person should remain in the cockpit while tensioning to assure the chains don't twist and the hooks don't slip off. Once the hoist is taught, everyone should climb out of the boat. Never stand in, on or under the boat when lifting. When using the lifting bar method you may need to place some weight on either the bow or stern of the Shields to make sure she remains level when up in the air as each boat has a slightly different balance point. Be sure to check the tide before launching not only for depth but also to know which direction the current will pull the boat once she is afloat.

When using a lifting bar with the mast in place several other procedures are needed. The backstay should be disconnected and the boom removed from the mast. After tensioning the lifting bar with the hoist, you can also use a spare line to brace the lifting eye athwartships to the jib winches to keep the boat from rolling to either side during the lift. Once everyone is clear, continue lifting the boat out of her trailer, swing the boat over the water and lower. The bow and stern line handlers can pull the boat loose to the dock while someone hops in to disconnect the lifting bar from the lifting rings.

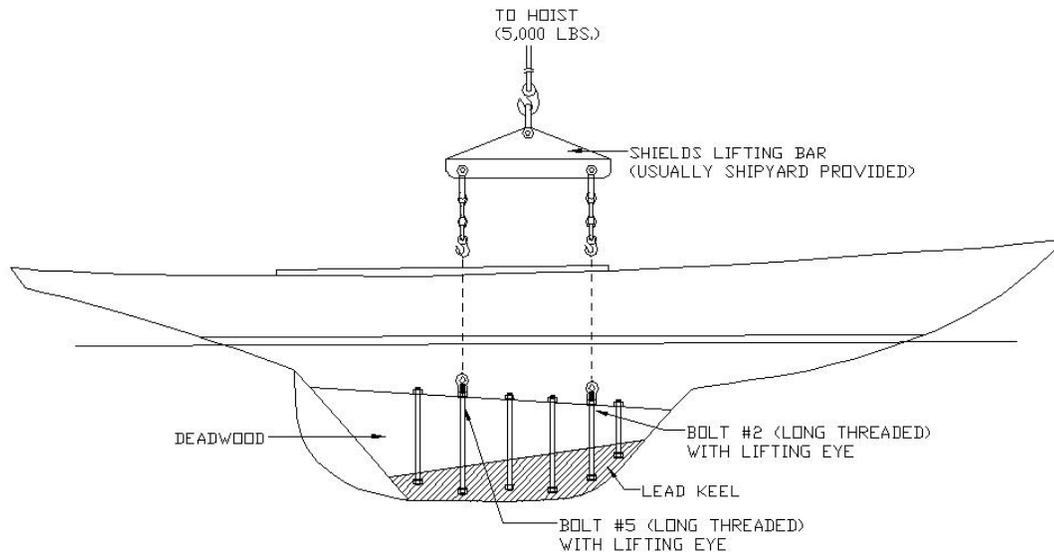


Figure 1: Lifting Bar/Hoist Connection to Shields with Lifting Eyes.

The Shields is strong enough to take the pressure of lifting either under the hull with slings or from the keel bolts using a lifting bar. The lifting bar method will put less pressure on the un-fiberglassed deadwood to hull joint than using slings under the hull. Newer Shields have had their hull to deadwood seams fiberglassed so this is no longer an issue. Older deadwood joints can be fiberglassed in the same manner for extra strength and to improve the cosmetics by eliminating the crack that appears.

Stepping your Mast: Depending on where the gin pole or crane truck is located you may have to step your mast before or after launching. When stepping your own mast you will need a short length of rope

with a splice or bowline on each end. This short line gets wrapped around the mast extrusion just below the spreaders and lower shrouds. The gin pole hook is hooked to both ends of the line. You can also tie a retrieval line to the short line in order to pull it down once the mast is in place. Sometimes this line can get stuck under the lower shrouds. The spreader brackets are just about the balance point of the mast & you will need to have one person at the butt or bottom of the mast to keep the wind indicator clear. The mast must be straight up & down to go through the deck and onto the mast step. This is easiest if the boat is level. The main and jib halyard exit box can be a tight fit through the deck. Always take care to clear the mast step and deck of debris before stepping and un-stepping the mast.

For many of you these tips may be common sense, or something you already knew and have been doing for years. For others, it may be the first time you've heard of one method. As our thoughts turn to attending another Shields Nationals this information should be helpful in understanding that there are different methods of launching Shields. We hope those in the know can continue to share their knowledge with new members so our class can continue to expand.

Publishing of the Masthead

Richard Robbins (#238- **White Rabbit**), 2006 Editor

The Masthead has a long history in the Shields class. Past issues of the *Masthead* can be seen on the Shields class web site at the following:

http://www.shieldsclass.com/f_Newsletter.htm

The last issue was the Fall 2003 - Spring 2004. At a meeting of the Shields class executive board on January 28, 2006, it was decided that rather than appoint an editor for the *Masthead* (any volunteers out there?) the responsibility of publishing of the *Masthead* would fall to the fleet handling the current National Championship. The publication of the Masthead would be via email and on the web (no printing hard-copies). The idea was that the National Championship host fleet would compile and publish the *Masthead* as part of the marketing for the National Championship. This would involve at least a Spring volume (invitation material) and a Fall volume (summary of the regatta). Other articles would be included depending on issues at hand and the imagination and enthusiasm of the host fleet.

This issue of the *Masthead* is being published by Fleet #10, Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts as part of its hosting of the Shields National Championship to be held in Marion, Massachusetts on August 9 through August 12, 2006. The 2007 issues of the *Masthead* will be the responsibility of Fleet #9, Newport, Rhode Island as part of their hosting of the 2007 Shields National Championship Regatta.

In order to get email delivery of the *Masthead* you must be on the Shields National mail list. Please sign-up on the web site at:

<http://www.shieldsclass.com/phplist/subscribe.htm>

Check out the Shields Class web site and send comments to:

webmaster@shieldsclass.com

Thoughts on Achieving Success in a Shields

Jon Pope (#220 **Madam-X**) – National Champion 2004 and 2005

I consider sailing to be possibly the most complex sport in the world. So many variables exist that much commitment, time, and a great amount of effort need to go into a sailing campaign in order to be successful. Some people rate success as finishing in the top 10, others top 5, and if your desire is strong enough, your name on the trophy is where it has to be! But to remain focused on sailing and not distracted by everyday life is a battle in itself. With the right direction of focus you too can have a successful sailing season. A culmination of many factors attribute to our success in the Shields Class and many of those factors cannot be appreciated until they actually happen on the racecourse. But I can honestly say that the majority of these success factors stem from boat preparedness and a strong cohesion between my crew and myself ("The Team"). Any successful sport team that has this desire, ability (raw talent), and fun outlook towards the game will be successful in their own view. I have been fortunate to have had these factors working for me for many sailing seasons and always look forward to seeing how it plays out each year.

I was asked to write this article on speed but find that achieving and maintaining speed in a Shields is such a broad based subject that I have broken this article into several brief segments that will hopefully assist you in achieving a successful season of your own.

So your boat is in the shed, now is the time to act on the rig while you still have a chance. Obviously breakdowns have something to do with speed. It is very slow. Long before the mast gets stepped (usually the month of May) I check every cotter pin, ring ding, and fitting on the mast twice. The mast should be the first item on the agenda because we all know that if it does not get done first it will most likely be delegated to the last thing on your mind just before it gets stepped. Hope you remembered to put the Windex on before launch! Good luck after that! Ask Chuck Allen how important thorough mast inspections should be (Nationals 2005). Tape everything that might, could, or would create chafe and check again. If any halyards are slightly chafed, get rid of them because Murphy's Law will come knocking on you door (or mast) when you least expect it. I use old chafed halyards for twings, and control lines. If the running rigging (wire) is rusty at the fittings or has a few meat hooks exposed, replace it. Each and every year I lightly sand the mast with 400 grit wet/dry sand paper (fore and aft motion) to remove any oxidation, and then wax with 2 coats of dolphinite wax. Smooth mast is fast mast, which may equate to fast boat! All halyards are tapered with the smallest of diameters. Weight aloft, and windage should be of great concerns for all competitive sailors. Every ounce counts! My adage, lose it or you will lose.

With regards to the mast, just make sure that it is in column before any major racing. I leave the mast set fully back in the partners. The mast step placement gives the boat a balanced feel. [Editor's Note: **Madam-X** has her mast step at 1/8" within the limit for mast rake.] Check the pressure on your stays. I normally sail with 850-900lbs. on my uppers a slight more pressure than North's tuning guide. Lowerers are around 350lbs. if the air is going to be light I usually take a full turn off the lowerers.

Once finished with the mast, all hardware on the boat is checked and rechecked. Every winch is broken down cleaned and lubed. Every year! Take a close look at all blocks and their bearings. Every so often I find at least one that needs replacement. Crawl into the forward and back compartments to examine all backstay and forestay mechanisms. Great loads take place in these areas so care should be taken to insure that everything is in safe working order. Once finished with the deck components move to the bottom of the boat. Hopefully your plug was pulled shortly after you had the boat hauled for the year. Install plug and fill area around plug to be faired. After the bottom has been prepped and painted with VC Offshore I wet sand fore and aft with 400 grit wet/dry. Everybody has his or her opinion on how rough or smooth the bottom should be but this works for me. I get plenty of attachment with this bottom system. Just keep it clean!

A few years ago I hesitantly asked Joe Schultz-Heik (National Champion 1997-2000) to crew for me during the Buzzards Bay Regatta and pleasantly found this to be the most exhaustive and enlightening experience of my entire racing career. His manner of processing every gear change on our boat was mind-boggling. Throughout the racing not a moment was lost on any aspect of our boats speed. How one man could hold and control just about every line simultaneously with his hands, feet, and teeth was beyond my comprehension. However, the clear message conveyed to me was to never stop trying to achieve more speed, even when you are already going fast. Stay focused on your competitor's speed and constantly make those adjustments necessary to move further past them. If it doesn't work, try something new, but never give up or become complacent. After all the racing you'll have plenty of time to think about the Dewar's girls on your sail back to the club.

When regatta time comes everyone should fully understand his or her job. Otherwise, you could be in for a long weekend. The person who usually sits in back of me is my lookout, always feeding me information on our surroundings. I need constant input with regards to our angle with other boats, our overall speed, what phase we in with the wind angles, or how far above or below mean are we on the compass. All other crew are making constant adjustment to sail trim while keeping a watchful eye out for wind and waves on the water. I often say to myself that if I cannot eat, sleep (not in the same bed), and sail with my crew happily then someone has got to move on. Everyone on the team has to be comfortable with one another. Happiness breeds success!

During light to moderate conditions (0-14knots) we set our sails according to the topography of the water. If the water is smooth then flat lower sections and medium open leeches will help with both the main and jib. Outhaul is usually tighter than you might think. Jib leads are either at the T or get moved 1 hole back. With light air and lumpy seas we have full lower sections and very open leeches. Ease backstay to power jib being careful not to create a knuckle in the forward part of the jib (very slow). We want a smooth draft forward shape necessary to power through the waves. In these light conditions make sure that after you tack you are powered up and footing to allow time for the boat to get up to max speed so that you can point. Speed first, point later. I often use the traveler to assist in the tack. This helps lessen the use of rudder and its attendant drag and gets us out of the tack moving fast. If you have a good smooth operation in your traveler this technique works great!

When the wind is above 14knots I pay close attention to leech twist, and the top batten of our main. A more open batten that is slightly parallel with the boom is fast in most of these conditions. Backstay, cunningham, and main sheet will help control this aspect of the mainsail. Once again wave conditions will determine how much twist we have in our main. A common rule of thumb is that as the wind and waves increase, so does the amount of twist. In short chop, bring jib lead 1 or 2 holes forward of the T. This creates a very powerful forward section in your jib. This setting was used throughout the Nationals in Edgartown, which proved to be very effective. Longer wavelengths dictate the lead slightly aft or even with the T. Always pay close attention to the pressure on your helm (tiller) in all conditions but especially in medium to heavy air. I know very little about the lift to drag ratio for the Shields but I can say that you never want leeward helm and you certainly do not want the weather helm to be excessive. I like to have a slight amount of weather helm pressure at all times during the windward beat. This allows for some lift without compromising too much speed due to drag. Use your control lines (backstay, mainsheet, jib sheet) to induce or reduce this desired pressure, but by all means do not let it get to strong or weak or you will have pushed the preverbal fool button. Experiment and find that balance! By the way, the traveler line remains in my hands until we round the weather mark. The driver is only one who can respond quickly enough to weather helm issues. And yes, timing has something to do with speed too.

Downwind is a balancing act without the drag! Any resistance on the rudder during this point of sail is slow; keep that rudder from becoming a brake! Our key to fast downwind speed is the rudder, or should I say lack of rudder. The team steers the boat. If we need to go down on a wave, I simply ask to have the guy trimmed. If we have to go up, main and spin sheet will direct the boat to the desired angle. It has taken some time to perfect this balancing act, but the team has overcome the obstacles and become very comfortable with the method. It is second nature now, and very fast.

I hope that these tidbits can be of some help in your desire to move faster through the water. And as always, I am open to any questions you may have with our trim and helm techniques or general boat handling. My hope is that we will see a great number of you at the Buzzards Bay Regatta, which should prove to be a great warm up prior to the Nationals.

One last but important detail, purchase a bright yellow Brazil soccer jersey, surround yourself with a talented fun crew, and go get em!



Photo courtesy of Carol & Michael Berwind, berwind@mindpsring.com