An article in this month’s publication will help answer a most-common survey question: What do you most wish to learn how to do? Remarkably, the #1 wish was: Learn how to sail. This topped goals like learn how to play golf or tennis, scuba dive or cook, etc. Paul “Odie” Odegaard’s article “Giving Back,” starting on Page 3, is one of the most helpful and fun ways for each of us to introduce sailing at our clubs to youth and adult sailors alike. Enjoy this very informative article that, if practiced at our clubs, could help shape the future of our Sunfish Class. Photo by Paul “Odie” Odegaard
Dear Sunfish Sailors and those who appreciate them,

With Winter melting into Spring, we begin to see Sunfish wake up from hibernation. Some of you steely hearted stalwarts have been sailing all winter, but for the rest of us, I’d like to welcome you to Sailing in 2022. As many of you know, last month we kicked off the national sailing schedule with the Sunfish Midwinter Race Week. Between, the International Masters Championship and US Nationals, we had an astounding 118 entries. With massive fleets and even stiffer competition I’d like to extend a big congratulations to all our new champions. Events such as these cannot happen without fantastic hosts such as Clearwater Yacht Club. Thank you to Clearwater for hosting the Sunfish Class.

As we head into the bulk of the Sunfish season, the class schedule has begun to fill up. As of now we can look forward to:

North Americans in Hyannis Yacht Club, Massachusetts
US Masters at Bay Waveland Yacht Club, Mississippi
Women’s North Americans at Lake Bluff Yacht Club, Illinois
10 Regional Championships (with more on the way)

Check out the schedule on our website: https://www.sunfishclass.org/regattas/06/2022/ and don’t forget to send you local regattas to sunfishschedule@gmail.com to get your regatta posted on the schedule as well. Please reach out to anyone in class leadership if you’re interested in hosting an event. It’s never too early to start planning and major events get filled years in advance. Class leadership can be found here: https://www.sunfishclass.org/about/class-leadership/us-board.

In other news, now that the Pan American games country qualification is published, we are working closely with US Sailing and the US Olympic Committee to finalize our athlete selection process. We look forward to publishing the details soon.

I hope all of you are as excited about sailing this year as I am. Sail fast, sail smart, and bring the energy like only the Sunfish Class can. 2022 Sunfishing here we come!

Will Kresic

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**Video Tutorials Courtesy of Lee Montes**

A new feature in the Windward Leg publication will feature a few different videos each issue. Enjoy!

2022 SUNFISH RIGGING Secrets | Paul-Jon Patin- 3X International Master Champion - YouTube

How to Rig the Sunfish Sailboat Jens Rig | GUST ADJUST | COMPREHENSIVE Tutorials - YouTube
GIVING BACK

BY PAUL “ODIE” ODEGAARD

Several years ago, I remember reading an article somewhere reporting on a survey that asked the question: WHAT DO YOU MOST WISH TO LEARN HOW TO DO? Remarkably, the #1 wish was: LEARN HOW TO SAIL. This topped goals like: learn how to play golf/tennis; scuba; cook, etc.

Since the Sunfish is historically the most (arguably) popular learn-how-to-sail vehicle, we have a significant opportunity to introduce junior and adult wannabees to our beloved sailboat. So many famous skippers have traced their sailing lineage back to the little Sunfish. The progression hopefully goes like: learn on a Sunfish — love a Sunfish — race a Sunfish — stay with the Sunfish— become a Senior Master on the Sunfish! If we are to continue keeping our Sunfish Class healthy and growing in numbers, we have to introduce more novice sailors to our sailboat. I believe we can do this by “GIVING BACK” via promoting FREE learn-to-sail lessons. Our many active fleets have the available boats and skilled skippers to offer these lessons.

The old Alcort brochure “Learn to Sail in 3 Days,” available on-line at https://sunfishclass.org/documents/learn_2_sail_in_3_days.pdf, outlines the very basic skills needed to get started. The simplified goal of this program is to just get the student on the water safely sailing with minimal intimidation. Follow-on programs to learn the nautical lingo, sharpen boat handling skills and teach some basic sailing rules will hopefully be offered to motivated students who want to learn more. The following lessons learned at our local LIARS (Leetes Island Assoc. of Retired Sailors) fleet in Guilford, Ct. are offered for consideration:

KEEP IT SIMPLE—avoid all nautical terms; use “the pointy end of the boat” rather than the “bow;” use “rope” not “sheet”, etc.

More Keeping It Fun! ... Long-distance cruise, fun race with LeMans starts, cocktail parties for adults, fastest capsize recovery (shown above).
GIVING BACK (cont’d)

MANAGE THE FLEET---set up the Sunfish properly with high rigged sail plans, sheet hangers, daggerboard retainers, wind indicators, etc.

PICK THE BEST WEATHER DAYS---sail only in light (5-10 mph) air. A scary experience on a windy day can result in: “Never again”.

AGE ALLOCATE THE INSTRUCTORS---Junior instructors for the kids, adults for the adults. For best results double up with one instructor on board with one student.

GIVE MANY AWARDS---kids just love trophies/tee shirts/achievement-graduation awards, etc.

PUBLICIZE THE PROGRAM---Everyone appreciates local news coverage plus more press on the Sunfish helps the cause.

Question to all our “serious” Sunfish racers: what boat did you learn to sail on? It is now time to GIVE BACK and introduce more beginners to our Class.

Marketing suggestion to dealers: consider offering a free learn-to-sail package with the purchase of a new Sunfish.

For more info on an expanded 5-day course contact: captnodie@comcast.net.

Life Member, Paul “Odie” Odegaard, Sail #5077, racing at the 50th Sunfish World Championship sailed in Sarasota, Fl, in October 2021.

Odie is a Senior Master in the 80+ yrs age division!!
The second Sunfish Southeast Regional Championship of 2021 took place October 8-10 at the Augusta Sailing Club’s annual Halloween Regatta. It was sailed on Lake Thurmond (also called Clarks Hill Lake), a 40-mile long reservoir of the Savannah River on the border of Georgia and South Carolina.

This was one BIG regatta! They’ve had plenty of time to grow, since this was its 67th incarnation. 165 boats were spread out over four courses: besides Sunfish, there were Melges 14, Vanguard 15, MC Scow, E Scow, Laser, Opti, Club 420, Open Skiff Bic and PHRF. These included many juniors in a youth course (including 11 sailing Sunfishes).

The club grounds were packed with tents, campers, cars and boats. Volunteers put up amazing decorations. The Halloween Costume party was phenomenal and inspirational. A lively band (The Coaches) cranked out music to get people dancing. The band had two singers (including Bob Ross, who also played keyboards), a penguin on the drum kit, a golf caddy on guitar and a banana on bass. They started off their spooky set with Rockwell’s “Somebody’s Watching Me.” The club served lobster rolls and burgers, while food trucks added barbeque, chicken and desserts. On Sunday afternoon the Hawaiian Ice truck made up great treats such as the incredible Onosicle, which brings back childhood memories of orange Creamsicles.

There were three races each day, for a total of six with one throw-out. The winds were moderate, at roughly 8 knots out of the north, but with enough gusts to make people hike out and work their abs. Waters were generally smooth, though puffs led to some slight chop.
Sonya Dean dominated the races, taking first place in four of the six races. She was still in the groove from the Women’s North Americans (Sept. 24-26) at the Columbia Sailing Club on Lake Murray in South Carolina where she placed 7th out of 47 competitors. She went down early to get a day of practice on the water before that regatta, and it really helped.

Sonya Dean finished first and was the top female. She was kept on her toes by competitors such as John Butine, Steve Szymanski, Elaine and David Parshall and David Krausz. John Butine came in second, followed by South Carolina’s Elaine Parshall and brother David Parshall.

Sonya won a year’s rights to the Southeast’s Perpetual Trophy. David Loring, the 2008 Sunfish World Champion, presented the trophy. David was at the regatta with his daughters racing Lasers; he took first place in the standard Laser class.
Adoring the Sunfish
by International News Correspondent, Ton Nuitjen / BONAIRE

Last January we sailed selection races on Bonaire for the Worlds in Italy combined with some club races. It was pretty windy that day. Some of our sailors sailed their first race ever.

One of those was Nico and he was happy he managed to drag himself back into his boat after being flipped over again. When I saw this picture of Nico I got a smile on my face. You too?

Ton
Bonaire

The 2019 Sunfish World Championship in Bonaire was a HUGE success! To view photos of this event, go to:
https://photos.app.goo.gl/ZnvMMvEfMUxtzwJA

Eight Bells — Betsy Schmidt, Sail #19742, Lewes YC, DE

Long-time Sunfish Class member Betsy Schmidt, age 76, sailed to the final finish line in the sky with all of us who knew her remembering what a unique and special woman she was.

Betsy retired to Rehoboth Beach, DE, after more than 30 years as a Music Director in the Pennsylvania high school system. She ventured into the sailing world and got very active with the Sunfish Class at the Lewes Yacht Club in Lewes, DE. With Connie Miller, Betsy traveled to almost every North American Championship from 1988-1921 missing just one or two along the way. She designed the 3-boat Sunfish trailer they used to tow their Sunfish to these events, always carrying an extra boat or two for extra travelers. Always generous with her time to help the Sunfish Class and other Sunfish sailors, Betsy’s gracious and calming presence will be greatly missed.

To add to Betsy’s interesting history, she was born September 4, 1945 at the Ideal Maternity Home on Canada’s rocky east coast to a birth mother who gave her up for adoption. These babies born here later became known as Butterbox Babies because the unwanted ones, purposely not well cared for until they died, were buried in boxes used to deliver butter to grocery stores. She was adopted as an infant by a Pennsylvania couple. When she learned the story of her birth, she began a search to find out more about her birth mother. What she discovered was she had several birth siblings and later reunited with them. Books have been written about the “Butterbox Babies.”

Our hearts go out to Betsy’s family and friends. Those of us who sailed with her and got to know her will never forget her generous, kind and loving nature.