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# The Great Atlantic

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## FOSTER'S CORNER



**By John Foster, Class Chairman**

### INTO THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Now that we are into our second century as Atlantic sailors it is well to take stock of where we are and where we are going as a class!

We sail boats that are a source of pride to all of us. The Atlantic classic design is timeless. Sure, our boats don't have wing-keels, artwork topsides, knuckle-bows, carbon fiber masts, or advertisements on our sails - thank goodness!

While our inventory of boats for sale is shrinking, good used boats are available at modest cost and even new boats are well in reach of many people. Old boats can be made competitive; remember Larry Liggett who repaired 110 and finished 5<sup>th</sup> in the 1999 Nationals? The Fleet at Cedar Point is growing and may reach 23 boats this summer.

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## NIANTIC BAY TO HOST 2000 NATIONALS August 3 - 5

The Niantic Bay Yacht Club will host the 2000 Atlantic Nationals on August 3-5. The annual event is being held much earlier than usual to ensure that both crew and race committee volunteers are available. The Atlantic class has a team of volunteers to provide assistance with the transport of boats to and from Niantic Bay. Contact Norm Peck, III at 860-739-9660 for more information.

In addition, Fox Navigation ([www.FoxNavigation.com](http://www.FoxNavigation.com) or 1-888-724-5369) offers high speed ferry service from Glen Cove, Long Island to New London, CT.

Details on the 2000 Nationals will be sent in June.



[www.nbyc.org](http://www.nbyc.org)

## PRE SEASON SAIL PREP

**By Greg Fisher**

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Just as your car's engine requires routine care, your sails also need consistent, scheduled maintenance. Every so often, your sails should be laid out and carefully inspected. Even though your sails may ultimately end up at a sailmaker, you can save time and money by doing the checkover, and pinpointing and correcting some of the problems yourself.

The construction detail in today's sails has a large effect on durability. New techniques in finishing and new materials have also increased the durability and the life span of all sails. Unless a sail has been abused, it's rare that it will just fall apart. However, "abused" is the key word. Luffing, or when the sail flaps uncontrollably, is the absolute best way to age a sail before its time. A half hour of luffing in a 15-knot breeze can deduct a year or more from a sail's life. If the sail is luffing against a mast or shrouds, the impact is even more severe. Laminated sails can be ruined!

Leaving sails uncovered in sunlight also

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**(Sail Prep, continued)**

ages them prematurely. Of course, where you are in the hemisphere makes a difference as well. Those in the sunny South need to be more concerned about damage from ultraviolet light than those of us up in the gray North. However, UV degradation will occur anywhere, and, over time, can weaken the cloth or threads to the point where even a small breeze could blow the sail apart. Be sure to cover your sails when they're not in use.

Regardless of whatever abuse your sails have endured, let's lay them out, perhaps in your front yard, and give them a visual check.

**Mainsail:** Start at the head of the mainsail and check the rivets in the headboard. They sometimes work loose around the bottom corner and pop out. While this may look devastating, you can fix it by sliding in and tightening some bolts—they'll be as strong as the rivets.

Also check the wear at the boltrope where the sail enters the mast. If there are slugs on your sail, check that the webbing or shackles attaching them to the sail are still intact. Often the webbing holding slugs or slides can wear or tear loose. Resewing the straps is relatively painless. Just grab a needle, palm, and thread and sew it down, gauging the length by a piece of webbing that's intact.

Work down the luff, checking the luff tape for tears or cuts. Pay special attention at reef points and the cunningham-grommet area where the luff rope constantly feeds in and out of the sharper mast slot. If you do find tears in the luff tape, be sure to file and smooth the luff slot in the mast. Also watch those areas around the plastic protectors at the leading edge of full-length battens. Both the inboard end of the pocket and the luff tape are sources of wear and tear.

Battens really don't wear out, but if the wrong battens are used in the wrong

areas, more excessive wear and tear can occur. Use softer tapered battens, especially at the inboard end in the upper pockets, and use progressively stiffer battens lower in the sail. The lowest batten, intended to keep the lower leech straight and firm, can be stiff and untapered. Fiberglass battens can sometimes lose their shape if they're stored twisted, but you can just twist them back into shape.

Be sure that the tack grommet is intact and not distorted. The tack grommet is often deformed because it experiences serious loading. Check the clew grommet as well, as it's also heavily loaded. If a clew grommet fails, it usually pulls aft in the sail rather than down. Look for a split in the cloth just below the clew grommet indicating that the grommet has moved aft and the sailcloth is torn. Unless the grommet is cracked (look it over carefully for hairline fractures), you can just hammer it flat again. Don't crack it as you pound away—it's best to hammer it out on a rubber pad.

As you move aft along the foot, check that the window is smooth with no creases or cracks (more on this under "Jib," below). Look over your leech-line cleats. If they're burned out or on their way, this is the time to replace them. Also check that there's plenty of length in the actual leech cord. A shorter tail can make adjustment nearly impossible.

Check the batten pockets at the inboard end. Pockets usually break down where the batten tip wears the pocket from the inside out. Look at the outboard end where the batten seats itself against the end of the pocket. This area is doubly reinforced, so it's unusual for pockets to wear through, but heavy flogging of the main can sometimes break threads and push the batten out through the top of the pocket.

If you've sailed in a lot of breeze, it's good to check the leech-tape fold between the battens to be sure there's no tearing where the fold meets the sail.

**Jib or Genoa:** Start at the head, and check that the grommet is secure. If your genoa has a luff tape, be sure it's smooth and not frayed. You can clean this up a bit yourself with either a hot knife or a piece of sail-repair tape. If your sail has snaps or hanks, the top one takes the most load, so look closely at it and the grommet that holds it.

As you move down the luff, check the snaps to see if they snap and unsnap easily (but not too easily). Check the windows for any cracks or creases. Unless the window is broken all the way to the edge and into the seam, a good temporary patch can be fashioned with sail repair tape or even heavy duty clear shipping tape over the crack or crease. A window repaired this way can survive for a regatta or two, but it's a good idea to visit your sailmaker for a patch for the long haul. A blown window can tear out a good part of an entire panel if not cared for and then pressed in a breeze.

Be sure to check the leech tape fold where the sail may flap against the mast and shrouds. Is the spreader patch still serviceable? Is it in the right spot? Are your telltales still intact? Again, check out leech-cord cleats. If your jib is fitted with battens, they'll certainly show some wear after hitting the mast. If the pocket shows any wear at all, stick on a piece of sail-repair tape.

**Spinnaker:** Check over the body of the sail, looking for pinholes and tears. Hold it up so that light behind the sail will shine through any holes. The areas that take the greatest abuse are close to the leeches. A quick run around the edge with your hands can find any snags or holes in the tapes. Usually, if the tears are under 2 or 3 inches, sticky back sail-repair tape applied over them will do.

Dacron sail-repair tape, it should be mentioned, is better than nylon tape. Nylon is readily available, less expensive, and comes in plenty of colors, but it isn't nearly as strong or

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**(Sail Prep, continued)**

durable as Dacron. In fact, nylon falls apart quickly, and actually dries up and falls off when exposed to sunlight for any extended period of time. Contact your sailmaker for some Dacron sticky back.

Discerning when a sail is tired and has lost the competitive edge it had when new is always difficult. Sails can show their age in different ways, depending on the intensity and quantity of breeze they've been sailed in. Jibs usually change shape as they age, primarily in the leech; watch for flutter. The aft foot of the sail can become very straight and open. Mains, on the other hand, usually become hooked in the leech as the draft (the deepest part of the sail) moves aft. If you have questions about sail shape or the tuning of the rig to the sails, don't hesitate to call your friendly local sailmaker. Photos in various wind conditions, taken from below the sails looking toward the upper leech, can tell a sailmaker almost all we need to know.

Sails truly don't need any extra special care other than thoughtful storage and regular inspections. Obviously, don't leave sails outside in a barn or garage. I can't imagine crunchy Dacron being tasty, but it seems that when sails are stored close to a field, nesting mice have no problem with a little munching. If my covered boat is parked safely away from these gourmet rodents, I'll leave my sails on the seats all winter. I think it's safer than moving them around a basement or closet, and crunching them by placing things on them.

*One-Design guru Greg Fisher, based in Ohio, is a salesman for North Sails.*

**(Foster's Corner, continued)**

So much for the present, how about the future? The challenges that face us are not new. They have been talked about for years. How do we make our fleets stronger? How do we sustain all of our fleets and establish new fleets? How do we bring in more young people to crew and become boat owners? How do we keep our boats up-to-date, etc.?

The answers are clear: Make owning, crewing, sailing, racing, and being around Atlantics more fun and exciting for more people. The problem is in the details. How to make it all happen!

The sailing literature is full of help. Panelists provide advice on ways to promote sailboat racing. There are success stories about different fleets that have found their answers to the problems. For example, read the Special report on page 29 in the December 1999 / January 2000 issue of Sailing World "One Fleet's Secret to Success". Their secret is their "attention to detail and their timeless efforts to recruit and keep new members".

The Atlantic Rules Committee will continue to spend a lot of time this year on ways to make our class a continuing success but again they welcome and need your input and suggestions.

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE**

<http://www.thegreatatlantic.com>

Our Webmaster, Loralyn Helms reports that there has been over 7,000 visitors to the site. Last August, the traffic was especially heavy as visitors checked in to monitor the Nationals. Compliments on the site have come in from all over the world, including the Royal Naval Yacht Club.

The site is an excellent resource as it includes such things as the North Sails tuning guide, Atlantic Class rules, Sail Plan, Class History and pictures galour!!

**FREE NATIONALS ENTRY!**

**By Norm Peck, III**

**Assistant Regatta Chairman  
Nationals 2000**

In the interest of promoting our class, we are encouraging all members to invite as many guests (potential Atlantic owners) as possible to join them on the water this summer.

On page 7, you will find a Crew/Guest Log to be submitted upon your arrival in Niantic Bay for the 2000 Nationals. Any person that sails with you throughout the summer may be entered on the log once, along with the requested information. (See your Fleet Captain for additional copies of the log.)

The Atlantic owner with the most guests entered on the log will have the basic Nationals entry fee returned.

We have always felt that, since so many Atlantic owners were former crew, the best way to sell the boats is to increase the number of those crew introduced to the boat.

So.....let's give it a shot!!!

**GOOD SAILING!!!!**

## Class Tests New Spinnaker Design

By Bill Healy

Rules Committee Member

Currently the Atlantic Class Rules Committee is doing some testing of a new spinnaker design. What's wrong with the current design you may ask? Well, several things. After spending many hours sail testing with Bill Shore it quickly became apparent that the current spinnaker is very difficult to design due to its outdated measurements, which results in a more expensive product.

Over the years, the spinnaker has seen the most improvements in sail design with the introduction of wind tunnels and computers. Today, spinnakers can be designed to be much more user friendly, especially in lighter wind as we often get in Long Island Sound.

The Class currently has a newly designed spinnaker from Halsey Lidgard Sailmakers. The designer, Peter Wheeler, came up with a new set of parameters which incorporate the latest technology and thinking in spinnaker design. The result is a beautiful looking sail with no bulges or unstableness. The cloth weight was also slightly reduced. The thinking was that with the improvements in sail cloth technology and the way he could orient the cloth with the new design, it would last almost as long as the current weight. Quite a bit of aggravation would also be spared from the crew on those long, light air, downwind legs.

The fleet began its testing of the new sail last August. It will be passed around to the fleets again this summer before any decision on the new design is made. The Rules Committee eagerly awaits your comments. (See class Archives on our web site for more pictures of the spinnaker in use.)



Arvid Brandstrom sailing A-9, Helen Gar, tests the experimental spinnaker at the Janeway Regatta in October 1999.



## Boats for Sale

A-103 ODYSSEY Cape Cod boat, completely refurbished. New AWLGRIP white topsides, light green boot stripe, green non skid deck, all new quality hardware and mast rigging. Custom designed trailer, 2 suits of sails. A top quality beauty. Some deck work, hardware installations still need to be done but all parts available. Sunk cost \$18,500. A reasonable offer accepted. Contact John Rieger 516-323-3812. Or Email [thegreatatlantic@hotmail.com](mailto:thegreatatlantic@hotmail.com).

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A-38 ALLEGRO, Originally converted from wood by Les Goodwin for his own use, her hull has been completely redone by Cape Cod Shipbuilding and she is better than new. This boat is at Cape Cod Shipbuilding and awaits her new owner's specifications on fittings and hardware. Needs spars and sails. Price is negotiable.

Contact: Billie Lauricella, 255 Millbank Ave, Greenwich, CT 06830-6618. 203 661-4926 (phone) 203 661-4921 (fax) Email [laurice@banet.net](mailto:laurice@banet.net) or Email [thegreatatlantic@hotmail.com](mailto:thegreatatlantic@hotmail.com).

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A-111 CYBELLE White Seafarer in sailing condition. Full inventory of new or slightly used sails. Some soft spots on deck, needs work. Located at Captains Cove, Bridgeport, CT. Price negotiable. Contact: Tom Wilson 203 853 3622 Bob Torok 203 255-3025 or Joe Olson 203 227-8143 or Email [thegreatatlantic@hotmail.com](mailto:thegreatatlantic@hotmail.com).

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A-95 ZEST The boat has been stripped with parts in boat. Bottom sandblasted and ready for fairing. Comes with truck chassis trailer. Make offer. Contact: Jan Van Breems 203 227-8200 or Email [thegreatatlantic@hotmail.com](mailto:thegreatatlantic@hotmail.com).

## Atlantic Class Association 2000 Rules Committee and Officers

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## Fleet Captains

*Cedar Point Yacht Club  
Cold Spring Harbor Beach Club  
Kolegewidgwok Yacht Club  
Niantic Bay Yacht Club*

Bob Torok  
Ward Campbell  
Bart Hayes and Tim Britton  
Norm Peck, III

## New Boats for 2001?

The Rules Committee has been asked to look into a new boat order for 2001. Please contact Sean O'Connor if you are in the market for a new boat.

## Charter wanted for Nationals

Gerard Feddema, previous owner of #107, sold his Atlantic and moved back to Belgium last year. He has a crew lined up and would like to charter a boat for the 2000 Nationals. Please contact Scott Reichhelm if your boat is available for this event.

## 2000 Dues Reminder

### Active Member \$85

Carries voting privileges; required to skipper a boat in the Nationals.

### Sustaining Member \$50

For co-owners and former owners with continuing interest in the class.

### Associate Member \$25

For family members, crew, friends and other non owners who wish to receive Class Newsletter and other Class Notices.

Make check payable to:

**Atlantic Class Association**

Mail to: Scott Reichhelm  
18 Burritts Landing South  
Westport, CT 06880

(Include name, address, boat name and number and email address).

## ATLANTIC CLASS ASSOCIATION 71st Annual Meeting January 27, 2000



George and Carole Reichhelm



John Kantor and Georgie Silk Liggett



### ***The Crew of A-137:***

Norm Peck, III  
Dave Dickerson  
Don Wyllie  
Don Landers  
Rob Wyllie





**A-109 Fire Boss** skippered by **Dick Morris**:  
Winner of the 1999 Harry Williams Award  
presented to the skipper that sails the most  
races in one season.

**Atlantic Class Association**  
Founded 1929  
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**The Great Atlantic**  
**Newsletter of The Atlantic Class Association**