



# The Potter Yachter

Newsletter of the Longest Lasting West Wight Potter Club in the World

June 2023

## After Action Report: Moss Landing By Bud Kerner



Mike Swartz, Eric Zilbert, and Goose Gossman relaxing at the Elkhorn Yacht Club Photo credit: Jon Barber

Seven boats all arrived on Friday at the Elk Horn Yacht Club. The captains were Jon Barber in his Montgomery 17, George Wehrfritz in his Sparrow 16, Goose in his highly modified Potter 19, Eric Zilbert in his Potter 19, Dan Phy in his Montgomery 15, Mike Swartz in his Potter 19, and me in my Potter 14. I messed up my mast step on the P19, and the new one didn't quite get here in time to make the repairs.  
(Story continued pg 5)

## Please renew your [membership](#). (Dues \$50/family)

Mail a check made out to Potter Yachters to Goose Gossman, 865 West I Street, Benicia, CA 94510

Ship's Stores for sale. Order from Goose:  
Show your colors! Fly an official Club Burgee on your next sail!

Burgees	\$25.00
Bumper Stickers	\$ 2.50
Patches	\$ 2.50
Info Packets	\$20.00 (Primarily P-15 information)

Or head over to the CafePress website and buy a Cap, Stein, or T-Shirt with the club logo on it.

Visit: <http://www.cafepress.com/potteryachters>

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## The Commodore's Corner



By Phil Marcelis

We have a couple of good sails coming up in the month of June and I hope you'll join. I really enjoy the hospitality of the Westpoint

Harbor location with quick access to the South Bay, and I'm looking forward to finally sailing out to Catalina Island and experiencing the area I've heard so much about. That should be a fun week!

I've been pretty consumed with moving out of our home of 18 years into a smaller place. It's amazing how much stuff you can accumulate. Each time I thought, "Well, we're basically done moving" there would be a few "just a few more things" and the SUV would be full again!

The biggest thing I'll miss is the driveway where I used to store and work on the boat. My final acts of home ownership were to acquire a slip for *Merri Time* at the Berkeley Marina and make use of the large driveway for the last time to build a P-19 rudder out of a piece of plastic given to me by venerable Potter Yachter Rich McDevitt as well as remove the hardware from my trailer, grind down all the rust spots, spray with rustproofing primer and finish in white, and then reinstall the hardware before dropping off the trailer at the storage lot. Thus begins the next chapter.

I'll see you out on the water!

Regards,  
Phil — 






Club Events on the Horizon		<a href="http://potter-yachters.org/calendar">potter-yachters.org/calendar</a>
June 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Redwood City	Phil Marcelis
Join the Potters for a daysail to the wreck of the Thompson. Bring snacks for the afterparty at the docks.		
June 10 <sup>th</sup>	Delta Ditch Run	Not a Potter event
The Stockton Sailing Club's premiere event. 65 nm downwind from Richmond to Stockton.		
June 19 <sup>th</sup> – 26 <sup>th</sup>	Catalina Island (SoCal Potters)	Gary Nitta
Sail to Catalina Island with the SoCal Potters.		
July 7 <sup>th</sup> – 9 <sup>th</sup>	Benicia to Napa	Goose Gossman
Depending on wind and tides, this can be an intermediate sail. Launch in Benicia and sail to Napa. Stay overnight at the Napa Valley Marina followed by a sail back to Benicia on Sunday.		



Sail to the Wine Country!  
Upcoming: Benicia to Napa Sail  
July 7th-9th  
Sail Host: Goose Gossman

Why whine, when we can wine? 7/7-7/9. Launch at Benicia Marina 5th street ramp on Friday. There's a minus tide at 12:01pm, so splash a couple of hours before or after. Sail, dine, and overnight at the [Benicia Marina](#). (Follow the link to make reservations). Saturday morning depart noonish on end of ebb/slack tide and catch the flood up to Napa Valley Marina for a late afternoon arrival. Beautiful and protected waters, usually in 8-12k reaching conditions. We have again reserved the guest dock adjacent to the fascinating "boatyard of broken dreams," and will probably have a dockside pizza party...

Sunday return to Benicia; Depart Napa noonish catching the end of the ebb (low 12:42) for a glorious downwinder onto the Carquinez Strait as we pick up the flood tide at the confluence of San Pablo Bay/Mare Island Strait. High 8:17pm, so easy retrieval. Those who want to launch Saturday morning can also splash at the 9th Street Park ramp and meet up on the water. VHF ch69. Skipper's meeting at 11am Saturday. About 20 miles or 4-6 hours each way, in amazing surroundings. — 

Directions to 9<sup>th</sup> street ramp, Benicia  
**From I-80:**  
Exit onto I-780 East towards Benicia  
Exit at Military West  
Take an immediate right on K street along the water  
Proceed 2 stops and turn right at 9<sup>th</sup> Street Park Launch  
**From I-680:**  
Exit onto I-780 West towards Benicia  
Exit at Southhampton and turn left on 7<sup>th</sup> street.  
Proceed down the hill past the jog at Taco Bell  
Turn right on K, Left at 9<sup>th</sup>  
**To Marina Ramp:**  
Exit 5<sup>th</sup> St, go south to the end, turn right into the lot

**Upcoming event:****Catalina/Two Harbors Cruise (SoCal Potters) – June 19-26**

Sail Host: Gary Nitta

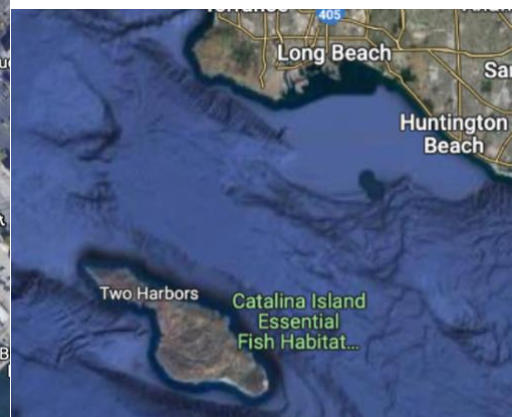
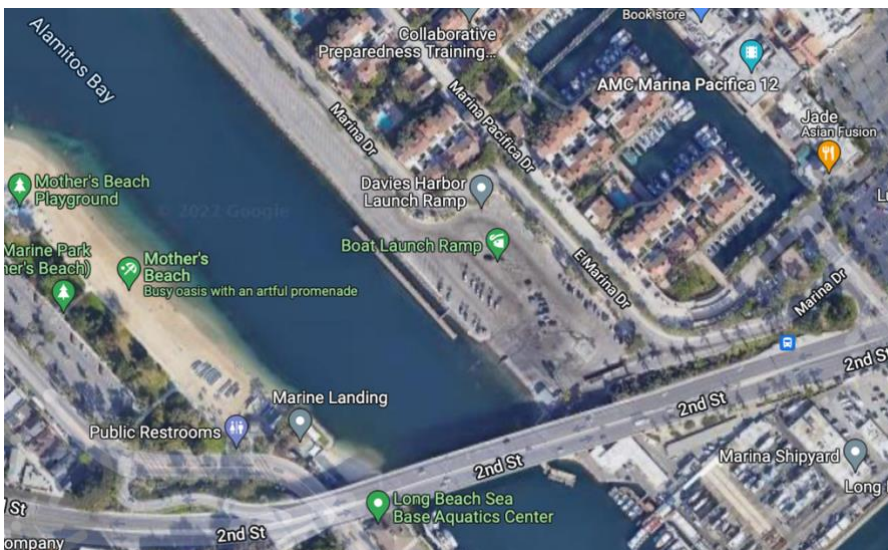


Here is a short synopsis for the Catalina sail. It's around a 30 Mile trip from Long Beach to Two Harbors. Conditions are usually calm in the morning hours with the wind picking up about halfway to the island. As we arrive we will tie up to the stringline, which costs \$35 per night. A dinghy or kayak will be needed to get to shore. We will depart for Catalina on Monday morning. Most folks spend the night before (Sunday night) we depart in a slip at [Alamitos Bay](#), Long Beach. Slips are also available at [Shoreline Marina](#), Long Beach. We will return on Saturday. Most folks also spend another night when we return in a slip before pulling out on Sunday morning. Vehicle and trailer parking is available at [Davies Launch Ramp](#) for \$12 per night. Here is a [video](#) showing the approach to the launch ramp that may be helpful. More information will be provided on the [SoCal Potters Facebook page](#).

**Directions** to Davies Boat Ramp, Long Beach, CA from Northern Ca.  
For your GPS, the boat ramp address is:  
6204 Marina Dr, Long Beach, CA 90803.

**Via Hwy 101 South:**

Follow US-101 S to I-405. Take I-405 S to N Studebaker Rd in Long Beach. Take exit 24B from I-405 S. Turn right onto 2nd. Turn right onto E Marina, then left to stay on E Marina. Follow E Marina for ¼ mile to the entrance to the boat ramp area.





(Moss Landing continued from page 1)

Friday afternoon Dan, George, and Eric went out sailing for a while.

When the club opened for cocktails, we all headed that way. Dan had not had anything to eat all day, so he opted for the Fish Harvest Restaurant in the parking lot. While sitting at the bar talking to Brian Ackerman, the club's Port Captain, I discovered he thought we were sailing to Monterey on Saturday and coming back on Sunday. It turns out he had no room for us Saturday night. That left us two options, one: just sail on Saturday, or two: sail to Monterey Saturday and come back Sunday.

#### Moss Landing Participants:

- Bud Kerner – *Cat's Meow*, WWP 19
- Jon Barber – *Ol' 44*, Montgomery 17
- George Wehrfritz – *Betty Sparrow*, Sparrow 16
- Eric Zilbert – *Riptide*, WWP 19
- Mike Swartz – *Burgundy Splash*, WWP 19
- Dan Phy – *Six*, Montgomery 17
- Goose Gossman – *Regale*, WWP18



Eric Zilbert waves from *Riptide*  
Photo credit: George Wehrfritz

The weather looked reasonable for Saturday. The forecast was for winds gusting to 25 knots in Monterey Saturday afternoon. If we left early enough, we could miss most of that. The group decided to wait until the next morning to decide.

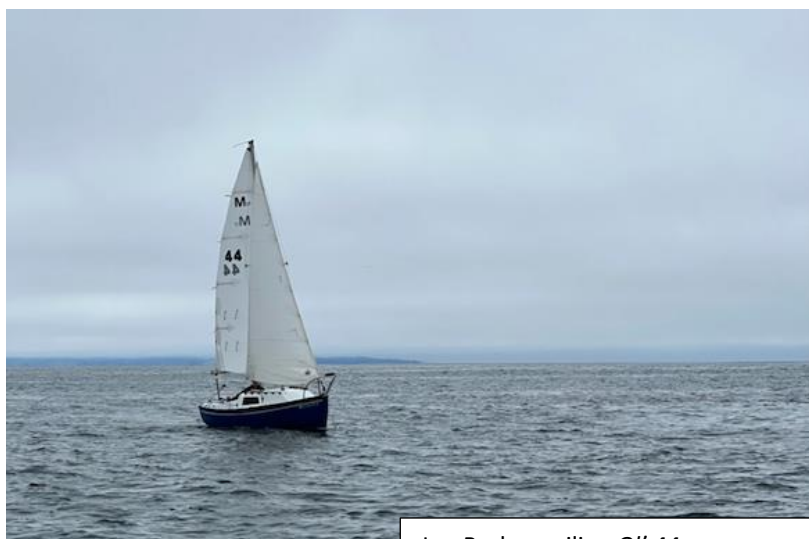
We had a couple of pizzas at the club for dinner, and as the sun was setting over Moss Landing, we headed for our boats. That is everyone except George, he lives close by and went home to sleep in a real bed.

As I mentioned earlier, I had never slept in the P14. I put my gear in several plastic crates and stored them on the port side of the cabin. The cooler I left in the cockpit. My sleeping bag took up the starboard side of the cabin. With the door out and the hatch open, it was easy to slide into the sleeping bag. Getting the door back in was a chore from the sleeping bag. The temperature was in the low 50's, so it was a cool night.

I am an early riser at 5 am I was up and out of the boat. Everyone else was still sleeping. I made a cup of coffee as it was just too cold to sit in the cockpit. The temperature was in the 40's. There was no way I could sit up in the cabin, so I had to slouch way down putting a leg on each side of the centerboard housing. I closed the hatch but left the door open. I started the stove and temperature wise it was comfortable.

While drinking my coffee I turned on NOAA. The forecast had worsened. They were now forecasting winds of 25 knots on Saturday and were talking about gusts to 35 knots on Sunday. While sitting in the cabin I decided I would go home. It seemed like it was forever, but eventually, I heard voices and knew the gang was up. After sitting in that awkward position for over an hour I had one heck of a time getting out of the boat. Dan, Mike, and I decided to take the boats out Saturday morning and go home. The rest of the gang decided to sail around the Moss Landing area for the day.

(Continued next page)



Jon Barber sailing *Ol' 44*  
Photo credit: George Wehrfritz



Mike Swartz on *Burgundy Splash*  
Photo credit: George Wehrfritz

*The following is from an email Eric sent me about Saturday's sail:*

We watched the whales. You could see all the way to Pacific Grove. It was a perfect day to go over to Monterey, but George, Mike, and Goose said they did not think they wanted to do it. I was all for going, especially since Mike was willing to ferry us to our trailers.

Unfortunately (or fortunately) Jon Barber did not know about that offer, and so also declined to go to Monterey. In the end, we had a good sail and saw a fair amount of whale action. Goose and I decided we would spend the night. Everyone else headed for home. On the way out of Moss, Jon Barber toasted a trailer wheel bearing. He disassembled the hub but could not determine the size of the bearing. Jon came back to Moss to figure out what we could do.

I don't know if you were there Saturday morning when Larry Stephens came by. (Larry is a P19 owner). In any case, he lives on Elkhorn Slough and came down and talked to us and checked out our boats. It turns out that his son saw Jon's boat on the side of Dolan Road and told his father. Because Jon left a note with his phone number, Larry called him and offered to help. He also notified the police who said they would keep an eye on the boat and trailer overnight. Jon stayed with Goose in his boat on the hard at Moss. I stayed on the back side of the kayak dock where I have stayed many times before. On Sunday morning I pulled out, and we all went to meet



George Wehrfritz and Mike Swartz  
Photo credit: Jon Barber

Larry at Jon's boat. Larry was already pulling the races and getting the hub ready for new bearings and seals. They were eventually able to replace the bearings and send Jon on his way. Goose and I continued on after photographing the mayhem and got to Benicia at about noon. Jon was glad we had not gone to Monterey as he would have been that much more tired when the bearing fried.

Missed you on the sail. It was really flat for Monterey Bay, and the wind was just perfect for Pottering.



Goose and Larry Stephens talking Potters  
Photo credit: Jon Barber





## Potter Yachter Poker Regatta Draws to a Full House.

By Michael Kennedy



Phil, Jim Hunt and Kevin Crowder preparing to ante up  
Photo credit: Phil Marcelis

Once all the ICE forms and next of kin contacts were established, questions were answered, and answers were questioned. Five official entries and five boats on the line for a winner take all pot of \$50.00. The first card was dealt at the meeting, one to each captain as receipt of an ante and registration. The directions to the remaining points of sail and 'rounding marks' were distributed. Captains were on their own to make calculations for time and tide and to determine a departure and direction time.

The start of the SSC Long Distance race, also occurring that day, was a pleasant distraction and a preview of the conditions for the Potter warriors sailing that day, as always, under alien skies. Four Etchells, sailed by the elite cadre of SSC sailors, demonstrated an intense level of competition, unfolding in real time during their pre-start windup in a strong current under a threatening sky.

Due to short, drenching showers, foulies were donned and Vice Commodore of the Potter Yachters, Jon Barber, showed off the 3.0 version of his aerodynamic, portable-and-quickly-deployable-dedeployable (stowable) bimini. A brilliant bit of design that hasn't changed much in the last three months and was more than equal to the steadily building breeze. It also allegedly provides a great deal of shade but, as there was no sunshine at the time, the claim remains to be fact checked.

Of the total boats that took on the challenge, two were from the Stockton Sailing club and three from the Potter Yachters. It came as a surprise to some at the SSC that, though there are a passel, nay a plethora of Potters in the world and in the Potter Yachters club, you do not need to own a Potter to join the Potter Yachters. In fact, the preponderance of the Potter Yachters membership prefer sailing something other than a Potter and so a paucity of genuine Potters was present. (Continued next page)

May 6, 2023, dawned as scheduled but it was sort of hard to tell through the overcast and spit-full rain. The skippers meeting, also as scheduled, went off at nine, with Stockton Sailing Club's (SSC) Walt Andrews as a guest, sitting in to "see what the Potters are all about." Potential new SSC member Ernie McCleary came to crew for one of the other competitors but left his Catalina 25 at home on the skewer where it has been for the best part of a decade. (A long story and one I promise to tell as soon as I get it straight...and he joins the club.) When late entry registrations were completed, there were five boats ready to rig and take on a stormy course. For Potters, rigging means stepping a mast and launching off a trailer across the street. There are many ingenious methods, but many hands make light(er) work.



Phil Marcelis on Dock A  
Photo credit: Mike Kennedy

Potter Yachter Commodore Phil Marcelis, sailing out of Berkeley, brought *Merri Time*, his impeccable Catalina 22 wing keel. Vice-Commodore Jon Barber, repping the 209 Modesto style, brought *Ol' 44*; a dark blue go-to-weather witch, aka a Montgomery 17. Jim Hunt came downhill from Twain Harte with *Blue Moon*, a water-ballasted Santana 2023 and brought along Kevin Crowder as crew. Rounding out the fleet and representing for the SSC, Mark Sailer and his co-captain Joe Osbourne, wearing a custom accordion life jacket, sailed *Wind*, a Vagabond 17 from The Museum of Sail collection. Your author used his newly acquired Com-Pac 19, which is as yet unnamed, to make for an odd numbered fleet. Eight sailors, five boats, one squeeze box but no Potters puttering or even putting up a pretense of participating within our purview.



Approaching the Stockton Sailing Club on the San Joaquin River Photo credit: Phil Marcelis

The second leg of the regatta consisted of checking the expanded services available at the newly renovated and renamed Pacific Boat Works (formerly Ladd's Marina) where a second card was dealt by Michele Wagoner or her representative. By now the breeze was well up and so was the channel. A strong current was evident at the Etchell's start and if anything had increased by the time all Poker boats were under way. The choices were downwind and down current to Windmill Cove where manager Jerry Wolfe would deal you a card or upwind and up current to the Stockton Downtown Marina Office where Director of Marina Operations, Chris Magro, would deal you a card. Yes, you must dock your boat and walk a few yards to sail the course. Plenty of time to look around, grab chow, rehydrate or dehydrate at both stops. Final mark was at 6 PM on A dock. With boats tied up, a sailor's beverage in hand, the last card was dealt by a cut from the South Dakota Centennial deck. Like the big dog he is, Ernie McCleary cut to an Ace of Spades.

This Poker Run featured a different deck of cards (unique and ancient) at each station. In this format it would have been possible to have five of a kind. With the last card being common to all hands and cut from an uncut deck, before the eyes of the competitors, by a participant with no money involved, it kept the suspense real until the reveal.

(Continued next page)



Photo credit: Phil Marcelis



*Wind*, sailed by Mark Sailer and Joe Osbourne  
Photo credit: Mike Kennedy



**Poker Regattar Participants:**

- Mike Kennedy – *Unnamed*, Compac 19
- Jon Barber – *Ol' 44*, Montgomery 17
- Phil Marcellis – *Merri Time*, Catalina 22
- Jim Hunt and Kevin Crowder – *Blue Moon*, Santana 2023
- Mike Sailor and Joe Osbourne – *Wind*, Vagabond 17



The Stockton Sailing Club  
Photo credit: Phil Marcellis



"Feast of the Victors"  
Photo credit: Phil Marcellis

By this time, the Feast of the Victors was underway and it was delicious, courtesy of Linda Driver and her swarthy six-hour-marinated asada, rice, beans and tortilla fixings. And by this time life was glowing. The weather had steadily improved throughout the day and become gorgeous. One unnamed but true Potter Yachter sailor skipped the meal to sail a broad reach into the sunset. He just kept going for all we knew as we did not see him again. After the food was served, Joe Osbourn and members of Da Eryth Band performed some classic as well as original songs on instrumentation ranging from viola to squeeze box with percussion and a variety of strings. Eclectic, electric and to a pleasant degree eccentric.

When all was said and done, the most deserving sailor, the only one who actually completed the course, Commodore Phil Marcellis, took the pot with two pairs, Aces and Queens, prevailing over the competing hand, a compilation of cards collected by some who went one way and some who went the other. In both hands the last common ace allowed the finalists to

each snag two pair, but Aces and Eights really is a losing hand. In short, a good time was had by all. Da Eryth Band music was augmented with the banjo-picking stylings of Potter Poker Regattar Champ, Commodore Marcellis, and some laid back reggae grooves by your modest, humble, self-effacing but slappin' author on the bass. It was a bonus win for competitors and onlookers alike and a big shout out to Joe Osbourne for making this portion of the program happen. Would we do it again? I would.

The three remaining Potter Yachters, who spent a mostly quite night on their boats on A dock, listening to the clanking of poorly secured halyards on largely unused boats over on B dock, felt it was an enjoyable way to spend time boating. Joe Osbourne, who has been contemplating joining Encinal Yacht Club, and his musician friends, were so impressed with the friendliness and facilities at the SSC, he is going to reconsider his application. Joe has also expressed an interest in returning to shoot a video with the whole band for a promotional effort in late summer. I suggested he consider the spectacle of the Ditch Run finish line as a backdrop.

Look for a modified version of the Potter Yachter Poker Regattar next year. Perhaps an event with a less idiosyncratic spelling, an additional stop along the way, more participants and a larger (a much larger) pot. This event raised \$120 for the Stockton Sailing Foundation, and I thank the Potter Yachters for their donations to the cause of encouraging youth sailing. That is all.



The winning hand Photo credit: Phil Marcellis



Jon Barber displaying his bimini  
Photo credit: Mike Kennedy



The author, Mike Kennedy, sailing an actual  
Potter 15, *Small Axe*  
Photo credit: Tom Snyder

## Officer's Club

Commodore:  
Phil Marcelis  
Catalina 22, *Merri Time*

P-15 Fleet Captain:  
Bud Kerner  
P-14,

Secretary/Treasurer:  
Jim "Goose" Gossman  
P-19 *Regale*

Vice-Commodore:  
Jon Barber  
Montgomery 17, *Ol' 44*

P-19 Fleet Captain:  
Eric Zilbert  
P-19, #629, *Riptide*

Website:  
[www.potter-yachters.org](http://www.potter-yachters.org)

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Sharon Soule'  
Balboa 21, *Nighthawk*

Webmaster:  
Phil Marcelis

Facebook:  
[PotterYachters](https://www.facebook.com/PotterYachters)





'Goose' Gossman  
865 West I Street  
Benicia, CA 94510

## With a Grain of Salt

The **Potter Yachter** is a forum for exchange of ideas and information among West Wight Potter (and other mini-yacht) sailors. But we Potter Yachters are mostly a bunch of amateurs finding our way by trial and error and luck.

You will probably find some very helpful tips or ideas in the **Potter Yachter** that will enhance your sailing experience, but you may also find some ill-advised suggestions or ideas that just don't work for your particular boat, your sailing environment, your level of sailing experience, or your boat-working skills. So please understand that any sailing tutorials, suggested boat modifications, recommended cruises, etc., are the opinion of the author, based presumably on his or her personal experience and judgment at the time the article or letter was written.

If a Potter Yachter believes s/he has a good idea and submits it to the newsletter for publication, we will usually pass it on to the rest of you in the newsletter, but take it "with a grain of salt" and a large portion of your own good judgment, and perhaps get a second opinion before undertaking a modification or cruise or sailing technique you read about in the **Potter Yachter** (or any other publication).

- The Editor

