



# The Potter Yachter

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

September 2023

## After Action Report: Cruiser Challenge XXIV

By Alan Koepf



Ahoy! Here is a short report on our yearly bacchanal in beautiful Monterey. For the most part we had beautiful weather with wind, but not too much wind. This was my 5th year attending, but my first year as Sail host. I frankly had no idea what I was getting myself into. Fortunately for me and the rest of the participants, I had plenty of backup with Sharon Soule and our always helpful Commodore, Phil.

(Story continued pg 4)



## 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
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Patches	\$ 2.50
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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

Well, the season is winding down. As I look at the calendar, I see three more official sailing events before our Annual Meeting scheduled for next year at OYC. Reflecting on the sails from this past year, it really has run the gamut of interesting times: cancellations, great sailing, mild winds, harsh winds... varied experiences, really. The one constant is my fellow club members who help make these events the worthy experiences that they are. I'm looking forward to the sails through the end of this year, but I'm also anticipating next year's events and considering ways to encourage new and prospective members to get out and enjoy our events with existing members.

So I'd like to ask a favor. I'd like you to answer a short survey...


- 1) Where is your favorite sailing location?
- 2) How did you get introduced to the Potter-Yachters?
- 3) What do you think new members are looking for in a club?
- 4) And, how do you think we could go about finding new members?
- 5) Finally, I'd like to get your sailing photos for the calendar expected to be published in January.

If you're reading this, I'd love to hear from you. You can send a message to "Commodore" via this webpage: [https://potter-yachters.org/officer\\_mail.html](https://potter-yachters.org/officer_mail.html)

One suggestion I've heard was to have something like a "work day"; a non-sailing day where people can get help with problems on their boat that they're not sure how to approach. I know we have some very experienced members in the club, so I wonder if it's just a matter of finding a place to gather and picking a day when those members would be willing to offer advice?

I know I have a bit of an independent, solo-sailor attitude (and I suspect many in the club are like me in that regard). But having just recently installed a masthead antenna as one of several projects, I also know that some things are just easier with two people. Further, having installed my autopilot nearly **two years** after purchasing it, I think it could be helpful to have someone reassure you that the hole you're reluctant to put in your boat *needs* to be drilled.

Regards,

Phil — 

Club Events on the Horizon		<a href="https://potter-yachters.org/calendar">potter-yachters.org/calendar</a>
September 16-17	Loch Lomond	Goose Gossman
Join us for a nice day or two of sailing on the bay and good food at Andy's Market		
Sept 30 – Oct 1	Moss Landing to Monterey	Bud Kerner
Beginning to advanced sail depending on weather conditions. Keep an eye on the forecast and join us for a nice trip to Monterey and back!		
October 2-10	<a href="#">Fleet Week Events</a>	(Not Potter Event)
Watch the Blue Angels fly over the bay. Parade of ships. Ship tours. Air Show. Main venue at Marina Green, San Francisco.		
October 28-29	Delta Bridges	Bud Kerner
Don't miss the last of the Delta Bridges sails. Conditions could be anywhere from no wind to very challenging. Bring gas and a motor capable of going 3 mph.		
January 7, 2024	Annual Meeting	Jon Barber/Goose

Upcoming: September 30th - October 1st, 2023

## Moss Landing to Monterey Overnight

Sailhost: Bud Kerner



Here's another chance to gather with fellow Potter Yachters for a sail to Monterey. If you haven't been there with the Potter Yachters, you don't know what you're missing, so plan on joining us for a weekend of good food, good sailing, and good friends. Weather permitting, we will have a group sail from Moss Landing to Monterey on Saturday the 30<sup>th</sup> with an overnight at the docks of [Monterey City Marina](#). October is usually very pleasant on the bay. There is very little fog and moderate wind. That said, one never knows for sure, including [NOAA](#), what the weather might be.

We'll sail back on Sunday the 1<sup>st</sup>, if the weather holds, otherwise we will shuttle our trailers from Moss Landing to retrieve and derig in Monterey.

We will plan on gathering in Moss Landing on Saturday, September 30<sup>th</sup> so we can all be in the water by 10 am. Usually the morning breeze starts to fill in at this time. The sail is approximately 13 NM, and we should be in Monterey by about 4 pm. The [Elk Horn Yacht Club](#) has given us permission to use their guest dock Friday and Sunday, for those of us who would like to launch on Friday and stay over Sunday for a \$7 beer and burger.


I will reserve slips for us in Monterey. Please let me know by Thursday September 28<sup>th</sup> if you plan to make the sail. Monterey Harbor monitors channel 5 and when you get close to the harbor you can call them on your VHF radio. They will tell you what slip you are assigned to. That is much easier than tying up at the small dock next to the launch ramp and going to the office for assignment.

Directions: Get onto Hwy 101, then take exit 336 (Hwy 156) towards Monterey Peninsula. Take Hwy 183 through Castroville to Hwy 1 north, then turn left into the parking lot just after the bridge over Elkhorn Slough.



There's plenty of trailer parking in Moss Landing, but the fee schedule is a bit confusing. Once you decide what to pay, you put exact change into the "iron ranger" using the envelopes provided. The credit card pay station appears to have been removed. Our best guess so far is that it's about \$35 for launching and two days of parking. It's a long walk to the Harbormaster's office if you need to make change. See the [August 2016 Potter Yachter \(page 11\)](#) if you want a firsthand account of this trip. Of course the option is always available for anyone who wants to launch at Monterey and sail out to greet us there.

It should be said that Monterey Bay sailing can be challenging, so it's not recommended for beginners. Keep in mind that YOU are the final authority on whether you can make the trip, so study the chart, check on the weather, and be ready to drive your boat to Monterey, if necessary. We'll probably meet up at the [English Pub](#) for dinner on Saturday night, either way. Looking forward to seeing you in Moss Landing!

See you there — 



(Cruiser Challenge continued from page 1)

The only drawback to the festivities may have been the wild and crazy sea lions, which were in abundance this year again. Their ruckus barking which seemed to go on all night undoubtedly bothered some of us, but I was able to sleep through it.

The races went well, and everyone seemed to have a good time. No one was lost overboard. No one capsized. No major catastrophes. Only a few instances of cheating...ahem! You know who you are...'nuff said.

#### Cruiser Challenge XXIV Participants:

- Jon Barber and Constan Laliotitis– *Ol' 44*, Montgomery 17
- Jim Hunt and Kevin Crowder – *Blue Moon*, Santana 2023
- George Wehrfritz – *Betty Sparrow*, Sparrow 16
- David and Sharon Soule– *Nighthawk*, Balboa 21
- Eric Zilbert and Goose Gossman– *Riptide*, WWP 19
- Alan Koepf and Phil Marcelis – *Napili Breeze*, Santana 2023
- Mark Sabin – *Half Fool*, Compac 16
- Rob Samson and Dennis Vaders – *Vagabond*, Vagabond 17
- Ron Dietel – *Ultimate* 20
- Jens Kaemmerer and Dana Suverkrop- *Krash*, Santana 22
- Mike Swartz – *Burgundy Splash*, WWP19
- Danny Ward – *Baby*, Montgomery 15

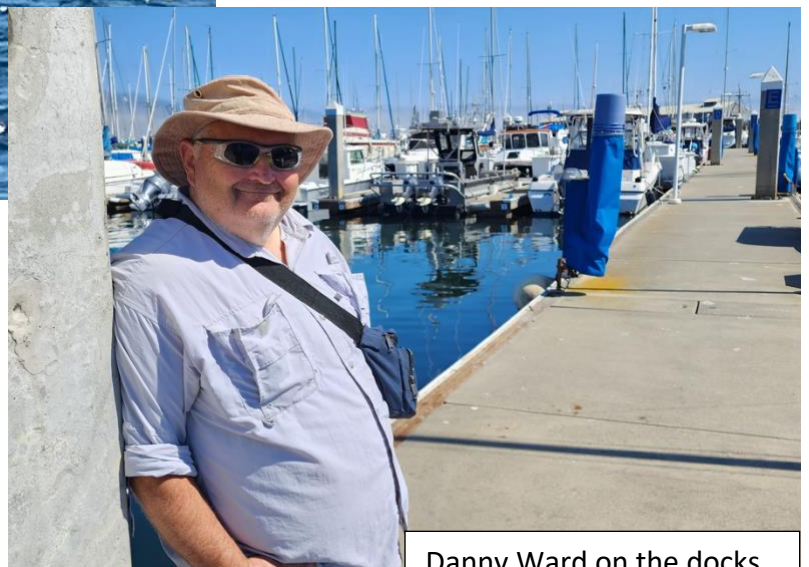


One of the great things this year was seeing folks we haven't seen in a while. Danny Ward joined us on his Montgomery 15, *Baby* and won the small boat class.

Photo: Mike Swartz

Results of the two races were tallied up and winners received their Award Certificates at dinner that night at the Monterey London Bridge Pub. Turnout this year was good. Much better than last year. We discussed how the event has changed over the years. I believe there are potential opportunities for improvement. Bring your ideas to our next annual meeting (e.g., possible sponsorship and ways to increase participation) for next year's quarter-century cruiser challenge! A pleasure sailing with all of you.

Alan



Danny Ward on the docks.  
Photo: Rob Samson

Four boats competed in the medium class.  
Photo: Vicki Anderson



Jon Barber was joined on *Ol' 44* by Constantinos Laliotis to take first place.  
Photo: Vicki Anderson



Eric Zilbert, sailing on *Riptide* with Goose Gossman, took second place in the class and First Place Potter in the challenge.  
Photo: Vicki Anderson



Rob Samson with visiting crew Dennis Vaders on *Vagabond* took third place in the class.  
Photo: Goose Gossman



Competition was hot in the Big Boat class with 3 Santanas competing against a Balboa 21 and an Ultimate 20.

Photo: Vicki Anderson



Ron Dietel joined us from SoCal in his new to him Ultimate 20. This was his first time sailing this boat and he and crew member Todd handily won the big boat class.

Photo: Mike Swartz



Jens Kemmerer, sailing with his son and Dana Suverkrop on his Santana 22, *Krash*, took second in the class.

Photo: Mike Swartz



Alan Koepf and Phil Marcellis sailed Alan's Santana 2023C, *Napili Breeze*, to a third place finish in the class.

Photo: Mike Swartz



After the racing, the partying started. *Blue Moon* and *Riptide* were the local hot spots!



Photo: Mike Swartz



Photo: Phil Marcelis



Photo: Phil Marcelis

Beautiful shot of the marina with *Vagabond* and the Ultimate 20 on the end tie.



Photo: Rob Samson



Awards were handed out during dinner at the London Pub.



Photos: Mike Swartz  
And Phil Marcelis





Mike Swartz generously volunteered to act as committee boat on *Burgundy Splash*. He also got to do a little sailing.  
Photo: Vicki Anderson



The omnipresent sea lions.  
Photo: Rob Samson



George Wehrfritz looking very serious on *Betty Sparrow*. He did very well in the second race.  
Photo: Phil Marcelis



*Blue Moon* with her crew of four. Jim and Kevin were joined by Becky and Rose.  
Photo: Phil Marcelis



## Sailing on Monterey Bay (According to Chat GPT)

Story and photos by Sharon Soule (with help from Chat GPT)



David and I just returned from our yearly sailing trip to Monterey, and I thought I'd write an article for the newsletter about it. Seriously though, I could simply direct you to last year's article and skip the writing part altogether. Monterey never disappoints and this year was no exception. Take out the power outage and add in a bunch of dolphins, and it's pretty much the same article. So rather than repeating myself, I decided to play with Chat GPT and see what it had to say about our sailing trip this year.

I started by telling it to write an article about sailing in Monterey Bay and it gave me the headline "Sailing the Serene Waters of Monterey Bay: A Nautical Adventure." Not a bad start... Not

sure I would describe the sailing as "serene," but we did reef only once—on the last day—and we had the spinnaker up once, so maybe...

*Nestled along the ruggedly picturesque coastline of California, Monterey Bay is a sailor's paradise. This stunning stretch of the Pacific Ocean offers a captivating blend of natural beauty, maritime history, and an abundance of marine life. Sailing in Monterey Bay is not just an adventure; it's a journey into the heart of the ocean's mystique.*

A little flowery, but not entirely inaccurate. Continue...

*Monterey Bay's allure is evident from the moment you set foot on its shores. The bay is sheltered from the open ocean by the Monterey Peninsula and is home to some of the most breathtaking coastal landscapes you'll find anywhere. Verdant cliffs, sandy beaches, and dramatic rocky outcrops provide a scenic backdrop for your nautical escapade.*

I'm sold. Let's get to the sailing, though.

*Monterey Bay offers a diverse range of sailing experiences, catering to both seasoned sailors and novices alike. Whether you're chartering a boat or have your own vessel, there's something for everyone:*

Chat GPT goes on to list several options: day sails, sunset cruises, whale watching, racing, and multiday adventures. No matter what you choose, you will be able to "soak in the bay's beauty," and "witness majestic creatures in their natural habitat." Races are "exhilarating" and you can "explore nearby islands and coves."

[Insert record scratching sound here...] Islands? Coves? Anybody remember any islands around Monterey? The only island like objects I've ever seen are the rocks off Point Piños. And I'm not eager to explore those anytime soon. And as far as coves go, the last time I looked the majority of Monterey Bay is bordered by an unfriendly and downright scary lee shore. Maybe it considers Moss Landing to be a "cove."

Still, ChatGPT was kind enough to inform me about some "sailing practicalities" that I should investigate, such as weather, marinas and services, wildlife etiquette, safety, and permits.



*Safety should always be a top priority. Ensure you have life jackets, proper navigation equipment and knowledge of local boating regulations.*

It's good to know someone cares.

Still, as flowery as ChatGPT was with the adjectives, I couldn't help noticing that it wasn't exactly an article about *our* experience sailing on Monterey Bay. While it got the broad strokes right, it completely failed to mention the fine details. No mortal combat with the sea lions on the boat ramp. No playing "dodge the tourists" while attempting to launch. No Point Piños buoy playing hide and seek in a fog bank. No pod of hundreds of dolphins leaping and dancing around and under the boat in what was one of the most magical moments we have had on a sailboat--ever. No chasing whales and watching them breach next to the whale watching boat. And not one Potter Yachter.



Mike Swartz joined us on *Nighthawk* for a sail on Sunday. We sailed out past Point Pinos and realized that we were headed for the whale watching fleet. We saw some great whale action, but these are the best photos I was able to produce!



So I refined my parameter and added "staying at the Monterey marina." And that's where it went completely off the rails.

*The Monterey Marina experience:*

*1. Waterfront accommodations: The Monterey Marina offers an array of waterfront accommodation options, from cozy waterfront cabins to fully equipped RV sites. Imagine waking up to the gentle sound of waves and stepping outside to picturesque views of boats gently swaying in the harbor.*

*[...]Many marina accommodations offer outdoor seating areas and barbecues, perfect for enjoying a meal with a view.*

I want to know where the cozy waterfront cabins are! I feel cheated now! And shouldn't it be "Imagine waking up to the obnoxious sound of sea lions barking—all night long, every night!?" They don't even mention how Mark Sabin—the hero we didn't know we needed—bought ear plugs and passed them out to anybody who asked. Silly ChatGPT.



It's not clear whether Mark Sabin had more trouble fighting off the sea lions or the tourists while pulling *Half Fool* out of the water.

And apparently staying at the marina is far more dangerous than we had imagined because safety now had its own full section:

*While enjoying your stay at Monterey Marina and sailing in Monterey Bay, it's crucial to prioritize safety:*

- *Check the weather and tides before heading out to ensure safe sailing conditions.*
- *Make sure your boat is well-maintained and equipped with safety gear.*

Crucial!

So I thought to myself—maybe I need to tell ChatGPT that we were on a Balboa 21. Maybe that will help it get a more accurate flavor for the whole trip. I added “Balboa 21 sailboat” to the mix.

*The Monterey Marina, nestled along the ruggedly picturesque coastline of California, offers the perfect launchpad for a sailing adventure aboard a Balboa 21. This compact but capable sailboat provides an intimate and exhilarating experience on Monterey Bay's pristine waters. Here, we embark on a journey exploring the thrill of sailing a Balboa 21 from the Monterey Marina.*

*And... Launching your Balboa 21 from the Monterey Marina opens up a world of possibilities for exploration and adventure.*

I'm in! I had no idea our boat was such a perfect sailing vessel for the islands and coves around Monterey. Chat GPT goes on to extoll the virtues of a Balboa 21 in ways that are so infinitely laughable, I can't possibly include them here lest the club should find the need to become the Balboa 21 Yachters anytime soon.

But beware! It's not all carefree gentle waves and picturesque views:

### ***Safety and Preparation***

*Before embarking on your Balboa 21 sailing adventure, prioritize safety:*

- *Conduct a thorough check of your boat's equipment, including life jackets, flares, and navigation aids.*
- *Familiarize yourself with local weather patterns and tides, as conditions can change rapidly in Monterey Bay.*
- *Stay informed about the latest marine forecasts and adhere to responsible boating practices to protect the bay's fragile ecosystem.*



I'll get right on that prioritizing right now! I thought about modifying the search even more to see what ChatGPT thinks of Potter Yachters or the parking situation in Monterey—how it's now better but also somehow worse—but I was concerned that it would devolve into an entire lecture on nautical safety. Instead, I asked it to add local restaurants on the theory that they are mostly pretty safe. Chat GPT did not disappoint:



This was the parking lot when we arrived. It is still unclear whether the parking has actually improved. We received mixed messages from the parking department and marina about how, when, and where to pay for parking, whether we were allowed to park overnight and how long we were allowed to park a truck and trailer. Hopefully, the city of Monterey can figure this out.

*Setting sail from the Monterey Marina aboard a Balboa 21 is not only about enjoying the thrill of the sea but also a chance to savor the delectable culinary offerings that this coastal region has to offer. Here, we combine the joy of sailing with the pleasure of discovering some of the finest restaurants in the area.*

Okay, that's more like it! I think this statement accurately captures the time we spent on shore in Monterey like none of the other previous ones did. They don't specifically mention Rosine's, The London Pub, Zab Zab Thai or the Alvarado Street Brewery—the last two of which were dog friendly if you are looking for that sort of thing. But safety—while still important—is no longer a crucial priority.

#### *Safety and Convenience:*

- *While enjoying these culinary delights, be sure to plan your sailing trips responsibly. Check weather conditions, tides, and safety equipment on board to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience both on the water and at the dining table.*

Nobody got food poisoning, so I guess we were responsible enough.

I'll let Chatty McChatface sum up our 4 days of exploration and adventure:

*Sailing a Balboa 21 from the Monterey Marina is an immersive and exhilarating experience that combines the charm of a compact sailboat with the natural beauty and adventure of Monterey Bay. Whether you're seeking a relaxing day on the water or an exploration of the bay's diverse marine life, the Balboa 21 offers a perfect platform for your nautical endeavors. Combining the thrill of sailing with a gastronomic journey through Monterey Bay's finest restaurants ensures an unforgettable adventure that satisfies both your love for the sea and your taste buds. So, hoist your sails, cast off your lines, explore the bay, and embark on a memorable sailing adventure in one of California's most captivating coastal regions.*



Pat Brennan's memorial on the USS Hornet brought the Potters together:



More than one Potter was heard to remark that Pat would have been happy to know that he had brought so many of us together for the occasion.



### Officer's Club

Commodore:  
Phil Marcelis  
Catalina 22, *Merri Time*

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

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)

Newsletter Editor:  
Sharon Soule'  
Balboa 21, *Nighthawk*

Webmaster:  
Phil Marcelis

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





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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

