



**Yacht Racing Association of Long Island Sound, Inc.**

455 Main Street, Port Washington, New York 11050 ★ 516-767-9240 ★ [www.yralis.org](http://www.yralis.org)

Bernard Armstrong  
President

February 12, 2010

Re: Gary Jobson Seminars

Dear YRA Member

I would to thank you for spending an evening with the YRA to hear Gary Jobson give us many views and ideas about what he sees as the future of yacht racing. Gary covered many topics that are a great interest to everyone involved in yacht racing.

One of the most important items Gary discussed was the importance of long range planning and why yacht clubs are so important. I am attaching an excellent outline that Gary produced to help you with that process. In addition we are enclosing a full compendium of notes from the meeting as a way of saying thank you for attending the seminar.

Look ahead for the Dave Perry and Butch Ulmer seminars coming this spring.

The YRA runs a series of seminars throughout the year that are of great interest to sailors and racers alike. We depend very much on our memberships to carry on all of our programs. If you are a member we thank you for that. If you are not, then please consider joining today. A full year membership is only \$45. If you are already a member then please invite and encourage a friend to join you for the same price. You both will get more out of it together. Call our office at (516) 767-9240 to sign up.

With regards,

*Bernard Armstrong*

Enclosures

**Gary Jobson**  
US SAILING  
January 14, 2010

## **Long Range Planning**

For YRA of LIS

### I. Why Yacht Clubs are Important

- Access to water
- Social activities
- Home away from home
- Education
- Organized group activities
- Meals
- Competition, cruising
- Maintain tradition of yachting
- Miracle clubs exist
- Note: important to update

### II. Member

- Emotional - clubs are tribal
- Great disparity in usage
- People like "belonging" - status important
- Members want things to work well

### III. Manager

- Tough job - hard keeping everyone happy
- Changing Board, administration
- Complex facilities - lots of upkeep (waterfront facility)
- Important to have your team in place
- Take philosophy - do fewer things well
- Have total Board support
- Meals aren't only thing

#### IV. My Experience with Yacht Clubs

- Toms River (Sailing Instructor, 1967-1971)
- NYYC (past Trustee) - AYC (Trustee)
- Storm Trysail Club (past Trustee), Corinthians (past Trustee)
- Memberships

##### Regular

Annapolis YC  
 New York YC  
 Storm Trysail Club  
 Cruising Club of America  
 Royal Ocean Racing Club  
 Annapolitan Club  
 Naval Academy SS  
 Swan 42 Class  
 Etchells Class  
 Laser Class  
 US SAILING (Pres. Club)

##### Honorary

Beachwood YC  
 Buccaneer YC  
 Eastern YC  
 Eastport YC  
 Fishing Bay YC  
 Fort Worth Boat Club  
 Great Harbor YC  
 Hillsboro Inlet SC  
 Mystic River YC  
 North Star Sail Club  
 Sheboygan YC  
 Spokane Sailing Association  
 Toms River YC

##### Guest

Bayview YC  
 Detroit YC  
 Long Beach YC  
 St. Francis YC  
 Southwestern YC

- Serves on many committees - House, Sailing, Junior, Entertainment, Communications, Fine Arts

#### V. Issues

- Aging membership
- Declining participation on water
- Regulatory restrictions
- Environmental regulations
- Handicap access
- Insurance premiums
- Litigation
- Setting priorities
- Reciprocity
- Refurbish (old guard vs. new guard)
- Budget deficits
- Governance - by laws changes
- Seasonal operations
- Long term lease of property
- Contiguous property

## VI. No Easy Answers

- Study trends/procedures at peer yacht club
- Help Flag Officers to look for answers
- Start with one big success
- Takes time to make things happen

## VII. Solutions

- Put out any immediate fires
- Set priorities
  - Start with Long Range Plan
  - Share other club's LRP
- Get lots of people involved
- Every committee chair filled (have a co-chair ready to take over)
- Use questionnaires - publish results
- Write (and use) mission statement
- Educate staff (service business) (send to seminars (hotel) (clubs))
- Use peer clubs as examples of what YC should be doing

## VIII Projects

### A. Communications

Hire director  
 High end newsletter  
 Easy to use website  
 Update information  
 Send e-mail reminders  
 Work on external communication  
 Editorial review with local media  
 Invite city officials to events  
 Lots of pictures and names  
 Keep historical archives  
 Adhere to requirements for public vs. member only pages info on website  
 Interactive

### B. Signature event

Every club should have one  
 Lots of volunteers  
 Builds prestige of club

### C. Make hero out of unique achievement

- Good deed
- Race performance
- Support Olympic effort

### D. Host charity event

- Leukemia Cup
- Hospice (\$600,000 - Annapolis)
- MS (Maine)
- American Cancer Society (San Diego)
- Heart Cup (NJ)
- Disabled ("Shake a Leg") ("CRAB")
- Jimmy Fund (MA, RI)
- Save the Bay (MD, NJ, NY, RI)
- Olympic Sailing (GJ)
- Blind sailors
- Youth sailing
- Gulf coast - 15 clubs - Katrina
- Museums, education funds, college, high school
- Environmental groups

### E. Community access

- Provide junior scholarship to sailing program
- Help high school team/club
- Work with community sailing group (Nantucket) (Sail Newport) (Milwaukee)

### F. Build club owned fleet

- Lessons for all ages
- Young member usage (short time frame)

### G. Build club pride

- Fly burgees
- Stickers on cars/boats
- Good clothing
- Ask members to be ambassadors on trips

## H. Entertainment

Speaker series (GJ experience)

## I. Club house décor

Paintings, burgees, pictures (heritage)

Trophies

Models

Honor commodores (incentive to be one)

Library (build) lend out, on line, magazines (around) post info

Good bar (place to hang out)

## J. Contiguous Property Acquisition

Boatyard

Parking

Additional facility

Merger with other club

Adjacent property

Building a separate fund

## IX. The Big Renovation

- On going plan to acquire more property
- Establish need (status of building)
- Final plan
  - Presented slowly
  - Take in lots of input
  - Be flexible - good ideas will arrive
- Define use
- Explore funding
  - Loans from members
  - Bonds
  - Donation
  - Spread costs (payments)
  - Assessment (least favorite)
  - Volunteer work
  - Accept gifts in kind
- Create more parking (important)
  - No club has enough
- Work closely with municipality for permit
- Beware old guard resistance
  - Take on individually

## X. Membership

- Important to have qualified (enthused) candidates
  - Active boaters
  - Lots of participation
  - Adhere to rules
- End legacy that creates long waiting list
- Must welcome diversity
- Honorary memberships?
- Dues - excellent value
- Reciprocity policy

## XI. Finance

- Dues
- Initiation
- Assessment
- Capital dues
- Voluntary donation
- Use of tax exempt status
- Reserve funds
- Raising dues annually?
- Recruiting/retention of members

## XII. Boating

- Offer activities for all types
- Power boat events
- Cruising, racing - don't forget daysail
- Junior program - high priority - future at stake
- Host important sailing championship for events - 1 per year
- Support high achievers attendance at major national and international events
- Acquire boatyard

## XIII. Recruit and retain staff - long term

## XIV. What Makes a Good Regatta

- Efficient race management
- Easy launch
- Good port
- Timely race management

## XV. Suggestions for Growing Membership

- Create a membership for 21 to 30 years olds that is very inexpensive. The idea here is to capture the recent college graduate and make it easy to join.
- Have a fleet of boats, maybe six, that are available for use in two hour blocks. These should be very inexpensive to rent. The fleet should be used for adult sailing instruction. Quite a few yacht clubs around the country have programs like this and it has been a big hit.
- Create a young member's committee. This has worked very well at the New York YC. They have lots of events and as a result have attracted many new members.
- Host family oriented events like a father/daughter luncheon or a mother/son. We do this at Annapolis.
- A swimming pool is always controversial but is a very good move because people will spend a considerable amount of time on the club's property.
- Do not underestimate the value of peer recruiting. It might take a concerted drive but if one younger member brings one friend in the club's roster will increase nicely.
- Governance
- Board matrix

## XVI. YRA

- Use the YRA as a collection point for information and a conduit for communications.

## US SAILING

### A. Visibility

- Website - discourse (polite, thoughtfully)
- Promote
- Elevate championship
- Promote forum (the place to go)

### B. BOD-HOD

- Create vision
- Enact change
- Spring - town hall - idea
- BOD - assign tasks (continue think tank)

### Initial Areas to Address

#### 1. Visibility and promotion

- Best place to sponsor
- Website
- Committee chairs who will make improvements with positive attitude

#### 2. Re-engage yacht club

- Announce yacht club summit  
early 2011

Examples

- Flag officer - GM - at large (3)
- long range plan
- recruiting youth
- fleet of boats
- signature regatta
- finance
- serving members
- community service
- compelling speakers and seminars

#### 3. Make it easy! (large refrain)

- Handicaping
- Racing Rules
- Measurement procedures
- Race management

4. Committees - December 1 Youth
  - 2 members in 20s
  - 1 member in 30s
  
5. Survey - who are we?
  - Demographics of members
  
6. Membership ( major focus)
  - Not mandatory
  - Join if:
    1. Helps you with sailing
    2. Inspires others
  
7. Encourage support for US SAILING Team
  
8. Work closely with other organizations
  - USCG
  - Sail America
  - Yacht Clubs
  
9. Work to make gateway open
  - recreational sailor
  - sailing schools
  - community sailing
  
10. Issues
  - Farrah Hall - I'm taking responsibility to resolve quickly
  - Get BOD/HOD working together
  - Work with BOD to take sailing forward

### **Please Help**

- Need lots of help
- We can be better
- Three years

## Gary Jobson

### Sponsorship Criteria

- A. An event must be highly visible and be newsworthy. Good press coverage does not happen on its own. Use a non-volunteer to work with the press. A simple story has the best chance of being published.
- B. An attractive venue is important. There must be a good location on site for showing sponsor's product. Sampling and sales gets consumers involved with their product.
- C. Have a plan for achieving your sponsor's goals. Communicate early with event organizer in writing and during pre-event planning meetings.
- D. The event should match the quality of a sponsor's product.
- E. Beautiful, unique, big or fast boats always make events work. A unique format of racing helps interest. Lead changes, close racing and high drama are key. The press always understands a winner.
- F. Sponsor's logo (signage) must show up clearly on television and for spectators who are present. (Black and white is best on video)
- G. Create a local tie-in between organizer and sponsors. The organization running the event must have a good reputation. Check the credentials of the organization closely before signing on. Remember the deal between the event and sponsor is a two-way street. Both must work together.
- H. Events thrive on big name competitors who the media can identify with. Competitors must cooperate with media, sponsors and event organizers. Sailors should be media trained and briefed about sponsor's goals prior to an event.
- I. Cross promotion by different sponsors through hospitality is an effective marketing tool. Social activities build goodwill and are everyone's reward.

- J. A television sport is different than a spectator sport. The hardest thing in television is getting on the air. Television coverage is the most important media because of the large number of viewers. Event must cooperate with television production. Put sponsors on the water to watch. The America's Cup even put sponsors on the race course.
- K. Winning a sponsor's event should have a lot of prestige. The perpetual trophy should reflect the stature of the regatta. Sponsor's name should be on keeper trophies.
- L. It helps to include celebrities, community leaders and elected officials at opening ceremonies or prizegivings.
- M. The added bonus of sponsorship is reaching beyond the traditional sailing audience.
- N. Clubs will find that their mailing lists have considerable value.
- O. Once a sponsor is signed on, budget 25% of the funding to go back toward fulfillment.

**Meet and Greet with Gary Jobson, New US SAILING President  
Manhasset Bay YC and Stamford YC/Indian Harbor YC  
Jan. 13 - 14, 2010**

**Q & A**

**1. How does sailing compete with other youth sports?**

Young people should participate in a wide variety of sports. Colleges like to accept well rounded candidates. Singlehanded sailing is a good way to learn because you are in charge of your own destiny.

**2. Thoughts on team racing vs. around the marks?**

Team racing is intellectually stimulating and is kind of like match racing; young people do team racing at college; New York YC has done a good job with team racing in Sonars. It is easy to organize. You need 6 boats for team racing and 2 boats for match racing.

**3. Does US SAILING have a library of videos that the yacht clubs can use?**

US SAILING had good training and books, plus instructional videos. The videos are coming out this spring. Check the US SAILING website for information on the videos

**4. Any way US SAILING will promote some young kids who are good at coaching?**

There is a tricky balance between coaching and teaching and pushing young people too hard. This is something that sailing organizations should handle with great care.

**5. How can clubs get sponsorships for their sailing events?**

Need to get spectators; sponsorship should give 25-30% back into fulfillment; sponsors support financially, then clubs need good PR to get word out.

**6. What can US SAILING do to make boats cheaper? From a junior sailing standpoint, it is much cheaper for kids from 5-7 years who play soccer, field hockey and football (3 seasons) than it is to sail for one season. Is there anything that US SAILING can do to lessen the blow of the expense?**

I suggest people purchase boats in a partnership, buy used boats or encourage their clubs to have their own fleet.

Any US SAILING championship provides boats for the event.

**7. Sports that are popular in the US are all bet on – all pubs have betting.**

**Should we be able to wager on sailing to elevate interest?**

I don't recommend betting at all. But big events do help people gain awareness in sailing.

**8. Olympic Effect on Sport of Sailing?**

From 1984 to 1992 the U.S. won 21 medals in 25 classes. USA was the team to beat. In the recent Olympics, England has been the strongest team. Their funding comes from a national lottery. England spent a lot of effort on their junior sailing. We can learn from them.

**9. Should you have sponsorship at yacht clubs?**

Clubs should have committees to find sponsors. Sponsors look for access to membership or association to clean, green sport of sailing. Gary's advice: start small, build on it. Many clubs have family foundations. Go to individuals and ask for funding for a specific reason and then show the results. About 30% should go back to fulfillment.

**10. Question by Gary: Does anyone have the right PHRF for their boat?**

No one raised their hands. Handicapping boats is still confusing. US SAILING need to be administrator of handicapping and set rules in an unbiased way. PHRF need to have more national type rules. Now there are changes in ratings from location to location. We need one rating rule that everyone loves but not one that has to change keels. IRC works well.

**11. Gary's Objectives:** More visibility for sailing, Olympic team doing well, yacht clubs successful, lots of fleets, make sailing less expensive for young families, make the sport fair, make sailing less complex. Important to have national teams; young people need someone to look up to. The average age in Athens was 39, China was 26.