

From many years of experience, we've learned a few lessons about what works best with the various sailing programs we have.

We'll use this area to record our suggestions about ideas that should or shouldn't be included in our sailing programs. Anyone is welcome to submit suggestions to the Web Master.

The most important things we want to say are:

1. THANK YOU for volunteering your time and energy! That's part of what makes this such a great sailing club, and part of what makes it fun for everyone.
2. HAVE FUN and do what you can to make sure everyone else has fun. That's why we exist.
3. THE PEOPLE in this club are terrific. Enjoy yourself and enjoy them.
4. YOU DON'T HAVE TO SPEND A LOT OF MONEY. Most of our events are oriented around being a "dutch treat" where each participant pays for their participation.

Suggestions for the SBCC Cruise Captain

So you've agreed to lead our club on a 1-week Cruise in the Bay (always very popular), a 2-week cruise off the Bay, or some other cruise. Thanks!

The cruise captain(s) should select the route down to the level of detail including which marina(s) and/or mooring(s) are the selected destinations on a daily basis. The cruise captain should probably not be making reservations for everyone, unless there is no financial penalty when folks don't show up - which will happen. Once at a destination, the cruise captain(s) may suggest where the cruise members should gather for dinner and/or for activities, but cruisers have the freedom to attend or not.

The cruise captains are asked to take notes each morning of which boats had their owners on-board for the prior night at the actual club cruise destination for that night. Members who are on that list for at least half of the total destination nights get full credit for the overall cruise. Please report to the Fleet Captain via email within a few days of completion of the cruise, to describe which boats attended the cruises and for how many nights, each.

The sail plan for the cruise should be scheduled to bring the cruisers back to the Great South Bay on Saturday, hopefully in time to join that day's SBCC Rendezvous in the Bay. One important reason for this, is that every sail plan should include an 'insurance' day to allow an extra day in which to return in the event that bad weather delays the return trip.

To have the maximum exposure to all the club members, it is important for you to announce yourself as the Cruise Captain in the Masthead as soon as possible, no later than one month before the start of the Cruise - to allow people enough time to decide if they want to go or not.

You should also plan on having a 'cruise meeting' about a month in advance, so people can understand the schedule and maybe offer events along the way. During the One Week Cruise in the Bay, the "pot luck dinner" in Atlantique was a great success, as an example.

As Cruise Captain, you can send an email to our Masthead editor for inclusion in the Masthead in which you announce yourself as the Cruise Captain, provide your phone number for people to call you, and announce a Cruise planning meeting.

Here are some suggestions and requests of the Cruise Captain, to help have a happy cruise:

You may be able to plan your trips at 6 knots on my own. You may have no problems running for more than 24 hours or overnight on your own, if required. You may have no problem making landfall at night at places where you've been before. Those are not good ideas for a club cruise.

With a club cruise it's best to plan on these:

An average of 5 knots when making way. You'll want to check the nautical charts for actual travel distances from point to point including distances to get in/out of harbors, etc. use something like Garmin PC software and draw an actual 'route' that avoids shallow water, etc. The Garmin software will show you the nautical miles per segment once you draw it.

No travel in the dark. You'll want to check sunrise and sunset times for the dates of travel. Normally there is useable light 1/2 hour before sunrise and 1/2 hour after sunset.

Long distance travel needs to consider the timing of the currents; an earlier or later start time can result in much shorter travel time if the current is neutral or helping most of the

way. This is not so important in the Atlantic Ocean, but becomes very important in places with higher current speeds like the East River, The Race, Vineyard Sound, Nantucket Sound, etc.

No overnight travel.

Cruisers prefer an overnight stay after any day of travel, but at the beginning and the end of the journey 2 back-to-back travel days are OK. 3 back-to-back travel days is possible, but probably should only be done once in the trip.

Some folks may prefer to spend 2-3 nights in premium destinations like Block Island, Mystic, Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket, Newport, etc.

Don't be surprised during the trip if some folks decide to "peel off" and "do their own thing" for a couple/few days, and maybe re-join you later. The cruise captains should allow that flexibility, but should ask each boat's captain to keep the cruise captain informed of any individual deviations from the club's cruise plan.

During the cruise, or optionally before the cruise, ask who is willing to be the day's rendezvous host boat. Then each day of the cruise can be a rendezvous, enhancing the social aspects of the cruise.

When you start the cruise, let everyone know what channel is to be monitored for cruise-specific traffic. It should be a high power channel like 68, 69, 71, 72, 78, 79, or 80. (Voice traffic is prohibited on channel 70, since that is dedicated to DSC digital information.) Folks should "dual-watch" on 16 and the selected cruise channel if their radios can do that. You may need to change the cruise-specific channel during the trip if there's too much traffic on the first selected channel.

During a long day of travel it's nice to have someone who is willing to have a brief radio conversation with each of the traveling boats, maybe every 2 hours or so. If Joyce Gotard is on the trip, she's one of the best folks I've ever experienced doing that role - she's terrific at it.

At the start of the cruise, make a list of which boats have RADAR and/or other high end technology like AIS. If fog or heavy rain rolls in, try to get those boats at the front and back of the caravan to help look for problems and help keep track of the cruisers.

Our club did a 2-week sailing club cruise around Long Island which mostly followed the plan of one travel day then one day layover, and it was very successful. One lesson learned from that cruise is that we ended up with two cruising groups: (1) the sailboats

that could travel at 5 knots or more (2) the sailboats that traveled at slower speeds. The slower boats started earlier on each travel day, then the faster sailboat started usually an hour later. The result was that both groups spent more time near each other during travel and sometimes even arrived at the destination at similar times - so it was more fun for everyone.

Suggestions for the SBCC Rendezvous Host

As you may have noticed the Rendezvous host only has the following responsibilities:

Anchor (or arrive at the marina) at your chosen location, fly the large SBCC burgee and be the host for Happy Hour. If possible, try to arrive by noon or at least 2PM so other early arriving SBCC folks can find you.

Provide enough food and drink for your boat for Happy Hour (it's a Dutch Treat, so you don't need to provide enough for everyone else). If Happy Hour is on your boat, you may want to consider having some friends raft up to you, to make for a larger extended cockpit area. If Happy Hour is at a dock, lay claim to a nearby picnic table if available.

You get to decide when Happy Hour starts (typically 4PM) and ends; let the SBCC folks in the area know when it starts if you can.

Spend the night on your boat at your chosen Rendezvous location.

Take attendance in the morning and send an email with the list of sailboat names that spent the night to the Fleet Captain within a few days of the event.

If you'd be willing to look up the next week's Rendezvous host on the SBCC website (things may have changed since the Yearbook was published), and then make plans with that next host to get the SBCC Burgee to them, that would be greatly appreciated.

Otherwise let the Fleet Captain know, and the Fleet Captain will get the Burgee to the next person on the list.

Some Rendezvous Hosts will provide additional food and/or drink, beyond what would be their part of a 'Dutch Treat' - that's up to you.