



# Hard-a-Lee

occasional newsletter  
of the Wichita Falls Sailing Club  
(find us online at [wfsail.org](http://wfsail.org))

August 3, 2021

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## COMMODORE'S CORNER

### Mid-summer report: Hot

*By Debra Halter, Commodore*

The summer has been wet and warm (should I say "steamy") so far this year, but we haven't reached one hundred degrees yet.

The Fourth of July party was a hit, with many in attendance, as was the June hamburger/hot dog feed. Thanks to Blu and others who cooked for everyone.

The Hot Stuff Regatta on July 10 was pretty windy, staying just under the 20-mph-sustained-wind rule. I'm sure there were gusts over that during the race. I think it might have exceeded some sailors comfort zones just a bit; no one opted for a second race.

We had four boats entered (three big boats and a Flying Scot). A big thank you to Rob Havins for helping me with Race Committee duties.

Thanks also to everyone who has labeled or tagged their sails that they store in the Clubhouse storeroom. It is much appreciated. It was getting to the point of running an obstacle course when trying to reach the race flags. I'm sure Bink appreciates it, too.

If you have any issues or projects you would like to see the Board of Directors tackle, please reach out to any of us. And don't forget that you are welcome to attend the Board Meetings, just to see what goes on or to bring up a pet project. We meet at 7 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month.



## HOT STUFF REGATTA

### Zach Whalen tops small fleet to take Regatta Honors

Three generations of Whalens (Zach his son and his dad) boarded Zach Walen's Flying Scot last month to enter the Hot Stuff Regatta, which turned out to be a very windy one-race affair.

Since he is used to traveling at 700 mph, Zach might not have been impressed by the boat speed. But it looked pretty awesome from the shoreline, observers say. His Flying Scot was flying in the big wind.

Racing resumes at WFSC August 7 with the Big Boat Handicap Fleet taking to the course. Skippers meeting at 10 a.m.

**City of Wichita Falls  
Source Water  
Lake Levels**

as of August 2, 2021

**Lake Kickapoo**

87.8 %

▼ 0.9%

**Lake Arrowhead**

96.7%

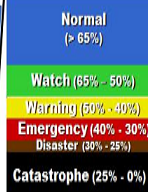
▼ 0.4%

Little Wichita River

**Combined Lake Capacity**

▼ 0.5%

94.3%



**Current City of Wichita Falls  
Drought Status:**

**NORMAL**

**2021 Board of Directors**

Commodore	Debra Halter	940/632-8557
Vice Cmdr	Glen Spadin	940/500-0478
Rear Cmdr	Blu Kennedy	940/733-6225
Treasurer	Matt Baker	940/923-7387
Secretary	Lee Havins	940/704-1474
Past Cmdr	Steve Colley	940/733-0847
Harbormaster	Mike Gillis	940/867-3753
Grounds chair	Paul Spilman	940/782-3277
House chair	Bink Davidson	940/782-6147

**WFSC Sailors take on  
the "Texas 200"**

*WFSC members Patrick and Loren Simmons decided to join in on the "Texas 200" earlier this summer. The T-200 (Texas200.com) is an annual "raid-type" event that travels up the Texas coast. Here's their story:*

*By Patrick Simmons*

The Texas 200 is a long distance sailing challenge along the Texas Intra-Coastal Waterway. It attracts boats of all makes, and sizes. Some boats being little more than a bathtub with some bedsheets hung on a pole. With the official number of starting boats being 85, and only two boats without motors finishing, it speaks volumes of the difficulty of the event.

With the length and depth of the course in mind, my mother and I chose to take the Hobie 16. While this boat gave us the advantage in shallow waters and in speed, it presented unique problems. Specifically, it turned into a Log Plume like at Busch Gardens anytime it hit a wave. Keeping enough gear for a week of sailing dry and secured to a trampoline platform was a challenge. The answer we came up with was two bright orange 40L dry bags, which could double as backpacks in any emergency. They were

**SCAMP #560 UPDATE**



*Gimme some skin . . .* After weeks of cussin, fiddling and gluing up of the skeleton, the mast box, centerboard and rudder, the front and back transoms have finally been attached and the side panels are starting to go on. It's beginning to look a little like a boat !

secured with lines to the forward tramp, along with waterproof map case, items that had a healthy tolerance for salt water.

The race started long before we traveled down south. We spent weeks studying the many oyster beds, channels, potential camping sites, and random hazards. With hull leak testing, standing rigging and running rigging replacement, and with our sails getting an overhaul by a loft in Dallas, we were well prepared, equipment wise.



- Patrick and Loren ready to stow it and go -

With the winds being non-existent in the morning of day one, we chose to sleep in and leave late. Last in fact. Leaving Port Mansfield was somewhat eventful with the wind channeling that happens from the buildings surrounding the mouth of the harbor. But once we were clear of the mouth we turned north and the wind finally picked up. With the wind now coming out of the east, we were able to cover the first 25 miles of the course without a single tack. With the pace we were managing, we had the pleasure of seeing nearly 40 boats of the fleet as we passed them. We made it to the first camp in 3 1/2 hours which averaged us out at a little over 8 knots.

With this pace the rest of the 200 was setting up to be a mad dash to the end. We ended our day in the mud of the channel, along with nearly 50 other boats lining the beach.



- Part of the fleet on the beach -

Our second day brought the beginning of the end. The favorable winds turned their backs on the fleet and we soon found ourselves in a bitter spiteful fight to make it to the second camp. The offshore wind turned into a nearly perfect head wind down the 100 meter wide channel. While I have no proof, I believe the wind went so far as to shift following our bow after every tack. Some fellow boats we passed tracked their progress on GPS units and boasted of the 60+ tacks they made to cover a single mile of forward progress. Despite the wind conditions we found ourselves passing boats under sail and several that were under motor, in spite of the conditions. After all, it was an event for sailboats.

Despite using every trick I had in the hat, the reality of the conditions gradually overcame myself and the rest of the fleet. The morning of the third day, those who had been lucky enough to make it the first 50 miles climbed to the top of the sand dunes to gather what weather information we could. With everyone getting bits and pieces of forecast from loved ones and phone apps alike it didn't take long for information, and unsure glances, to spread. There was a few moments of optimism amongst others as the forecast showed a small shift eastward, however I stomped on what hope they had when I pointed out that our bows would also shift eastward as we followed the coast.

We boldly went forward with the lofty goal of

making it to Naval Air station Corpus Christi. Despite braving unmarked oyster reefs and Islands, the narrow channel became more and more busy with commercial traffic and non-navigable. The sides of the 100M channel were lined with built up oyster beds that without fail kicked our rudders up. As the bridge we needed to tack under began to rise on the horizon, we had to make the tough call to turn around and pull out at the Bird Sanctuary. Continuing on and forcing our way under a bridge and into the Corpus Christi Bay would have been irresponsible and needlessly dangerous.

It was a tough call but I stand by it, as chance would have it after turning around and sailing another 8 miles we rounded an island and left the channel only to see another set of Hobie Sails on the beach. The other Hobie 16 had decided to take a break, when we spoke of the conditions we had found going forward he was relieved that he too would be pulling out.

While we failed to complete the course, we were among good company for what part of the course we managed. Between the many pods of Dolphins playing between the hulls, the sea turtles, and of course all the other brave sailors, it was not a lonely 75 miles.



- A friendly dolphin checks out the action -

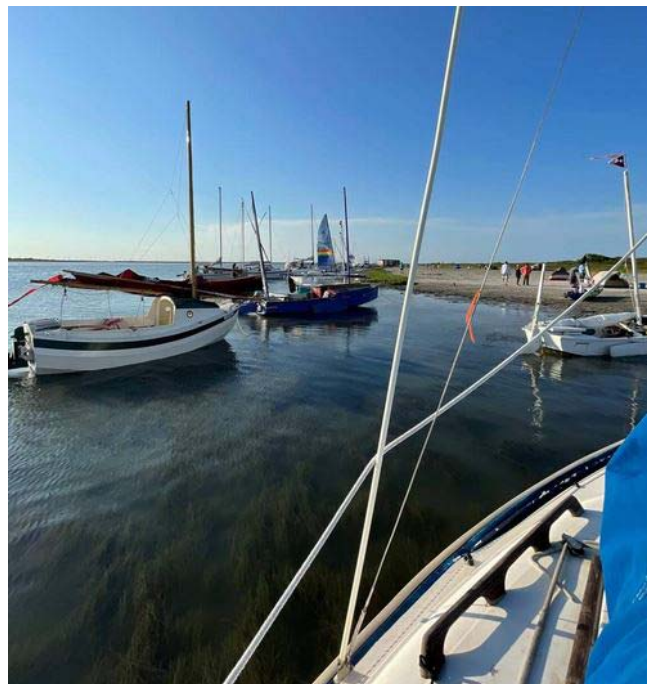
Some of those brave sailors are still out there tacking. There were two boats that managed to finish the course without use of their motors.

One was an incredible woman who rowed the entire way. The other was a man in a 14' Mayfly who sailed at night and into days whenever it was favorable.

After getting a taste for what the ICW can have in store for us and the 200 style, my mother and I both look forward to attempting again next year with an even more aggressive approach for completion. With favorable winds of course.

In closing, I realize I have been rambling and haven't covered nearly enough. Seventy-five Miles of Texas Coast gives plenty of material for storytelling. The event is truly special and is a genuine test of sailing skill and decision making. With no ramp, dock, or town for the first 60 miles, the decisions made are critical. I am happy to tell others about the event and offer any assistance or support for others who wish to attempt it.

The plus side was our early completion of the 200 meant I had just enough time to get back to the Falls for a Flying Scott race. Lots of water under the keel that week.



- Boats, boats, boats. Hey, isn't that a Scamp? -