McLaughlin Christmas Newsletter

All of us at McLaughlin would like to wish you a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy Holiday Season. We want to thank you for your support in 2005 and wish you a wonderful 2006.

McLaughlin now has gift certificates at a discount. Do you have someone who is hard to shop for? Give them that perfect gift. Let them pick out just what they want. You can get gift certificates in $25, $50, $100, or $200 dollar increments, or mix and match. For a limited time you can get a $50 certificate for $40 dollars, a $100 certificate for $80, and a $200 certificate for $160. Free shipping on all certificates. To order call 1 800 784 6478 or visit our online store at www.optistuff.com. This is a great stocking stuffer.
How to use an opti compass

Why use a compass? Recognizing wind shifts can be a daunting task for young sailors especially when you are on open seas without a shoreline. Recognizing shifts is a major factor in determining who is leading the race and who is following. Lifts, headers, osculating vs. persistent shifts can be taken advantage of with the use of a compass. Sailing a five-degree wind shift for one minute in an Opti can gain or lose you three boat lengths. But there are times you want to ignore the compass as when you are covering a competitor going into the finish line.

How to read the compass. Tactical compasses have a center sight line and lubber lines on starboard and port. The center sight line is good for finding the upwind mark when the direction is posted and the true wind direction. The lubber lines are read while sailing to windward as they can easily be read from a hiked out position.

Pre-start readings. The main purpose in using a compass know the current sailing conditions so that you can detect shifts in the wind direction. It is never too early to start taking wind readings. There are three readings to take before the start. The true wind reading of the upwind mark and average course headings on both tacks while sailing close-hauled. The true wind direction will help you find the new upwind mark if there is a course change after the start and which end of the line is favored. A good routine for determining average coarse headings would be to sail 10-boat lengths on each tack. Repeat this 3 times. Write down or memorize the average compass heading of the lubber lines on each tack. You now have a good indication of the predominate wind direction. The Opti compass comes with a detailed set of instructions that helps you maximize your performance. Your coach can help explain all the ways a compass comes in handy.

How to choose a compass. Any racing compass will perform the preceding goals. McLaughlin carries the NEXUS 73r as shown above. This compass is considered around the world, as the best for an Optimist It is small, easy to read and mount. It has the added advantage of quickly removed from its mount bracket to take home and prevent theft. The compass bracket is mounted on fordeck near the ISAF sticker. Be careful that it does not interfere with the swing of the boom vang. Also duct tape should be added to the bottom so it cannot fall out in a capsize.
Holiday gift ideas from McLaughlin

- Double Tapered Mainsheet $79
- Bottom Cover $209
- Praddle Paddle $18
- 1.4 mm Vectran mini spool $19
- N1 blades $749
- Bow Wow $20
- DVD $45
- Bail $10
- Compass $123
- Protest Flag $10
- The sailcloth gear bag $49

And you thought these bailers were for port and starboard.
McLaughlin 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} at Mid Winters and 1\textsuperscript{st} at SEC’s

Congratulations to the following McLaughlin skippers for their Mid Winters finishes: 

\textbf{Nick Johnstone took first place}, Taylor Lutz second, Jordon Factor fourth, Gregory Dair fifth, Mac Agnese sixth, Pearson Potts, eighth and Dodge Rees, twelfth

\textbf{Graham Landy sailed a great series to win the 2005 South East Championships} in his McLaughlin. Going into the 6 Th and last race he was so far ahead in points he did not even need to sail.

Incidentally \textit{every USODA Championship} this summer has been \textit{won in a McLaughlin} hull. That is six regional Championships in a row plus the US Nationals and Mid Winters. No one skipper has won two events. \textbf{The new 2005 – 2006 hull with perfect alignment has constantly proven to be very fast in all wind conditions.}

If you make the teams for 2006 North Americans or Europeans you will be sailing in a McLaughlin hull as we are the chosen as the charter boat at those events.

\textbf{Sizing your centerboard slot}

Do you ever wish your blade fit tighter or looser in the slot? The rules allow you to add strips to the centerboard slot to keep your board from moving around. This “Jap” tape can sometimes make the slot too tight. You can then sand the tape or scrap it with a pocketknife to open up the space. Most clear tape is thin enough that this should not be a problem.

\textbf{Orange Bowl Regatta and Clinic Charters are going fast}

If you are going to \underline{Orange Bowl Dec. 27} or the \underline{McLaughlin / Coral Reef clinic Dec 20 – 23}, please make your reservations now! Over 55 have signed up and we to make sure you have a boat.
30 New Articles on optistuff.com designed to help you sail smarter, faster and have more fun.

**Articles**
- Over the Starting Line Early
- Optimist Control in High Winds (raising the CB)
- North Sails Tuning Guide
- Starting and Expanding an Optimist Program
- Empowering Conversations with your Child
- Honoring the Game
- Benefits of the Optimist for your child (Bad Dad)
- Fleet Start up Manual
- Coaches Letter to Parents First Day
- Guide to Parents First Day (Tips for Harbor Mice)
- Optimist a 25-year Perspective
- Your Time Will Come / Everyone Cannot Win
- Quiz for Opti Sailors Boat Parts and Safety
- USODA Growing the Class

**Instructions**
- Rig Travel Bag
- Sail Numbering and Removal
- Tie Sail to Mast without Plugs
- Silver Mast Tie on Sketch
- Bow Bumper Install
- Blue Jay Airbag Install
- Optimist Mast Collar
- Mast Step Repair
- Fiberglass Repair
- Optimist Transportation
- Boat Tie Down Protection
- Building an Optimist Trailer
- Towing, Storage, and Launch
- Mast Lock Safety System

These will be up under FAQ’s in about 1 week. See Optistuff.com

**Read the Sailing instructions**

At the Mid Winters several competitors received a 50% penalty because they did not report to the Safety Measurement Check Boat. It was clearly stated that the first 10 boats must report in each race. One boat thought they were 11th. They were actually 10th. When in doubt check it out! It is not the race committees responsibility to hail you. This is just one example where not reading the instructions can cost you your position in a race.
Sneak preview of new opti products for 2006

Some other new products for 2006 not shown include the improved Bow Wow, a tented top cover, a 3.9 Dura - Race sail in two cuts (for sailors under and over 99 lbs). Some products for the Laser and 420 include a clew strap for the Laser, Laser hull bailer, Laser rudder and daggerboard, (these are not race legal). We are also will have a 420 Sail Faster DVD. All these products have not yet been priced and they will be available in 2006.

So have fun, practice, sail hard and have a great New Year!