

21Years of BABA

compiled by Chuck Schnee, with help from Hal Ashman

*Editor's Note: When **Coby Leyden** asked me questions about BABA's history for a short piece he was writing about BABA for **Windsurfing Magazine** (In The Club with BABA - May 2008 p 22), I realized that much of what folks know about the early days of our club is from conversations on the beach. I decided to ask **Chuck Schnee**, one of the original BABA members who is still active in the club, to put together a BABA chronology that would become part of our written history. It's always enlightening to look back at where you've been, and realize that you've been part of the history of a new, evolving, sport.*

In the chronology below, we've listed the "firsts" of the club. For details and stories, we invite you to peruse the newsletter archives (2001 - present on the website, and 1995 - 2000 in Chuck's paper files) which serve as a more complete narrative of our history. If you know any BABA firsts that we've missed, please let us know!

*Acknowledgements: Thank you to **Chuck Schnee** for putting all this information together, and for helping make BABA what it is today - a club with a great group of volunteers and members who care a lot about windsurfing. I also offer our deepest gratitude to **Hal Ashman of Ultimate Watersports**, and **Mark Bandy and Mark Saunders of East of Maui** for their ongoing support of BABA. BABA was formed as a shop club by Hal Ashman and his partners, so they play an important role in BABA's history, which you'll read more about below. East of Maui Boardshop was founded in 1979 and has been an integral part of windsurfing in the Midatlantic for 28 years, longer than BABA has existed. They are important to our club and our sport, although their history and ours did not intersect in the same way as Strictly Sailing/Ultimate Watersports.*

P.S. Turns out that 2008 is BABA's 21st anniversary as a windsurfing club! We've officially come of age. Now that we can legally buy the club a beer, please send me your ideas about what we should do to celebrate.

*Daphne Lathouras, Editor
May, 2008*

1985 Hal Ashman forms Strictly Sailboarding, Baltimore's first nationally certified windsurfing school – provides instruction at Rocky Point golf course site.

1987 Strictly Sailboarding moves to the Gunpowder and secures a one-year contract for beach concession. First local shop, Wicks Ski & Sports, opened in White Marsh with limited sailboard equipment. Hal Ashman, Joe Holland, Steve Alpern & Donna Darmsteadt form BABA, the first windsurfing club on the Chesapeake Bay, and produce first club newsletter.

1988 Second one year contract now permits Strictly Sailboarding to drive school trailer to beach. Membership in BABA growing. First novice race held at Gunpowder.

1989 Hal Ashman opens retail shop in Timonium under Sailing, Etc. name after negotiation with Peck Miller of the Sailing, Etc. shop in Ocean City, MD.

1990 New name for the retail business is Baltimore Boardsailing Inc. Windsurfing school is renamed Baltimore Boardsailing Academy. Racing program becoming well established and BABA membership growing.

1991 Shop moves to new location on York Road in Timonium. Boardsailing retailers proliferate: Windsurfing Unlimited, Windsurfing Annapolis and ISP in Annapolis, Wicks in White Marsh, and E-Z Sailboards in Essex. Annual Aruba/Margarita/Costa Rica trips, Hatteras trips (8 houses) and local women's clinics are popular and well subscribed.

1994/95 Shop moves to 110 West Padonia Road in Cockeysville during the winter. BABA membership had declined to twenty-four sailors who maintained their club affiliation simply to support the sport. Business name changes to Ultimate Sports with addition of in-line skates, kayaks, wakeboards, snowboards and apparel. Business volume at new location makes running the club more difficult. JB Babcock becomes racing coordinator but time constraints for JB has Chuck Schnee assuming responsibility for racing program. Mid 1995 Hal agrees to club becoming independent of the shop and finances creation of the club's first banner using logo designed by JB. Chuck takes on newsletter creation, publication and distribution as well as clinics, membership, treasury, and sponsorship responsibilities (in addition to the racing program). BABA memberships increase to thirty-one at year-end.

1996 Racing program is strong with 39 regular participants. BABA's first race of the season is named Gerry Brown Memorial Race in memory of Gerry who was an early BABA member who contributed significantly to the growth of our racing program. Ultimate Sports continues to run very popular Aruba and Hatteras trips (7 houses in Hatteras Colony). This major rebuilding year ends with 65 registered BABA members and 19 sponsors generating significant merchandise prizes for our regular raffles.

1997 BABA's first Mid-Winter Party is hosted by John and Kathy Holmes at their place in Baldwin, MD. 35 racers turn out for the first event of the season. Linda Grande takes charge of organizing the women's clinic. Tony Litwak, our Travel Coordinator, organizes a Margarita trip. It is a big growth year for BABA with 57 racers at end of season and 102 paid memberships representing 124 sailors at year-end.

1998 BABA forms a Steering Committee to develop a mission statement for the club and provide a consensus on the direction BABA should take and what activities it might sponsor. Committee members are Mark Weinman (acting chair), Tracy Bueche, Stuart Gray, Tony Litwak, Mike McCormick (now the Racing Coordinator), Chuck Schnee and Fred Thomas. A BABA web site is created by Mark Raginsky to disseminate racing scores.

1999 Mark Weinman creates a unanimously approved mission statement for the club, becomes committee chair and Clinic Director. Daphne Lathouras and husband Steve Melnick assume responsibility for the newsletter, Fred Thomas becomes treasurer, and Mark Raginsky is webmaster. The year ends with 122 BABA memberships comprising 150 sailors.

2000 Mark Raginsky takes over as Racing Coordinator, Ann Jackson assumes Membership responsibility. BABA I - Gerry Brown Memorial Race becomes a fundraising race for cancer research at Johns Hopkins. BABA's newsletter first becomes available to download from the Internet (March/April issue). {The current web site has newsletters archived to July/August 2001.} The Southern Maryland Windsurfing Association (Alan Bernau) organizes the USWA Open Nationals at Drum Point.

2001 The “Pat Pugh Memorial Service Award” was established to honor a long time member whose contributions to the club were legion. Winners through 2007 have been Fred Thomas, Mark Weinman, Marc Rosen, Chuck Schnee, Daphne Lathouras/Steve Melnick, Tom Sargent, and Bill Anderson/Helen Van Gelder. Maureen and Albert Pritchard take on Sponsorship duties. Fred Thomas adds Hatteras Coordination to his Treasurer responsibility as Hal Ashman agrees to transfer Hatteras trip management to BABA. Tony Litwak is now Winter Trip Coordinator (to exotic foreign destinations). Chuck Schnee does the Clinic Director job again and Mark Weinman becomes Lead Instructor for BABA clinics while remaining Steering Committee Chair. “Family Fun Day” at the Gunpowder is initiated as an annual event. Year-end membership reaches 131 (157 sailors).

2002 Daphne and Steve add Webmaster to their newsletter responsibility. BABA member Tara Collis professionally designs the club’s web site. A Women’s 7.5 Limited Class is added to the racing fleet. First year of the East Coast Formula Championships organized by windsurfers in Southern Maryland (began as the Drum Point Championship in 2001).

2003 Mark Weinman takes on Sponsorship. Janice Emerling becomes Clinic Director. Bill Anderson and Helen Van Gelder join the Steering Committee as Members at Large. Marc Rosen is elected Steering Committee Chair. Tom Sargent becomes Racing Coordinator.

2004 Mark Raginsky adds his name to the Members at Large group. Chuck Schnee returns to Sponsorship. First overnight camp-out at the Gunpowder for a two-day race event. Helen Van Gelder and Bill Anderson step in to help out with Hatteras trip coordination.

2005 The East Coast Formula Championship regatta – part of the US Windsurfing National Race Tour – becomes part of the BABA series under the direction of Racing Coordinator Tom Sargent. Helen Van Gelder becomes BABA Treasurer. First Mayo Beach camp-out for the East Coast Formula Championship.

2006 BABA incorporates. Maureen Pritchard is the new BABA Steering Committee Chair. Colin Pitts is Vice Chair, Mike McCormick is Secretary, Marc Rosen moves to the Members at Large seat, then to Sponsorship. Fan Pat becomes a Member at Large and Bill Anderson assists Fred Thomas in Hatteras Trip management.

2007 BABA becomes a 501(c)(3) – that’s a non-profit organization. Coby Leyden joins Steering Committee to manage 2008 Spring Hatteras trip. Fred Thomas continues duties with coordinating 2008 Fall trip. Bill Anderson returns to Member at Large role. A “Meet at the Beach” program is created to help new sailors progress in the sport.

2008 Roger Fitzgerald sets up a BABA Speed Quest program utilizing Global Positioning System (GPS) trackers. Carsten Boekholt joins the Steering Committee as a Member at Large.