



Exercise, fellowship or just a change of scenery

The HKF Kaknäs Club offers a variety of recreational possibilities, and it is a popular meeting place for seamen from around the world.

Sitting in a bumpy minibus, the boys from the Bahamas-flagged cruise ship "Jewel of the Seas" are all changed and ready for action. Their destination is the HKF Kaknäs Club, where they will engage in a football game against the crew of "Silja Symphony".

– It is so very important to be on dry land now and then, says Kevin, Colombian assistant waiter sitting in the front row. When you work non-stop for stretches of six months, you need a little change in scenery.

– Yes, leaving the ship is like coming alive again, says someone farther back in the bus.

HKF-member Harri Joensuu negotiates the minibus through the dense Stockholm traffic with accustomed ease, from the Stadsgårdskajen-quay along Strandvägen, and further out to Gärdet. The hustle of the metropolis is replaced by forests and meadows, and a winding asphalted road leads to a low green-painted building which houses the Kaknäs Club. The bus draws to a halt and the sliding doors are pushed aside. Several of the players have been here before and make their way inside, walking through the building and towards the changing lockers in the back as if they were at home. They are welcomed by HKF-member Peter Barasinski.

– I need some other shoes, a tall bloke says and lifts up a weathered gym shoe.

Several more want to borrow shoes, and a small crowd is soon formed in front of Peter, who sorts through the equipment in order to meet everyone's wishes. Usually there is no problem, since the club is outfitted to equip three whole football teams.

– Most people come here without any equipment, they borrow everything from us. Before leaving, they just throw everything in the clothes baskets, which leaves us with a good deal of laundry to be done, Peter says.



At the Kaknäs Club, every wish is strived to be met. Photograph: Linda Sundgren

Looking from the side of the entrance, the facilities look rather modest, but there's more to be found at the back. Here, there is a stoned outdoor area with exercise bikes and a fair-sized masonry grill. A round-shaped swimming pool glitters by the lawn, and a bit further down, two well-trimmed football fields lie waiting. Football has a central role at the Kaknäs Club, with 76 played games last season. But the sports meetings are about much more than just football, says Peter.

– The party surrounding the game is at least as important. On warm summer days, we can have over 400 people who come to swim, sun bathe and cheer for their teams.

The Silja team arrives and changes into the blue colours that have been laid out for them, after which the field begins to fill with people. When everyone is in position, the umpire blows the signal for kick-off and the game is on. The visitors' team immediately takes command, the first goal being scored soon thereafter.

– I support the Jewel team, Peter says with satisfaction. Coming on board and saying they have won means so much to them.

Football is popular, but organising a match requires a great deal of preparation. Today's encounter was put together at the visi-



Heavy losses for the crew of "Silja Symphony". Photograph: Linda Sundgren

tors' initiative. They e-mailed the Kaknäs Club a few days ago, expressing their desire to play a game during their stay in Stockholm. Peter knew that the "Silja Symphony" would be berthed in Stockholm at the time, and forwarded the request to its crew. Once the teams were settled, transports→

2 of every 100 employees use drugs



Modern shipping requires a sharp crew. Photograph: Thorkild Sandbeck

A good method for reducing the use of drugs is to implement random tests at the workplace. This is maintained by Per Björklöv, drug test expert and consultant at the Karolinska University Hospital, in Huddinge.

Drug tests are increasingly becoming common practice, both in Sweden and abroad. Safety-sensitive trades, e.g. the transportation sector, the military and the factory industry are the ones performing the largest number of tests. USA is at the top, with over 100 million tests performed each year. In Sweden, approximately 45,000 tests are analysed each year, with an average of 2 to 2,5 percent reading positive.

– The figure is more or less the same regardless of the industry sector or the company, Björklöv tells. Cannabis and amphetamines are our most frequent finds.

The strongest reason for drug testing, according to Björklöv, is that it motivates the staff to stay away from drugs. A person who controls his substance use will refrain from it, if there is a risk of being exposed. Random tests also increase the chances of discovering and attending to abuse at an early stage. However, drug tests performed on new employees are rarely positive, provided that the company has previously informed about the testing.

– Pripps chose not to give prior warning one year. When they performed the tests, a whole seven percent turned out positive, Björklöv says.

Only a few percent of all tested subjects find the test a violation of their personal integrity, according to Björklöv. In his capacity as Chairman of the European Workplace Drug Testing Society, he took part in a large international survey regarding how people feel about the tests. Between 95 and 98 percent felt that the tests did not violate their personal integrity, while 1 percent felt they did.

– Most people accept as motivation that they will obtain a safer work environment, says Björklöv.

More information about workplace drug testing can be obtained from Per Björklöv:

per.bjorklov@telia.com, or from the nationwide organisation for the prevention of substance abuse, Alna: 08-56440770 or www.alna.se

Linda Sundgren

Advice for companies seeking to implement drug testing:

- Sign a collective agreement with the labour organisations, specifying the grounds and procedures of your drug testing policy.
- Train your work supervisors on the subject of drug testing, so that they can respond to the ponderings of the staff.
- Appoint a chief responsible of testing among the personnel. This person acts as the company expert on the subject, and must know for example how to handle positive analysis results or refusals to submit tests.

Exercise, fellowship, continued

were arranged with the Katarina Seamen's Club and the Seamen's Church in order to have all the players gathered on time.

– The ships' berthing times are short, so everything must be planned with great precision in order to make enough time for a match to be played. This requires no small amount of coordination, but we usually make it.

While the match continues, more people arrive to the site. Some are jogging, a few sit down on the grass to watch the game, and others play pool inside the house. There are also indoor table tennis and computer and telephone facilities. Snacks and fruit are sold from behind a counter by the entrance. A large part of the club's activities, however, take place downtown. Such activities include rides to tourist attractions, assistance with sports equipment shopping, sightseeing tours, etc. The club receives between five and ten e-mails each day, with varying requests.

– We try to manage to do as much as possible, but sometimes we are forced to prioritise, says Peter. Our busiest time is in the summer, when all the cruise ships are coming and going, and keeping up is hard.

Today's football encounter progresses in the same fashion as it started. Even though the Silja crew manages to score a few goals, they face a superior resistance and the game ends at 6–2 in favour of the visitors' team. After the game, the boys are driven back to their ships. For Peter and Harry there remains a good deal of laundering and tidying to be done before they can lock up and call it a day.

The Merchant Fleet's Culture and Leisure Council (Handelsflottans Kultur- och Fritidsråd, HKF) was founded in 1948. It is a government authority whose task is to provide meaningful leisure time activities for seafarers. It supplies the ships with books and films, arranges sports events and offers a multiple range of services in the ports. HKF has offices in Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmö and Norrköping, and also in Rotterdam (Holland) and Antwerpen (Belgium). HKF is popular among maritime workers, but its existence has been disputed and questioned by politicians at several occasions. The latest occasion was during the inquiry on the Seamen's Service, of which a report was submitted in February. The report proposes that the level of service be lowered to match the international minimum standard and that the authority be made part of the Swedish Maritime Administration. However, people within the sector wish that the organisation maintain its current form. A decision regarding the future of HKF is expected to be made in the next budget proposal.

Linda Sundgren

On a regular basis, the Maritime Safety Inspectorate publishes information on incidents as well as reports that the shipping industry may find interesting.

Below is a selection of items from the latest report. The texts are also available in unabbreviated form on the Swedish Maritime Administration, www.sjofartsverket.se, under the heading Maritime Safety Inspection.

Fishermen died of asphyxia

A crewman on a fishing vessel went down to the cargo hold to gut some herrings, and collapsed over the flooring. A colleague rushed to his succour, but also fainted. A third crew member finally got them out, suffering injuries in the process. The two first crewmen died. The cargo hold had been kept closed during a couple of days, and the fish guts had begun to rot. The process of rotting consumes oxygen, which in a closed space can lead to oxygen deficiency, as happened in this case. The same problem may occur on tank ships carrying a cargo that releases gas, or with ballast tanks or chain boxes kept closed over a period of time. A number of reports reach the Shipping Inspection every year regarding persons who have perished due to asphyxia. There are several types of cargo that consume oxygen through maturation or rotting processes.

- Caution must be observed whenever entering a closed or poorly ventilated space.

- Specific routines should be established for such chores.

- There are gas meters available with an alarm that is tripped whenever the level of oxygen is below acceptable. All ships where a risk of oxygen deficiency is present should have an oxygen meter.

Iu dnr 080202-05-16327

Lever in wrong position caused bottom contact

The vessel was proceeding along a narrow waterway, with the pilot on board. It was dark, and navigation was fine-tuned using the bow thrusters. There were three levers on the panel, each operated in a different way. The steering lever was mounted on the console like a door handle of sorts, the end pointing at the operator. By turning the handle to starboard, it gave a starboard rudder, causing the vessel to turn to starboard.



Another lever controlled one of the bow thrusters, and was mounted in the same fashion as the steering lever, but with an arrow on the opposite side to the end. With the arrow pointed to starboard, the propeller worked in starboard direction, but in order to make the arrow point to port the lever had to be moved to port. This meant that the lever had to be turned to port if one wanted to make the craft veer to starboard. The third lever controlled the other bow thruster. This lever was of a straight vertical shape. When turned to port, it made the vessel veer to port. In the dark, the pilot turned the wrong lever by mistake. This mistake caused the craft to make bottom contact. These types of levers, presenting differing shapes and effects, are normal at sea, especially since many functions are complemented or added at a later stage. Such arrangements may be a serious threat to safety. The investigating body finds it odd that such installations exist, and that their delivery is accepted by the persons on board receiving the equipment.

Iu dnr 080202-05-16500

Two people on chartered vessel died

Several similar accidents have occurred in the recent past involving larger pleasure crafts that are also used for charters. In two cases, the ships were an older wooden vessel, both finding themselves in fairly hard weather. The ships started taking in water and the pumps could not cope. One ship sunk, and two people died. Several crewmembers were evacuated by helicopter from the other ship, while those remaining on board managed to bring the craft to dock with outside assistance. The foundered vessel was recovered. One of the accidents was caused by maintenance neglects, combined with the fact that the ship was sailing too hard under the prevailing weat-

her conditions. The other was due to failing caulking in several spots, causing the leaks to surpass the pump capacity. A third accident involved a relatively new sailing vessel. On its way to West India, with paying passengers on board, the vessel came into heavy weather on the North Sea. The hull was torn apart and the ship took in water. The vessel was kept afloat with the help of pumps supplied from the shore. Evacuation was necessary, however, and a number of passengers were brought to shore by helicopter. The ship with the remaining people on board were towed to dock. The hull was not designed to resist the strain it was subjected to. Despite official demands, the hull's seaworthiness had not been inspected according to the regulations currently in force, and the crew lacked the necessary qualifications for the journey. The shipowners and the master are now being subjected to criminal investigation.

Conclusions:

- Hard weather can sometimes impose excessive demands on a vessel and its crew. It is very important to monitor weather conditions, and to have the experience and theoretical knowledge required to correctly assess the situation.

- A good maintenance system, good equipment and proper preparations are of great importance.

- Taking passengers on board involves great responsibility, and puts high demands on the crew and the vessel.

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Gas bottle exploded during refill

A gas bottle exploded while it was being refilled using an air compressor. On board a fairly new vessel, the gas bottle was older, with various different numbers and dates. One person suffered serious injuries, and the hull of a lifeboat was ripped open.

- Pressurized containers are recommended to be under proper surveillance. Neglects in maintenance or care may have serious consequences.

Mars 200533



Focus on shipping

The ISPS Code has deprived many seamen of one of the most basic rights in shipping, the right to go ashore in a foreign port and enjoy other views than those of one's own ship. After a long sea voyage, this need is often very deep. To be met at such a time by mistrust and arrogance from the authorities, or in the worst of cases to be forbidden to leave the ship, is an unworthy way to treat fellow human beings. I believe that a ratification of ILO Convention 185 (Seafarer's ID Convention) and a functional application of the ISPS Code are required, in order to restore the seaman's freedom. However, though ILO Convention 185 has been ratified by four ILO member states, having therefore officially come into force, it appears to awake little interest.

Life on a ship has many highlights, and one of them is definitely food. Opinions

differ regarding which food is better, but God help the poor cook steward who decides to serve any other breakfast than bacon and eggs on a Sunday. Seamen are often regarded as conservative regarding the on-board diet; food must be plentiful, and of course an evening tray should be waiting in the fridge. But is this true even today? We will have the chance to discuss both this subject and the seamen's right to go ashore at the SAN Conference, held on the 27th of October at the Arken Conference Centre, in Gothenburg. These items are included as main issues of the day, and I look forward to your insightful views and debates. We look forward to seeing you there as well! Invitations will be sent out shortly.

Good watch!

Pieter Sprangers/Chairman SAN

Terror prevention – a problem for seafarers

Certain seafarers have been affected by some serious oversteps, made for the sake of terror prevention. The situation is however becoming increasingly stable, with fewer and fewer problems being reported.

Since the ISPS Code (International Ship and Port Facility Security Code) came into force as a means against terrorism, sprung from the September 11th terrorist attacks, the freedom of movement of on-board employees has been strongly reduced. It has become more difficult to enter or leave a vessel, and it is also no longer possible to move freely on the quays. Several serious oversteps affecting seafarers have also been reported during the period of little over a year that has elapsed since the law came into force. A compiled report by the IMO (International Maritime Organization) describes how ships have been forced to hire armed guards to prevent their own crew from going ashore. Lifeboat drills have been prohibited in certain ports, while a visa has been necessary in others in order to access the quay and check the vessel's draft. Dan Sarenus, the person responsible for ISPS-related matters at the Maritime Administration, tells how at a foreign port it was demanded that the religious beliefs of each individual crew member be reported before arrival.

– The ISPS Code was created very quickly, and has given ample room to individual interpretation, he says. By

twenty-twenty hindsight, one can conclude that the process was somewhat hasty.

A relatively low number of problems have been reported from Swedish ports.

– Of approximately 300 ports, we have only had problems in two, perhaps three locations. These have involved individual vessels, where going ashore has basically been denied.

According to Sarenus, the application of the ISPS Code is constantly improving, and fewer incongruities are being reported.

– New clarifications concerning the Code are constantly being issued by the IMO, lowering the risk of misinterpretations. The discontents currently expressed are more related to the reduced freedom of movement, which the Code rightly implements.

ISPS Code at SAN Conference

Dan Sarenus is one of the speakers at the SAN Conference on the 27th of October, when he will tell us more about the ISPS Code and its consequences.

Linda Sundgren



Topical book, *Modern piracy and terror on the high seas*, by John S. Burnett

Work environment regulations in January

Around 50 regulations belonging to the Swedish Work Environment Act will come into force on ships from January 2006. The regulations have been adapted to the special conditions in shipping, and were subject to consideration last spring. A last examination is now being made before their coming into force.

The Swedish Maritime Administration continue inspections

The Swedish Maritime Administration is the authority with the best knowledge concerning ship environments, and is therefore to continue handling the inspection of on-board work environments. This has been established by the government. With this decision, the maritime unions' request that the Swedish Work Environment Authority take over the inspections was denied.

New law on seamen's rest hours

The maritime unions consider that the current Rest Hour Act leads to excessively long working days and too little sleep. In its place, a new maritime working hours act is proposed, based on eight-hour working days with a maximum of 72 working hours per week. The employers and the Shipping Inspection are opposed to this proposal, referring to the disadvantage it would bring to the competitiveness of Swedish shipping. The issue is undergoing preparation at the Ministry of Industry.



SAN is a joint body for SARF, Swedish Ship Officers' Association (SFBF), Merchant Marine Officers' Association (SBF) and SEKO Seafarers.

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