



THE MAGAZINE OF THE

WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB

Experimental edition

November 1976

WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB
HOVE, KENT

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The club's newsletter will be published in the last week of March May July and October.

Contributions should be sent to the Secretary; letters and small ads should be sent to arrive not later than the first day of the month in which the newsletter is published.

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a newsletter ?

Whenever the idea of a newsletter has been suggested in the past, the reasons why we have not gone ahead have usually been those of practical difficulty and of course cost. But there seems to be a strong feeling among some club members at least that a regular magazine or newsletter would be a good idea. Not only would it serve as a better means of communication with members than the secretary's irregular dreary circulars but it could provide an opportunity for information to flow in the opposite direction as well as for members to share tips, knowledge and experiences; it might even stimulate some argument about the way the club is run or about its future development.

Now, thanks to the assistance of printer/member Richard Jordan, most of the practical difficulties seem capable of being solved and next season we shall try to get a newsletter off the ground, aiming at a minimum of four issues appearing in March, May, July and October. This is essentially a dummy run - a product of the secretary's fertile imagination. For the real thing we need ideas, articles, photographs, drawings and of course letters. We shall aim to publish during the last week of the month and if members want to buy, sell, rent or charter, we will carry a small ads column.

We shall need a name for the newsletter. We have to decide whether it looks better printed on A4 paper (like this one) or A5 (half the size). We shall want a cover design, so please start thinking, writing and drawing now.

boats away

Now that we have reached the end of the sailing season may I please remind you that all dinghies should be removed from the dinghy park by 1st December. We hope that we shall see most of them back again soon after 1st March 1977.

changing class

During the 1976 season we reached capacity membership. All 250 places in the dinghy park were allocated. At the beginning of the season it was necessary to start a waiting list for Mirror dinghies and to impose restrictions on some classes in the handicap fleet. The present position is that the sailing committee will approve the allocation of dinghy park spaces to boats in those classes of which there are already three dinghies in the club. Applications for spaces for boats of new classes, or classes of which there are at present only one or two boats in the club will be considered on their merits. Since the position may well change during the winter months, I can only suggest that you consult the sailing Secretary, Robin Musters, (whose address is in the handbook), before committing yourself to the purchase of a new boat in the handicap fleet. You are, of course, required to seek the permission of the Secretary before changing a class of dinghy to be kept in the dinghy park (Byelaw 13).

winter work

This winter, the barge will be removed from its moorings for overhaul by Acorn Shipyard at Rochester. The two motor boats will be taken out of the water. Present plans are for the rescue boat to be put in the club garage at Hoo Marina for repainting and antifouling. The scow will be taken by road to Borough Green for similar treatment. Members who would like to help at Borough Green should contact me as soon as possible.

work parties

Winter work plans at the club itself will include replacement of a section of the downstream slipway, some repair work on the "sea defences" outside the dinghy park, repairs to the tracks through the wood and down the hill to the car park and one or two smaller tasks. The first working party will be arranged for Sunday 28 November, and a second working party on Sunday 12 December if that proves necessary. Please turn out in force on 28 November; if we get all the work done then there may be no need to organise any further working parties after Christmas. Shovels etc. will be needed as usual.

xmas party

The club's Christmas Party will be held this year on Friday 10 December at the clubhouse of the Old Wilsonians Association which is to be found in Hayes Hill, off Pickhurst Lane, Hayes, Kent. The start will be at 8 pm and the cost, ~~£10~~ £10, will provide you with good company, a cold supper and a glass of wine. As old hands will know, accommodation at the Hayes club is limited so applications please in good time with the money to the House Secretary, Ray Blyth, on the tear off slip on the last page of the newsletter.

evening classes

We have been asked by the Medway Yachting Association whether there is a demand for evening classes on the theoretical sections of the RYA intermediate and advanced Dayboat certificates, or the National Coastal Certificate, in the Medway area. If anyone is interested, can I please ask them to contact Ray Blyth or Robin Musters without delay.

phone

Please note that the telephone number of Robin and Geraldine Musters is now Tonbridge _____. You may care to amend Page 2 of the supplement to your handbook.

Robin Musters

the demise of the irror

by a
Mirror Sailor

There are some seventy Mirror dinghies in the dinghy park for most of the year but on an average Sunday only a handful can be found on the river or, more particularly, on the club's start line. During 1976, the best showing was on the Mirror Fleet Day when some 25 Mirrors joined in, but on one recent Sunday afternoon it was left to two fourteen year olds in a ten year old boat to represent the entire Mirror Fleet in a race in the Commodore's Cup series. The Mirror is not a fast boat, it is true, but in handicap racing the very high Portsmouth Yardstick of the Mirror (122) gives the Mirror sailor an even chance, and probably a more than even chance when the wind is either very light, or very strong.

Of the seventy Mirrors in the dinghy park, there are probably no more than fifteen which are raced during the whole of the season. That leaves no fewer than fifty-five boats which are used only for pottering, if they are used at all. Does it matter? It can after all be argued that the object of the club (Rule 1) is the encouragement of amateur sailing, not racing in particular, and that if Mirror owners are willing to pay their subscriptions but not to join in the organised activities, that is up to them. On the other hand, if nobody took part in club activities the WSC would be no more than a rather inconveniently situated marine "car park" - which, let us face it - the Mirror section of the dinghy park almost is already. Besides, can it not be argued that the best way to encourage amateur sailing is to provide a sensible and non-exacting programme of races so that there is opportunity for people to sail in company? It is a well known fact that there is no better way of developing sailing skills than with the racing fleet; so racing makes for safer sailing, and of course the racing fleets are accompanied by a rescue boat. The people who get into serious trouble on the river are nearly always the unskilled unaccompanied potterers.

Over the past two or three years, the club has gone through a period of expansion. But the additional space which was added to the dinghy park when we negotiated our new lease has now been filled. Given a continuation of the recent rate of new applications for membership, we can soon expect to have a small queue of prospective members, some of whom will be keen to take part in club racing. It would be idle to assume that the sailing committee and the general committee of the club have not realised this, and given that the running of the club is almost entirely in the hands of members who want to see the racing side developed, it would not be surprising if there was a suggestion that in some way or other, the new keen members should be accommodated at the expense of the inactive Mirror members. How this could be achieved is anyone's guess; but the obvious answers are either a reduction in the size of the Mirror Fleet to be achieved by natural wastage, or a requirement that to have a space in the dinghy park, boats should take part in a minimum number of races in the season. The writer hastens to add that this is only speculation, but the problem is real enough.

So what should happen? Chris Stevens, the Class Captain, knows well enough that part of the trouble in 1976 has been that several of the "older" Mirror sailors have moved on to other, faster dinghies now that the Handicap Fleet has begun to grow. But that still does not explain why so many of the others play such an inactive role. It's not just the racing. Take a look in your club handbook and see how many Mirror owners there are on the general committee.

This short article is not intended to find solutions to the problems of the Mirror Fleet. But it does seem an appropriate time to point out that if the Mirror owners cannot solve them by taking a more active part both in club activities and the running of the club, others might seek to solve them for them; and if some Mirror owners find there is no longer a place for them in the dinghy park, they will only have themselves to blame.

COMPETITION

Any newsletter needs a name. You probably noticed that this edition doesn't have one. A presentable newsletter also needs either a distinctive cover or a title panel, depending on the size of the paper. So, before the first edition of the newsletter is published, there will be a competition with prizes of club burgees for (a) the most apt and original name, and (b) the best cover or letterhead design (whether or not incorporating a name).

The competition is open to members of any age. Entries should reach the Secretary by the end of the year. The results will be made known at the Annual General Meeting, which will be in February. Entries for the cover design should be either for a panel measuring 210 mm wide by not more than 80 mm high for use on the top of A4 paper (that is the size on which this experimental edition is printed) or a design suitable for use on the front cover of a magazine printed on A5 paper (approximately 210 mm high by 150 mm wide) whether or not it takes up the whole of the page.

Cover of letterhead designs should be in black and white, or black and white and one other colour. Results will also be published in the first newsletter which, hopefully, will carry the prizewinning name and design.

dinner and dance

About 120 members and guests gathered at the Bull Hotel, Birchwood, Swanley on Friday 22 October for the club's annual dinner and dance. The official guests were Captain and Mrs David Gibbons of the Medway Ports Authority, Dennis Dowley, the Commodore of the Hoo Ness Yacht Club and his wife, Michael Jessup, the Commodore of the Medway Cruising Club and his wife and Mr and Mrs Edward Brice. After an excellent dinner, the Commodore (Sam Brookes) proposed a toast to the club's guests and in reply David Gibbons revealed that even such highly qualified and respected people as harbourmasters can suffer the same indignities when sailing as lesser mortals. After dinner,

the club's silver trophies were presented. Dancing was to the Johnny Spice Ensemble.

For many years this annual event has been oversubscribed and late applicants for tickets have been turned away. For the past two years however numbers have been smaller, though the total number of members in the club has increased. Though one of the reasons has almost certainly been the increase in the price of tickets, there may be other reasons why this year and last year some people have stayed away.

The House Committee would like to have the views of those who did not go to the dinner. If you have some views to put over, please write to Ray Blyth at _____, Otford, Kent.

steering on a transit

by Sam Brookes

Anyone who races at our Club is familiar with "Transits" because our start line is an imaginary one representing the projection across the river of the line produced when the two starting masts are in line or in transit. What you may not be so familiar with is the need to use the imaginary line or transit phenomenon when you are down river during the race. Imagine for the moment that you are racing downstream having just rounded buoy 24P with the next mark as 23S. The tide is ebbing at full force. If the helmsman keeps the bow pointing directly at 23 then the tide will sweep the boat off course to starboard until the final approach to 23 will be made from well below. The course actually achieved will be in the shape of an arc with the degree of curve increasing quite dramatically at the finish. If the leg has been fairly fine on the wind then it may even be necessary to tack to pass 23 on the required side. Now, a track over the water in the shape of an arc is not the shortest distance between the two buoys. The shortest, and quickest, track is an imaginary straight line, like our starting transit. To achieve it we have to identify a couple of fixed points on the line and keep them one behind the other. In the example above the nearer point to choose will obviously be 23 itself. The further one will be an identifiable location on the shore behind - probably the corner of one of the power station buildings or an electricity pylon. As you progress along keeping the transit you will find that you are having to point the bow well to one side of the track you are trying to make. Don't worry about that, I can assure you its still a lot quicker than following the longer arc.

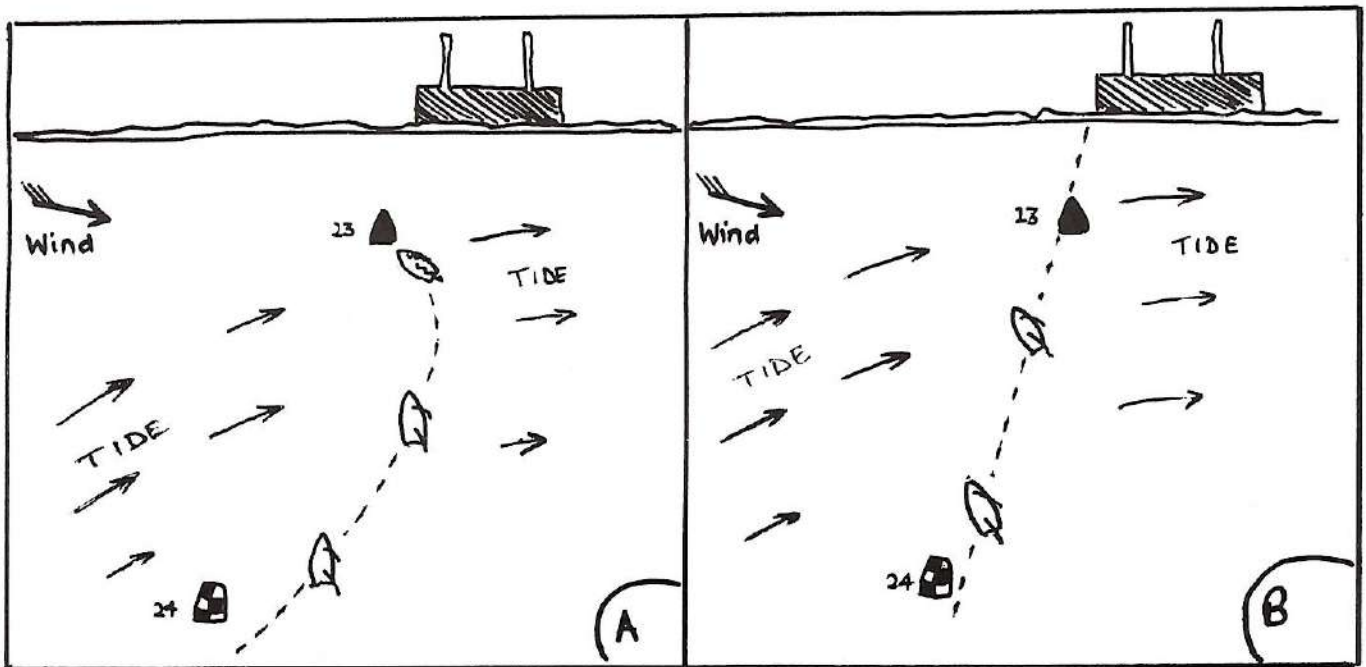


Fig "A": Steering for the mark

Fig "B": The Transit course

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

During the first week of December or thereabouts, our hard working assistant Treasurer, Geraldine Musters will be sending out invoices for subscriptions for 1977. Hopefully in the days that follow she will be inundated with cheques as our 350 family, ordinary, young ordinary, junior and country members all fight for the privilege of being the first to renew their membership for 1977.

The invoice this year is in three parts. The first part has the subscription rates and fees on but you are asked to send the whole of the form back to Geraldine with your remittance.

The second part of the invoice serves two purposes. First it asks for names, addresses and telephone numbers so that the club records can be kept up to date. Its surprising how many people change them during the course of a season. It also asks for preferences for club weekend duties during 1977. During 1976 the club has run like clockwork on most weekends and there has been only a very small number of members who failed to turn up for duty or to arrange a substitute. Inevitably, some people were unable to turn out at the last minute for quite valid reasons. But the handful who forgot or who couldn't be bothered will hopefully not bother to renew their memberships if that is the best that they can do.

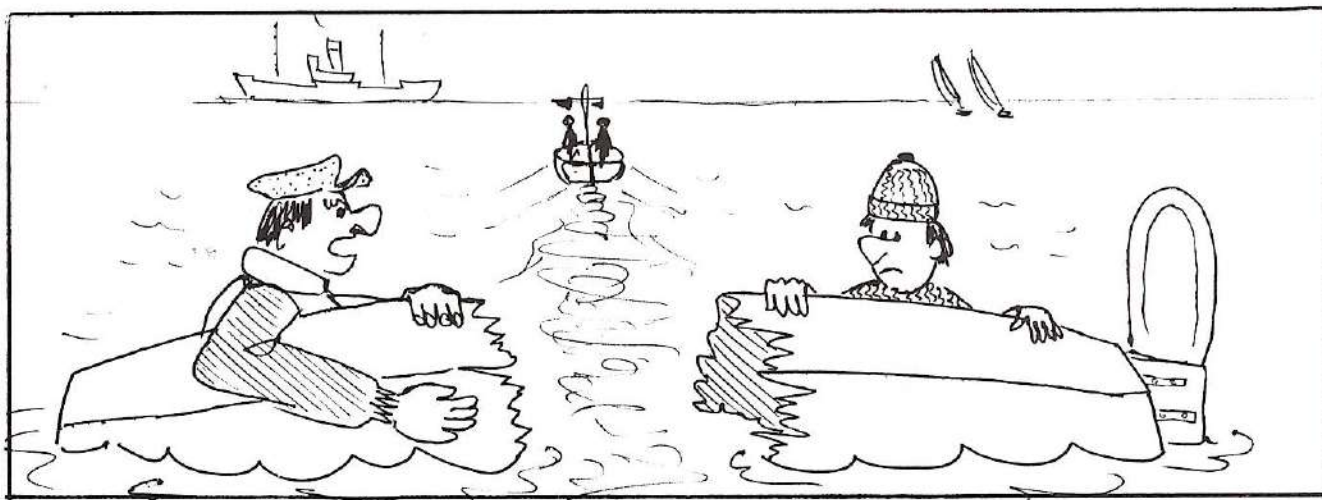
For the rest, all reasonable choices of duties and dates will be met. We could do with just a few more volunteers

for Chief Duty Officer. This is the chap who opens up the barge on Saturday afternoons and has overall responsibility for the manning and running of the club until Sunday evening. A cabin is reserved for him on the barge. The instructions for Chief Duty Officers are comprehensive and are sent to them a week or so before the duty weekend. It is not an onerous duty (all the best managers know how to delegate the hard work).

There was no shortage of volunteers for the rescue boat in 1976 but the standard of rescue boat handling was sometimes capable of being criticised. In spite of the fact that volunteers were asked to ensure in advance they they knew how to operate the boat, one man arrived and actually asked the CDO "Which is the rescue boat?" In 1977 please volunteer for this duty if that is what you would like to do. But if you do not have previous experience, we will require you to undergo a few hours training before going on active duty.

If you cant manage a weekend duty, perhaps because you are a shiftworker, the Secretary can always provide a few jobs to be done at some other time.

The last part of the subscription invoice is an application for a dinghy park space. Dont forget that for 1977 if you want a space in the dinghy park you must be able to produce a measurement certificate and evidence of third party insurance. If you cannot produce these, your application for a space will be put on one side until you can. But you have been given plenty of warning.



Rescue boat? That was the rescue boat!

THE RACING PAGE

The Laying Up Cup

Some years ago the laying up cup was a three race event; then it was two. Now it is down to one race, but in some ways that is not a bad thing. Three was too many and the slowest boats in the second race were sometimes too late to start in the third. The extension of the racing season beyond the end of British Summer Time has now made a protracted afternoon race a rather risky affair and one race, after all, gives people a chance to pack their boats up for towing home.

The last day of the 1976 season started sunny but rather lacking in wind. There was a fifteen minute postponement while the duty officers were rearranged to provide a crew for the rescue boat but at 1115 there was a good start and 33 boats set off downstream with an ebb tide and a following wind. The fleet stayed tightly packed to the first mark (28) but one or two people underestimated the strength of the tide causing a minor scuffle round the buoy. At 23 the fleet had begun to thin out and Terry Sullivan (Fireball) had pulled well ahead. At this point Trevor Walker (Solo) and David Musters (Laser) were also well up. The wind stayed light and the apparently

leisurely conditions disguised some keen jockeying for position in the middle of the fleet. Earlier calculations about the best course to steer on the way back were upset by the refusal of the tide to stop flowing in the direction of Sheerness until an hour or so after low water and some people appeared to be sailing on the mud by Darnet fort in order to keep out of the last of the ebb. The effect of the handicapping was to require Terry Sullivan to build up a lead of about twenty minutes in order to beat the next boat in on corrected time. In fact he managed to make up some fourteen and a half minutes which meant that the cup was won by Trevor Walker's Solo. Second place went to the Kinder family's Enterprise "Bounty" and the Fireball was third. The absence of a second race gave plenty of time for the presentation and for the race to be re-run in the saloon of the barge, as often happens.

Team racing at Bough Beech

WSC fielded two teams of three Enterprise dinghies for the Southern Area Team Championships at Bough Beech near Edenbridge on 30th October. Four wins in seven races provided a better than average result, but was not enough to put the WSC team into the final. Winners were Arun Yacht Club.

post script

Any newsletter can only be as good as the contributions which are made to it. This experimental issue was only intended to show what might be done. The committee would like to see a flourishing correspondence column, and a small ads service free to members. Articles on aspects of sailing, good black and white photographs, cartoons, advice on design and maintenance will all be welcome. Though this edition was prepared largely by the Secretary, it would probably be a good idea to separate the editing of a newsletter from any official position in the club, so if anyone is interested in becoming editor of the newsletter, the Secretary would be pleased to hear from him or her. The address and telephone number are to be found on page one.

SMALL ADS

for sale

Mirror Dinghy Number 6732 "Idano". Two mains, two jibs and a spinnaker. Cover.
£230 Apply: Peter Bolton, , Meopham. Meopham .

wanted

The club has need of a solid fuel domestic hot water boiler for the barge to replace the present boiler which is beginning to fall apart. If anyone knows of a boiler which might be suitable, will they please contact the Secretary.

lost

Missing from the dinghy park, and possibly taken by mistake: A white road trailer with yellow mast support. This trailer had been left in the trees at the back of the dinghy park and there is now another white and yellow trailer in its place. Please contact Ray Wright at Sutton Surrey. Telephone number (or office number).

FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday 25 November: Handicap Fleet social evening at the Buttery Bar of the Black Eagle public house at Polhill (between Sevenoaks and Crpington)

Sunday 28 November: from 10 am working party at the club. Please bring shovels picks etc

Friday 10 December: Club Christmas party, Hayes, 8 pm. Application form below

Sunday 12 December: Second working party at the club

Various winter weekends: Painting the scow in a barn at Borough Green (Volunteers required)

Date not yet announced: Social evening for GP 14 and Enterprise fleets.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

To Ray Blyth Esq

Oxford, Kent.

Please reserve for me places at the WSC Christmas party to be held at Hayes on Friday 10 December. I enclose my remittance for £..... (@ ~~2.50~~ per place).

Name..... Address.....

.....

Telephone number.....

NB Tickets will not be sent, but Ray or Helen Blyth will let you know and return your money if the party is oversubscribed.