



31 1/2

THE WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB MAGAZINE

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WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB
Hoo, Kent.

Commodore:

Bob Jones
40, Stangate Road,
Knights Place,
Strood, Kent.
Tel: Medway 719913

Secretary:

John Smith
554, Princess Road,
Dartford, Kent.
Tel: Dartford 78927

The Club magazine is called "31 1/2" because the club's previous headquarters, the barge "Wilsonian", was moored, approximately, halfway between navigation buoys 31 and 32.

Editor:

Terry Wright
12, Tradescant Drive,
Meopham, Kent.
Tel: Meopham 812361
(but see page 13)

25 YEARS ON.... and a MEMORABLE OCCASION

Such was the Grand Official Opening of our new clubhouse by Richard Corben, High Sheriff of Kent on May 5th. The clubroom was packed to capacity with our guests and WSC members and the atmosphere could best be described as electric..... one had almost to shout to carry on a conversation, such was the buzz from the capacity crowd.

Among the approximately one hundred invited guests honouring the club with their presence were Councillor and Mrs Crowther, Mayor and Mayoress of Rochester Upon Medway, Mr R. D. Knowles representing the Sports Council, Mr P. Buss from the K.C.C, Mr W. J. Henderson from the Manpower Services Commission, our landlords Edward, Walter and Andrew Brice, Chris Frier, chairman of the Medway Yachting Association and the flag officers of the various Medway yacht clubs.

With only minutes to go before the arrival of the High Sheriff, Dave Vettergreen, Paul Absolom, Martin Jessop and others were busily drilling holes and screwing the WILSONIAN S.C. sign on the outside wall, whilst inside Ian Wyatt was putting up the plaques that were to be unveiled! Bob Jones, Ken Grundwell Tom Sims and others who had been working down at the club since the crack of dawn, disappeared, to miraculously re-appear in their Sunday best togs, rather reminiscent of the transformation scene in a panto!

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The guests began to arrive in a steady trickle which soon became a flood and away we went, the wine flowed freely and the clubroom fairly buzzed. Reunions between old friends and past members seemed to be occurring all round the room.

After the official opening ceremony a number of presentations to the Club were made. Firstly a splendid mounted clock and barometer from the Medway Yachting Association, then a ships bell from former flag officer Ron Meadows and finally a superb painting of the old barge "Wilsonian" as seen from the river downstream and set against a backdrop of Cockham woods, commissioned and presented by past and present WSC flag officers.

The hard working House Committee had spared no effort to lay on a delicious buffet luncheon set out in the clubroom and below in the mens changing room, and this soon disappeared under the onslaught of the assembled company who kept coming back for more! A large cake had been prepared celebrating the clubs Silver Jubilee and this was duly cut by Mrs Rosanne Corben and Commodore Bob Jones.

In conclusion I think it may be safely said that all those present, guests and members alike, judged the occasion to have been a roaring success and a truly wonderful advertisement for the club. Well done, one and all!

Some excellent black and white photographs appeared in the Chatham, Rochester and Gillingham Evening News and the Chatham Standard, unfortunately, although permission to print them was forthcoming, delivery was too late for the publication date of "31 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".



And I thought bendy rigs were a modern innovation. This is the 1925 Bisquine de Cancale "La Jeune Amelie".

FLEET NEWS

GP 14

Alan Smith and John Pattison

The last series of 1983, the Autumn Points was won by Richard Jordan, with Ian Parris in a close second place. We also completed the second leg of our team racing against SEGAS, again in foul weather and adding to our points total in the first leg retained the trophy in a convincing way.

Following my comments regarding future Open Meetings. Firstly may I thank those who did contact me. The most expressed opinion was that we should continue to host an Open Meeting and you will therefore be pleased to know that we will be having our usual Open Event in August 1984.

1983 was a very mixed season with early memories of constant rain being superceded by the heatwave of midsummer but rarely without wind. Numbers of boats racing were slightly down on 1982 but the standard of racing was maintained. The 1984 season is now with us and I look forward to benign wind, lots of boats on the water and tight racing.

This being my last contribution as Fleet Captain, may I thank everyone in the fleet for your support during the last three years and hope that my successor, John Pattison, will derive as much pleasure from the job as I have.

Alan Smith

The cold and bitter start to the season saw only a mere handful of our stalwarts emerge from hibernation. From strong winds and freezing temperatures to no wind at all, we had to wait till the 6th race before we had the first result.

At the last count, I numbered eighteen GP's in the dinghy park and have been advised that a total of twenty-six have applied for spaces. We would very much hope to see the rest of you turn up soon, and would like to see the whole fleet on the water at the same time- you may not rate your chances to high at winning, but I would appreciate some company at the back of the fleet!

The results so far:-

SPRING POINTS

	1st	Windstreaker	10803	Richard Jordan
Equal)	2nd	Myvanwy II	12405	Alan Smith
)		Bin	10958	Mike Doherty

EASTER CUP

	1st	Windstreaker	10803	Richard Jordan
	2nd	Bin	10958	Mike Doherty
	3rd	After Ours	10957	D. Blyth

Cont.

SILVER JUBILEE EVENT

1st	Rough Justice	12434	Ian Parris
2nd	Windstreaker	10803	Richard Jordan
3rd	Bob Cat	11020	Bob Dutton

We wish to extend a very warm welcome to our new members and hope that the Club and the sailing excels all expectations.

CONGRATULATIONS to Mr and Mrs John Ireland on the birth of their daughter and very best wishes to Ian Parris and Denise who were married on May 12th.

The GP OPEN DAY is on the 19th of August for which we hope to see a good number attending, and even winning the prizes.

ENTERPRISE

Keith Jeremiah
E20237 "Hoo Caboodle"

A new season, a new clubhouse, a new fleet captain. Dave Vettergreen has had to stand down owing to unpredictable work commitments in far flung parts. Many thanks to him for his service over the last few years and his help in getting me started this year.

I must warn all you Enterprise owners that I shall be campaigning quite hard to persuade you to get your boats afloat frequently and preferably to join in the class races. You may be able to put me off by being rude to me when I pester you but the surer way of keeping me quiet will be to get out there and sail. As my side of the bargain, I shall do my best to give you as much practical help and advice as possible; all you have to is ask.

Now for a few results: the Spring Points Series is always rather slow gathering momentum but was deservedly won by Ray Fryatt (20056)- thanks partly to Molly's tolerance of having the boat in the dining room.....again. The Easter Cup started with light and variable airs on Sunday morning with Dave Vettergreen (20175) taking first place in the first race, a performance he repeated in the more robust conditions in the afternoon to give him a fairly secure position for the series. The wind kept up on Monday resulting in one or two involuntary duckings. Ray Fryatt won the third and fourth races to take third place overall having had to miss Sunday's races. John Bradley (19261) was second and Dave took the Cup home again - to get it engraved this time, maybe. A total of eight boats contested the series - not bad but we can do better.

We are now looking forward to the Club opening ceremony, the Jubilee racing on May 7th, the start of the early Summer Points series, our Enterprise Open meeting on MAY 20th, The Medway Regatta..... and seeing masses of blue sails on the river every weekend.

- P.S. Any views on
1. Social gatherings
 2. Training days
 3. Short multi lap courses
 4. Anything else

MIRACLE

Paul Absolom

- Firstly, apologies for the lack of Miracle Fleet news in the last issue of 31½, I hope the Editor will allow a longer report than usual in this issue.

For 1984 there are 4 class fleets, plus fast and slow handicap fleets. At present the Miracles are the smallest of the 4 fleets, in terms of those racing. If we wish to retain our class identity in the club, then it really is important that we have good turnouts for the organised racing, to justify having our own starts. The number of new members playing an active part in the fleet last season was very encouraging however, and we hope that we will have further new members this year.

That said, if anyone would like a trial sail in a Miracle, please contact me and I'll try to arrange one. We would hope to show you that the Miracle is just not an inexpensive and easy boat to sail, but can supply all the thrills of fast performance and planing ability in a breeze!

Our fleet evening to round off 1983 was attended by 15 members, and after the distribution of the pottery prizes the meeting asked myself and John Cassell to continue as Fleet Captain and Deputy respectively. There was some discussion about cruises, and it was suggested that we have both a cruise and a race training day this year...preferably in the warmer months, given the wet and windswept occasions we had last year!

Last year the racing was extremely close on occasions, (sometimes to close!) and it was also noticeable that in some of the club handicap racing the Miracles were all finishing within a few places of each other. There were nail biting finishes too for both the last points series, with Gordon Maclay winning both, but after discards being taken into consideration. Congratulations are due to him, and also to Paul Cusson, who won the August Cup after borrowing "Geronimo" from the Vinsons.

Our Open last year was a Paish family benefit, but Martin and Yvonne Jessop gave the SEGAS boat a hard time in the third race, and finished 2nd overall out of the eleven entrants. We had six visitors, but dissappointingly, only five home entrants. Maybe the torrential rain had something to do with this. For this year, we are not having an Open, but will have Miracle Class racing in the Medway Regatta, which should attract Miracles from other clubs.

Here are the results left from last year:-

<u>LATE SUMMER POINTS</u>	1st	2594	Gordon Maclay	7pts
	2nd	2110	Martin Jessop	7pts
	3rd	1958	Lucy-Anne Vinson	21pts
<u>AUGUST CUP</u>	1st	1958	Paul Cusson	3½pts
	2nd	1329	John Cassell	7½pts
	3rd	1999	Brian Ward	11Pts
<u>AUTUMN POINTS SERIES</u>	1st	2594	Gordon Maclay	7¼pts
	2nd	2110	Martin Jessop	7¼pts
	3rd	2180	Paul Absolom	8¼pts

Cont.

So far in 1984, the racing has continued to be close, with varying fortunes for most of the eight boats who entered the Spring Points Series. John Cassell, Martin Jessop and myself had all won races, and the result depended entirely on the last race. After an exciting tussle this was won by Paul Cusson, who crossed the line first by literally half a second.

When the results were worked out only a $\frac{1}{4}$ of a point separated the first three:-

<u>SPRING POINTS</u>				
	1st	2180	Paul Absolom	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ pts
	2nd	493	Paul Cusson	7 $\frac{3}{4}$ pts
	3rd	1329	John Cassell	7 $\frac{3}{4}$ pts

The Easter Cup also provided good racing. In fine sailing weather, the second race saw Lucy-Anne Vinson established a good lead in the beat up to 23, which she held to the finish. The third race saw the lead change several times, with 2180 just scraping home in front of Paul Cusson in 493. Again, all depended on the last race, but a capsized by 1958 put them out of contention and the final result was as follows:-

<u>EASTER CUP</u>				
	1st	2180	Paul Absolom	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ pts
	2nd	493	Paul Cusson	6pts
	3rd	1958	Lucy-Anne Vinson	6 $\frac{3}{4}$ pts

The weather for the Silver Jubilee Event was cold and blustery, but we had an excellent turnout of seven Miracles despite the conditions. In the Miracle Class Martin and Yvonne Jessop were clear winners in 2110 with two wins, and Paul Cusson was a good second, with a win in the third race in difficult conditions. John Cassell was third, having scored a second and a third place in Miracle 1329.

Finally, a reminder to renew your Miracle Association membership, its the best way to keep up to date with news and developments in the class. I have spare forms!

LASER

Colin Booth

As I write this wonderful news-letter we have been sailing for one month. Not only has there been sailing, there has also been two Laser fleet working parties. I would like to thank all those Laser sailors who gave their time and put their energy into the drainage system, mixing concrete, etc.

How is the Laser fleet? The fleet consists of 23 boats. We currently appear to be getting another boat each week. It is possible that the fleet could reach 30 boats this season. Most of last seasons fleet are back again and I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all the new members.

This seasons sailing has, as many can testify, taken place in a variety of conditions. The variety has been flat calm and gales, conditions far from ideal for Lasers. The determination of sailors such as Tom Keenan who gave an amazing demonstration of barrel rolling his Laser, in squalls and hail, between somewhere close to 30 and the Thumb buoy can only be admired. It also is an instant recommendation for his wet suit.

Cont.

Considering the weather there has been a good turn-out during April. So far though, only the "Old Faithfuls" have been turning out with any degree of regularity. To all those of you who, this season, have'nt yet risked the death roll, do come down, disentangle your boat from the weeds and take to the water.

On Sunday 28th April there was a Laser Fleet Day, Chris Stevens arranged with LDC for Performance Sailcraft to bring 3 complete Laser Radials and some Radial rigs to WSC. These duly arrived at about 10.30. Two of the boats had just been collected from the factory and arrived without any of the fittings or rigging in place. We had one of the Radials sailing quite quickly but it took considerably longer to fit and rig the other two boats. The two new boats which were hurriedly rigged without any of the standard modifications caused some problems to the first few people to sail them. We had hoped that many more non Laser sailors would try the Radial, but the very strong winds may have put many people off. The time available for trial sails was restricted when the morning race was abandoned due to the last mark being lost and the racing program was re-arranged with two races in the afternoon. Two scratch races for Lasers were organised with 4 Radials taking part in each race, Peter Belcher was the winner of both races, the first in a Radial and the second in his standard Laser. Racing was extremely close. In the strong winds, the Laser and the Laser Radial seemed very well matched. Reg Kuhn was very fast in the first race and appeared to be benefiting from the Radial rig.

The first impressions of the Radial is that it is a worth-while rig. There were some comments about weather helm. This may be due to how the rig was set up, but, did not in any case appear to affect the speed of the boat. In strong winds the Radial appears to be much easier to handle than the full rig. This is not to say that the Radial is easy to sail in very strong winds. As some of the non-Laser sailors who tried the Radial can verify the boat is very fast and requires firm and positive control. It is not yet possible to say how well it will perform in lighter winds. By the time you read this article there will be at least one Radial in the Laser fleet.

What can you wear to keep warm in your Laser? I have had a Dry Suit for over a year now and find it very good. The only real problem with it is getting in and out of it, help is often required. Although the Dry Suit keeps the water out, it is in itself not very warm. I adjust the insulation and therefore warmth by adding layers of clothing under the suit. The major component of this insulation in cold weather is a one peice pile longjohn. The Dry Suit is much more comfortable to wear than a wet suit although as the water gets warmer I switch back to my two peice wetsuit, mainly for the convenience.

An alternative to a dry suit in cold weather is a super-steamer, I believe Tom Keenan has one. If you ask him, I am sure he will tell you all about it. For any Laser sailor who may have mislaid the address of UKLA and as a result have been unable to re-new their UKLA membership, they should send a note of their sail number, the name of the club and a cheque for £9.75 to:-

Brian Goulder,
UKLA,
59, Queen's Road,
Isle of Wight. PO31 8BW.

"B" HANDICAP

Terry Wright

I am in no position to comment on the low turn-out so far of boats from what is numerically the largest fleet, people in glass houses etc etc. Mind you the weather to begin with was hardly encouraging, either for old hands or nervous novices.

I think the man to beat this season will be new member John Parsons in his Solo. John is really setting the pace and is an example to us all, winning the Easter Cup and the Jubilee Event and doing well in the Spring Points. I hope the other five Solo's will soon come out and keep him company. Here are some results.

<u>SPRING POINTS.</u>	Bob Jones	Mirror	TIKI	1st
	Ron Jordan	Lightning	SOLITAIRE	2nd
	Mike Groom	Mirror	LITTLE JIM	3rd
<u>EASTER CUP</u>	John Parsons	Solo	CHRISTINA	1st
	Sylvia Gregson	Topper	BLUE TACK	2nd
	Ron Jordan	Lightning	SOLITAIRE	3rd

I now have to tell you that I am standing down as Class Captain. I feel that I am not doing enough to encourage people to get out and SAIL. To do that one has to be down at the Club on a reasonably regular basis and for one reason or another I have been unable to do that this season. I am pleased to tell you that David Mason has agreed to take over the Captaincy, with the Sailing Secretary's blessing. David sails a Graduate, 2765 "Whizz Kid", and is looking for a regular crew, can anybody help? David's telephone number is 01.460.8451.

In the "B" Bulletin that was circulated recently I mentioned the Miracle class cruise that their Class Captain Paul Absolom very kindly said we could join in with. The date of the cruise is SUNDAY 29th JULY, when, weather permitting of course, the intention is to sail to one of the islands and have a beach barbecue. There will be a charge of 50 pence to cover the cost of the food and of course members can bring their own liquid refreshment and additional grub if they so wish. The Miracles don't have any racing on that day but we do, however I suspect that most of our fleet like cruising as much as racing so I look forward to a good turn-out. I shall have space in my Streaker for a couple of passengers, or at least an adult and child, they won't have a jib to play with but can have a go at helming the boat instead. Would those of you who intend coming on the cruise please let me know as soon as possible so we know how many to cater for.

PUZZLE CORNER

WHAT DO THE AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE, 72, ST. LOUIS STREET, QUEBEC AND THE MEDWAY ESTUARY HAVE IN COMMON?

ANSWER IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF "31½"

SAILING NOTES

Alan Smith

Firstly some words of warning. The river appears to be silting up in the area between buoys 26 and 24. This can cause problems at low water especially to the shoreward side of 26 and you are advised to stay in the main channel until you are well downstream. Would those of you who set racing courses please try to avoid using 26 at low water.

Some of you will have seen the paddle steamer "Kingswear Castle" thrashing about in the river. Some of its manoeuvres have raised a few eyebrows but its Master explained to one of our rescue boats that it does need room to manoeuvre and that he would appreciate it if small craft could give him room. I will simply comment that it is a rather large vessel which could cause a lot of damage to a dinghy and you are advised to give it a wide berth.

On the racing side turn-outs in general seem low, despite the weather we had this Spring. Your Fleet Captains will undoubtedly be making this point. Please give them your support. As I write we have just sailed the first Commodore's Trophy Race with traumatic results for most entrants. Of twenty eight starters only eight managed to finish, the gale which blew up just after the start having proved to much for the others. We have also sailed our Jubilee Series which for me was disappointing in view of the lack of support. Two of our largest Fleets, the Lasers and the Enterprises only managed to produce two boats each.

The winners of each class were:-

HANDICAP "A"	Carl Palmer	470
HANDICAP "B"	John Parsons	SOLO 2201 "CHRISTINA"
ENTERPRISE	John Bradley	E19261 "SOLID AIR"
LASER	Martin Jones	52430 "SPARKS"
MIRACLE	Martin Jessop	2110 "MERLIN"
GP 14	Richard Jordan	10803 "WINDSTREAKER"

Finally a small point about racing rules. I am becoming increasingly bemused by some of the strange happenings on the water which can only be ascribed to a little knowledge being dangerous. From the race box we have seen some odd versions of re-rounding marks, and on the water I have had a call of "Mast abeam" from a boat that was luffing me! Even stranger tales have been recounted to me by other people. Please therefore, if you are going to race, learn some of the more basic rules, "Elvstrom Explains" or "Twinames Racing Rules" are both readable books which don't get too involved, even for beginners. And incidentally, in case anyone thinks that these comments are for the benefit of our novice racers, the incidents referred to above involved some quite experienced club members.

small ads

CHILDS LONG JOHN WET SUIT
To suit height 4'7" to 4'11"
Inside Leg 24"
Chest 26" ONLY £12.50
Contact John Pattison G.P.8910
Tel. Gravesend 67283

for sale

MIRROR 33252 "LITTLE JIM"
Complete with launching trolley
and road trailer. All the usual
gear, anchor, oars etc. £250
Contact Mike Groom
Tel. Fairseat 822994

LETTERS

I was intrigued by your thought that the Club magazine might have a new name now that we have said cheerio to the dear old barge. It took me back to the time when I was Commodore and we first identified the need for a magazine. We had an Editor, contributors, and an offer of production facilities, everything in fact - except a name.

We published the first issue without a name but included a competition for the best suggestion from the membership and awaited an avalanche of inspired entries to arrive, but alas the response was disappointing. I think it was Bob Skene who came up with the mind-blowingly simple "The Wilsonian Sailing Club Magazine". One could not fault him on accuracy but his idea seemed to lack something in sparkle. Anyway, his was the best there was and as I remember he was awarded the prize.

So there we were, no further forward really. Names like "On the Wind", "Broad Reach" etc had obvious dinghy implications but we wanted a name that would identify the Club quite positively. Our thoughts narrowed down to location but the trouble was that the Club had no postal address. Finding a local association to tie in with without trespassing on neighbouring clubs or the dockyard opposite was difficult. Almost in desperation I hit on the name "31½" as the best way of saying where we were with a nautical flavour. We did not measure whether or not the barge was precisely between the two buoys.

Mind you, if you wanted to be pernickerty you could create a new name by surveying the precise position and calling the Mag. say, "31.526". Better yet, take two surveys, one at high tide and one at low tide, (both on springs of course), since the movements of the buoys between high and low water will change their positions relative to the Clubhouse. Then the Mag. might be re-named say "31.525/31.527".

If that's too hard to swallow then why not take another geographical line and acknowledge the Club is based on Cockham Reach. One could additionally remember that things at the Club do not always go as planned, so the two could be combined, the geographical with the actual giving us "Cock-Up".

Enough of these flights of fancy - please don't take the above too seriously. It's not for me to suggest that the present name remains both appropriate and unique but if I don't say it I guess there are others who will (not so I'm afraid, my tongue in cheek remark was greeted with an overwhelming wave of apathy - as usual. Edit.) The most important thing is for the Mag. itself to continue as a forum for discussion and information about the best dinghy sailing club on the Medway. Keep up the good work!

Sam Brookes

Sam nearly got it right. . . . and after a seven year interval who's complaining. The members were asked to submit ideas for (a) the most original name and (b) a cover or letterhead design. Four entries were received for part (b) which were also entries for part (a) plus one extra entry for part (a). The results were -

COCKAM MESSENGER-	Andy Inwards	MAINSTREAM
MEDWAY MAINSHEET-	Ken Hewett	The WILSONIAN
MASTHEAD	- Stanley White	MAGAZINE- Bob Skene

Stanley White was adjudged the winner and won a racing flag and burgee. However the committee finally opted for the then, anonymously, made suggestion of "31½", so now we know! The cover drawing, which we still use, was sent in by David Hollingum, a commercial artist.

Editor

BOOK EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT

According to the club handbook, the simplest way for available crews and helmsmen to make contact is via the race blackboard. However, I suspect that a number of people, who may have tried this method without success on one or two occasions, become discouraged and stay away from the club unless they have made some prior arrangement. To make it easier for such arrangements to be made I have put a notice up at the club (to the left-hand side of the kitchen hatch) for members to put their names on if they would like to be offered crewing jobs. Even if you are only occasionally available it is worth adding your name- you can always say "no" if someone rings you up.

Helmsmen who do not have regular crews might like to add their names as well-crewing for someone else can be very instructive. Please indicate on the list if you have a boat, though, as it would be a shame to leave it ashore when crews are available.

Keith Jeremiah

After some ten years with the Wilsonian Sailing Club I have decided not to continue my membership.

Although I have belonged to other clubs before, the WSC is the first I ever felt part of, so rather than just letting my membership lapse and perhaps some member say "whatever happened to that grey-bearded, balding old fellow who used to sail a GP14 up and down the river bouncing off the red and green buoys like the ball on a pinball machine?" let me tell you that I shall still be on the river sailing a Flying Fifteen.

I would like to wish the club every success in the future, especially with the new club-house, to say thank you for ten great years and to say goodbye to the many friends I have made.

Please talk to me, if it's only to shout "STARBOARD".

Colin Crawford

A MOAN AND A PLEA FROM THE RACE BOX.

To those who race. When you have crossed the finish line but wish to continue enjoying the sailing PLEASE keep well clear of the finishing line and other boats that have yet to finish- even if it does wonders for your ego and "physcs" out the opposition a treat. On 22nd April, some Tasars and Lasers after finishing continued to sail up and down in the finishing area and consequently were recorded as finishing more than once. As the finish was on a run, recording the finishers was especially difficult, the sail numbers being hard if not impossible to see, in addition, the handicap fleets have to be timed as well as given a finish and to have "spare" boats cluttering up the finish line does'nt help matters. Finally, if you intend to retire PLEASE DO NOT CROSS THE FINISH LINE.

Terry Wright

Most of you will have noticed that the application form for a dinghy park space for 1984 asks you to declare that you have third party insurance for your boat and also points out that it is your responsibility to ensure that the level of cover is adequate. Previously the club has stipulated a minimum level of cover but there is a view that by doing so the club was placing itself in a position whereby it might find itself involved in a legal action and it is hoped that this revised practice will reduce, if not remove, this possibility.

This does however raise the question as to what constitutes an adequate level of cover.

The limitation provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act can apply to liability arising from the use of dinghies and in effect this limits a skipper's or owner's liability for injury or damage to property in accordance with a scale which is related to the vessels weight and the Gold Franc (an antiquated form of currency) This would appear in practical terms, to put the maximum liability for dinghies at between £30,000 and £40,000. However the right of limitation will not be granted to an owner where an accident arises due to his "Fault or privity", for example, if his boat has not been properly maintained or he has not remedied a fault he knew about.

On speaking to a number of marine insurance underwriters I was surprised that none could give any examples of claims with high costs involved, the common view being that basically sailing does not lend itself to hair-raising (for the underwriters that is) claims and that the Merchant Shipping Act invariably applies. A variety of tales relating to power driven craft were put forward, but in the main these related to personal injury claims arising from injuries inflicted by propellers.

The obvious conclusion therefore is that the level of cover required is not very high.

Wrong ! ... what about those frayed toe straps, or the loose rudder fitting that "should" see you through to the end of the days racing. The crew who falls out of your boat in the path of a coaster, or the owners of a commercial vessel that takes avoiding action to avoid your uncontrollable craft and runs aground could have a very interesting claim against you as the owner.

Also, with the growth of ownership of small craft, there is a distinct probability of such boats being removed from the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act and the ability to claim rights of limitation.

Again, looking to the future, a number of harbour authorities already stipulate that vessels navigating within their jurisdiction should have in force levels of insurance coverage that they dictate, and Medway Port Authority may well join this growing number.

We therefore come back to the question of what is an adequate level of cover. In the latest R.Y.A. article on this subject that I could find, the recommended figure was £250,000. This was however published in 1980 and probably written in 1979, when this figure was commonly accepted as adequate. However

Cont.

currently it is common for third party liability cover to be effected for a minimum of £500,000, and more if you can afford it. Many of the more popular (by choice that is - no one is ever popular if they have just cut down your claim!) underwriters now offer £ $\frac{1}{2}$ m. as a matter of course and most will increase their cover to this level if asked.

To finish on a lighter note, I mentioned above, tales of power driven craft involved in accidents. One such referred to a sports boat towing a water skier in the vicinity of Poole Harbour, at speed. The skipper, somehow or other, managed to fall overboard, the throttle however remained jammed open! The skier had the presence of mind to drop the tow wire and the boat then disappeared at a rate of knots to one of the less populated parts of the harbour. Less populated to the extent that it was popular with young men with other sports on their mind, one of whom had parked his van on the beach and was having a degree of success with a young lady in the back.

The runaway sports boat, in true James Bond style, ran up the beach to within yards of the van and the engine then exploded. The young man's reaction is not recorded but the lady concerned is reported to have said that "it was a helluva bang!"

SITUATION VACANT

I shall be vacating the Editors chair at the end of the year so if anybody out there would like to take the job on please let me or any of the General Committee know as soon as possible, telephone numbers on page 29, sorry, correction, the first yellow page of the Club Handbook.

NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY! you don't even have to know how to type. All you need is two strong fingers and an inexhaustible supply of Tippex, I must have used gallons of the stuff over the last two years, oh and one other thing, a good ~~dickshonary~~ dikshun dictionary. The trouble with dictionaries is that you have to know how to spell a word before you can look it up.

A couple of PERKS! come with the job. Firstly, AN ELECTRIC TYPEWRITER, albeit slightly antedeluvian, so much so that when I rang up I.B.M to get hold of a book of destructions they denied all knowledge of the infernal machine. They finally relented and sent me a rather poor photocopy of what they claimed was the only remaining instruction book in the whole I.B.M Empire. You will need a stout table to stand it on as it weighs a ton and vibrates and rumbles away like a road roller.

Secondly, the Editor of "31 $\frac{1}{2}$ " gets a free seat on the General Committee, so you get first hand knowledge of all the Club scandal, wheeler dealing and general skullduggery that goes on behind the scenes.

If anybody would like to know more about what is involved please do give me a ring on Meopham 812361 and I will be pleased to chat about it.

Terry Wright



MEDWAY YACHTING ASSOCIATION



MEDWAY REGATTA 1984

RACING FOR:—

CRUISERS and KEELBOATS – Four Days

Thursday 19th July to Sunday 22nd July

* DINGHIES (MONO HULL) – Two Days

Saturday 21st and Sunday 22nd July

* *DINGHY RACING BEING RUN BY THE WILSONIAN S.C.*

Full Social Programme

For entry forms and further information apply to:—

Mrs Eleanor Ries,
Meade Cottage, Dunn Street, Bredhurst, Gillingham, Kent ME7 3NB.
Telephone: Medway (0634) 362788