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The Wilsonian Sailing Club magazine is called 31½ because the club is halfway between buoys 31& 32

Autumn 2000

issue 69

31½

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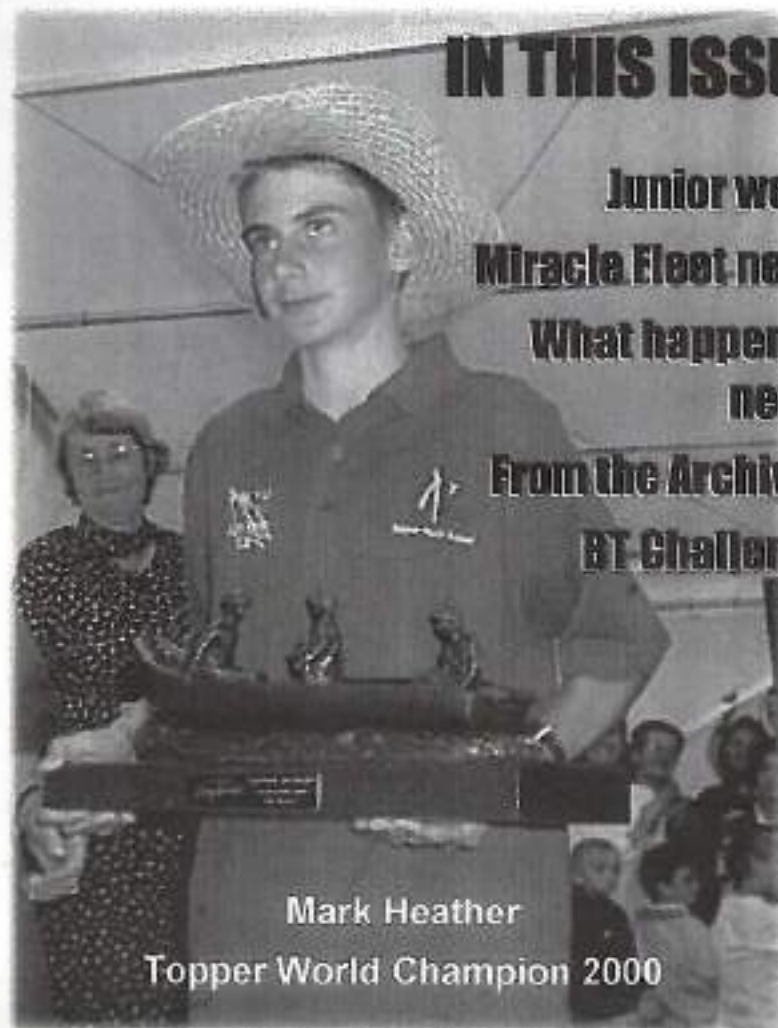
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BT Challenge



Mark Heather

Topper World Champion 2000

From the Commodore

This year has been momentous for the club for its own reason, with the extension and the new generator etc.- but to crown the 2000 season, three club members have achieved remarkable success on the water. I am sure you will join me in congratulating them.

Mark Heather has become Topper World Champion, what a achievement and I must say it couldn't have happen to a nicer young chap.

Simon Allen sailing his international canoe is now the European Champion.

And Peter Wolstenholme who joined us from Blue Circle SC is the Snipe National Champion again.

So as I think that the year 2000 is the last year of the second two thousand years since BC I wonder what the new millennium will have for us. We are getting a champions board made up to go on the club house wall to record these achievements, and future ones which I am sure will occur. I apologise to anyone if they have achieved similar feats and I have not mentioned them.

I do realise of course that to go to a Nationals or a Worlds and get a result, perhaps in the middle of the fleet, can be a real achievement for that person - I know, I've been doing it for years, but console myself with the fact that the winners NEED the rest of us in the fleets.

So that's it then, keep sailing, keep smiling- don't forget the fireworks party (28th October) the dinner/dance incorporating the silverware prizegiving (1st December) and the prizegiving followed by the children's Christmas party on the 17th December.

Congratulations once again to Mark, Simon and Peter.

Ian Wyatt

groans as the boat lunged and charged through the water.

Sleeping in the same place each time is supposed to help with the feeling of disorientation that you get when you wake up (or when you are woken to take your turn upstairs). You have no clue which way is up or down. Waking up feet first for the first time today, it took me several minutes to work out where I was. My training sails hadn't really prepared me for this. The bouncy seas of the English Channel never continued for this long.

You would expect that sleeping in the same bunk time after time would soon give you the techniques that you need to climb in and get settled quickly. Crewmates have said that they can get into the port side bunks more easily than starboard side bunks. Not so where I sleep, I still seem to have to invent a new method each time I get in. With a flat boat and nobody in the bunk beneath, it is quite straight forward. But, when the wall becomes the floor and the ceiling becomes a wall that is constantly swaying, it is tough. The person below knows that if you wake them or stand on them, it is an accident! The bunk becomes a moving target, it either creeps away from you or charges at you.

Most of the time, the whole watch goes to bed at the same time but if you choose to wash then you know that it will eat into your sleep time by at least one hour. I still find it hard to believe that it takes so long to visit the loo, brush my teeth, wipe some of my body with a wet wipe and powder my feet. Foot powder is a new one for me. We bought tea tree oil foot powder and spray as 'crew supplies' and they've been an amazing success. We are all paying lots of attention to our feet. We each have one pair of neoprene lined wellies with us and they never seem to be dry. I am in my second pair of socks in 14 days and I'm not sure that I can be bothered to change into my 3rd (last) pair. It seems like too much trouble.

What am I looking forward to in Boston? A bed with cotton sheets that doesn't move. I'd like it to be dry, big enough to stretch out in and warm enough not to need to sleep in my clothes. I'm longing to wear my pyjamas again.

Liz Hurst

BT Challenge

Ex Wilsonian member Liz Hurst is sailing round the world in the BT Challenge race on LG FLATRON. You can keep up to date with the race and Liz's journal on www.btchallenge.com. Here is an extract...

22 September 2000. Today, what has struck me is the challenges of OffWatch time. OnWatch we are sailing the boat as a team, our routines have become familiar and we are all supporting each other. OffWatch you are on your own and what is happening on the Grand Banks right now is weird.

The wide, deep expanse of the North Atlantic seabed allows the waves to settle into their own pattern. This pattern is seriously interfered with at the shelf of the Grand Banks. We have less than 1000 miles to go but it is here that below decks things have become most awkward. The power of the ocean is being squeezed into a much smaller space and we are being chucked around a little more than usual.

Last night I changed the way that I lie in my bunk. I chose to face feet first towards the pointy end of the boat. I now have a little more privacy and as I change out of damp, smelly clothes there is less chance of being seen. I used to be in full view of the 'back bedroom' media editing and comms suite - a very busy place. Although nobody was ever looking, stripping to my underwear in public still felt strange.

The reason for going 'feet first' is that we will fall faster down a wave than we will climb up it. As we fall, whichever bit of your body is nearest the front end of the boat shifts towards it. I'd rather have my feet accelerating towards the bulkhead than my head. Richard, who sleeps in the bunk beneath me, changed too and he reckons that he slept better. I sleep so soundly that nothing seems to affect my sleep.

I had resisted 'feet first' for the last 13 days (or 35 sleep times) because my head is now 2 inches from the hatch into the lazarette where we keep our rubbish. Another reason is that the special treat of an individual bunk light is now at my feet. I rarely use the light. Lights use power and interfere with the helmsman's night vision when the glow seeps above decks. We get used to doing things in the dark.

The sleep before last, my sleeping bag seemed to have shrunk to 4ft long because of all the twists at the foot end inside my bivvy bag. It was a huge effort to straighten things out again, lots of grunts and

On The House

Its nearly that time again to light up the sky. This year we will be having our fireworks on 28 October.

6.15 pm - lighting the bonfire

6.30 pm - firework display.

7.00 pm - food.

Price £4 adults, £2 children.

Our prize giving Dinner is on Friday 1st December. The numbers are dwindling every year so why not give it a try, especially if you have won a prize. Please contact Pam Smith or anyone on the House Committee to reserve your place. Then there is the Christmas Party where everyone can have fun (even the macho let their hair down) so why not join us after sailing in the afternoon.

Many thanks to everyone who has helped over the past season.

Pam Smith

House Secretary

Editorial

You may notice a preponderance of Miracles in this edition. This isn't bias (honest) but is because our very active Miracle fleet have been up to a lot this year. What's more they have submitted several articles about their activities while the other fleets, well.... they haven't. So if you are a fleet captain, here is a gentle reminder! The deadline for the next issue is **Sunday 7 January 2001**.

I intend to make next year my last as editor of 31½. Does anyone fancy taking over from 2002? I use Microsoft Publisher which makes the job easy. I can pass on the templates and other bits and pieces as part of a handover period, if desired. Please let me know.

Paul Absolon

199 Church Street Cliffe Rochester Kent ME3 7QE

tel/fax 01634 221032 email paul.absolon@lineone.net

What's Going On!

The last four months have been very busy and significant changes are still taking place. A Special General Meeting was held and Bernard Smith was appointed as trustee to fill the vacancy caused by Phillip Holmes sudden death. John Smith has taken over as Dinghy Park Secretary from Karen Steadman.

As usual during the summer months many of our members have been competing at different venues, bringing our club to the notice of others. On behalf of us all I would like to congratulate them for their efforts, in particular Mark Heather (World Topper Champion), Simon Allen (both for European International Canoe Champion and third in our National Championships), and Peter Wolstenholme (National Snipe Champion)

We hosted the MYA Medway Regatta (Dinghy Section) again this year but numbers, particularly of our members, were down on previous years. For next year Medway Yacht Club have declared they wish to run the Yacht section of the Medway Regatta on their own behalf, rather than for MYA.

The Clubhouse is progressing. The extension is now plastered inside and out and the quarry tiles are on the floor with good drainage (worth looking at to see how well tiles can be laid). The new generator is in service inside a security cage, and most of the electric's are completed. The family room and doors now have to be completed, then the extension can be used. The extension roof - the balcony, has been tiled, the balustrade is made and when it is fitted by end September we will be able to use it.

At a suitable time soon after the new extension is in use, there will be a short term, but major upheaval as the current Gents and Ladies changing room floor has to be ripped up and relayed to re-establish good floor drainage, again with a tile floor.

There is some plumbing to move the Gents WC's and washbasins to both block the current shower area/changing room door, and open up the new doorway into the extension. Ken Crundwell has completed the Lease extension, and we should be getting the first stage payment of the grant money soon.

Bob Jones

- Round Sheppey Race 1998

back the jib every time I tacked, and got a point where the channel was less than 50 metres wide and the wind right on the nose.

It seemed to take a long time to get a short distance. No sooner was I on one tack than it was time to get ready to tack again. I capsized a few times here and there, but luckily nothing serious. Eventually I went round a curve in the river which meant I was on a port tack beat for a while. I had noticed a catamaran coming into sight astern, and by the time I eventually got to the Bridge it was only a few hundred metres astern. I landed and got the boat under the bridge with some permitted assistance, and got on my way again.

The cat got under, and shortly after setting off again they capsized, which put them back a bit. It was now a beat for a couple of miles on fairly wide river until I finally reached a starboard bend and bore off on a screaming run in a heavy squall. I then came back round to port and was on a beat to Queenborough against the flood tide. The moored cruisers did not help, nor the old Radio Caroline ship moored in the river; I capsized a couple of times, finally got out to Queenborough Spit, and into the Medway.

It was then a port beat for a mile out of the Medway. It was fairly rough at the Medway entrance where it joins the Thames, but once round Garrison Point bore away onto a broad reach and headed for the finish a mile or so away. We were back into nose-diving mode again with wind over tide, and 50 metres from the finish I capsized. I was very relieved that it was all over, even if I did have to capsize the boat on the beach to get the sails down. The race had taken me 3hrs 20 mins for over 30 miles sailed. There were only 7 finishers. The Dart won on handicap, then myself.

To be honest, after such a sail, the results seemed immaterial.

Simon Allen



From the Archives

(Here is a more recent tale from the archives - Simon submitted this a couple of years ago and there just wasn't room in that issue. I'm sure you will agree it's a tale worth telling! -Editor)

The Isle of Sheppey is a magnificent island set on the north Kent coast. The western end forms the entrance to the River Medway. The island is all things to all people; it has the major seaport of Sheerness and on the eastern end there is a holiday resort with large amusement arcade and bingo hall. The island is noted for its cuisine, particularly seafood on the east coast where after a strong easterly wind the Whitstable sewerage outfall pipe greatly assists in breeding some rare species. Most of the wines to be found on the island are imported from regions further south (such as Maidstone or Australia) but there are exceptions!

On arrival at Sheppey Yacht Club on Sunday morning it was NW 6. Only 35 boats entered for the race for some reason. Anyway, I got off on to a broad reach using the fresh NW wind coming from Essex. It was about low water springs so with a depth of only a few metres there were short waves. After a few minutes I decided to move the seat carriage all the way aft. This meant that I was just a bit short of mainsheet, but it had to be done. In fact for the first 40 minutes or so I barely touched the mainsheet, I just held on and steered towards Warden Point, kicker and cunningham full on, manoeuvring through the waves to avoid nose-diving.

Abeam of Warden Point, on a dead run. I noticed a large lifeboat roaring up from astern at full speed, and as it got closer the sight of this caused me to capsize. I hoped that they wouldn't try to rescue me. But no, it was off to something up ahead. Just as I thought I was clear of the shallowest bit, some curling waves appeared ahead and sure enough I came to a halt, had to get out, the boat capsized and I got the board up, righted the boat, and pointed the boat in a different direction to get more offshore.

I gradually rounded up onto a close reach to go up the river Swale. The waves had disappeared as I was under the lee of the island now. After a few miles I was on a starboard tack beat and progress was obviously slowing down. It was still blowing force 6 with some occasional heavy squalls. Eventually I was on a proper beat. I had to

Prize Giving Dinner

*Wilsonian Sailing Club
Prize Giving Dinner and Disco*

*Friday 1st December 2000
6.00pm for 6.30pm until 12pm
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RS 200	37	60	80
RS 300	56	90	120
RS 600	81	120	162

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Heron	21	27	37
Lark	26	35	55
Wanderer	26	35	37
Wayfarer	31	45	54

and: Scorpion, Solo, Skipper, Spice,
Streaker, Topaz, Zenith, etc.

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Topper	14	17	31

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The extension is at last beginning to look really good and I'm particularly impressed to note that the new generator has allowed us the ultimate luxury of a hairdryer in the Men's' changing rooms - what with that, the occasional barrel of local beer and the now opened balcony, I'm wondering if some of us will ever get any sailing in at all.

I hope you all are happy with the racing opportunities provided by WSC - please remember to pass on all your comments/suggestions to you Fleet Captains so that they may be discussed at the Sailing Committee meetings which are held once a month.

Apart from the slight change in the start sequence, I don't think there are going to be any major changes to our Sailing Instructions next year. I shall continue to push for more committee boat starts, as I think we all need to practise starting on a shorter line. The Sailing Committee is intending to organise a cruise during next year - all suggestions to your fleet captains, please.

A few reminders: PLEASE write helm and crew names CLEARLY on the declaration sheets, otherwise you may not get any prizes! PLEASE return your trolleys to your dinghy space after launching, NOT in some-one else's spot, especially mine! PLEASE keep clear of the start line when another fleet is within five minutes of its start.

Looking forward to seeing you, if not always passing you, out on the water,

Brian Lamb

Wayfarer 9700 'Passin' Style'



From the Sailing Secretary

With only a few weeks before the end of the sailing season ends, I suppose it's time to reflect on what has happened over the year and to start planning the next. As there is so much that has happened, please forgive me for anything I may leave out.

The dinghy park looks fuller than I have ever seen before, although there has been a slight decrease in the number of boats racing on Sundays. The exception to this has been the Junior fleet with a significant increase in numbers racing regularly when not racing in events around the country. The turnouts for other fleets are, I know, affected by the large number of our members who attend Open events during the season, although I hope that we will continue to provide competitive racing for all at WSC.

The weather has not been on the side of racers this season, with several races lost through either too much or too little wind and other races marred by adverse conditions - still, it does mean that we remember all the more those special days when everything went well, the sun shone and the wind was just right.

I really enjoyed being involved in the Junior Training week held at the end of August - nearly 30 of our youngsters enjoying themselves and learning to sail at the same time - great news for all those of us who are constantly looking for crews! A pity they do not all seem to appreciate the finer qualities of Wayfarer sailing!

I was most impressed with our recent Topper Open, not only by the turnout of 44 boats, but also by the huge number of members who helped out on the day and who helped to ensure a most successful event.

Those of you who find our normal racing season either too short or not challenging enough might like to join in the Frostbite series which starts on 5th November and ends on 17th December. As we intend using the new start sequence (yes, they've decided to change it yet again), it might be a good way to practise it before the new season. Remember: a) classes with five or more boats entered will have separate prizes, b) you will not be expected to do an extra duty (unless you want to!) and c) the £12 fee for the series works out at less than £1 per race.

Work Parties 2001

It's approaching that time of year again! Please don't pass this article by, read on and take note! Work parties for this coming winter will be run on the same basis as the last three years. Three dates have been fixed for early in 2001, and every member allocated to a date alphabetically by surname. The rotation system has been used again for fair play. Details are as follows:

Work Party date	Members with Surname(s) commencing
Sunday 7th January 2001	A - G
Sunday 4th February 2001	H - O
Sunday 11th March 2001	P - Z

You are only expected to attend one work party, though we would be pleased to see you at any of the others, particularly in view of the amount of work to be done this year.

Administration

It is appreciated that your allocated date may not be convenient to you, so if you cannot attend please contact me as early as possible to advise when we will see you. Attendance records will be maintained, so please ensure that your presence on the day of your Work Party is noted.

Work will commence from 09.30 and is likely to be completed at approximately 16.00 hours. Morning and afternoon tea/coffee, as well as a lunchtime snack, will be provided free of charge.

Clothing/Safety

Please remember to bring along, appropriate clothing, noting that many jobs could entail getting rather dirty. Gloves and suitable footwear would be strongly advised. If you have these or any other form of protective clothing, please bring them with you.

IF YOU BRING ALONG CHILDREN PLEASE ENSURE THEY KEEP AWAY FROM AREAS WHERE HAZARDOUS WORK IS BEING CARRIED OUT AND HAZARDOUS EQUIPMENT IS BEING USED.

Colin Treadwell

Junior Week

Twenty-eight young members of the club attended Junior Week 2000. The weather was kind to us and everyone had a thoroughly enjoyable time. I had said at the beginning of the week that I had just two wishes for the week: first that the week would be fun and everyone enjoyed themselves and second that whilst having fun everyone learnt more sailing techniques and skills. I believe the first was achieved and I know the second was.

The syllabus for the Junior Sailing Scheme changed this year with the main effect being that every stage is much harder than before. So someone who gained a Stage Two certificate last year, for example, would have to demonstrate significant improvement and learn new skills to achieve the new Stage Two.

Eight youngsters who obtained their Red Racing Badge last year formed the White Racing group this year. The standard required is very high and the range of knowledge very broad making it a very intensive few days to cover everything. One of the changes in the requirements is the need to include two man boat training. So whilst most of the course was in Toppers, one of the days was spent in Miracles with helms and crews swapping around during the day. They look far too good to be allowed to race against us oldies!

It was clear that without at least one seasons racing experience including open meetings it is not possible to achieve the standard required. Thus the six who have all regular raced this year gained their White Racing Certificate and the other two, although both making significant improvement during the week, could not quite meet the requirement. However, all eight had an excellent week's training and competition. The big bonus for this group was that Mark Heather, newly crowned Topper World Champion, worked with them passing on valuable hints and tips and providing a good target to chase in the races.

As we had not specified on the course information precisely which stages we were going to teach, the other twenty juniors required training across the whole range from beginner to Red Racing. With a flexible grouping approach (sometimes split into two groups, sometimes as one group) depending on the activity, everyone was able to make significant improvement in their sailing ability. Every one of this group

Answer to Question 1

Boat A	Boat B
Continued to make slow progress around buoy	Gybed main boom. A call of "starboard" was simultaneous to the crash of the boom against the rigging

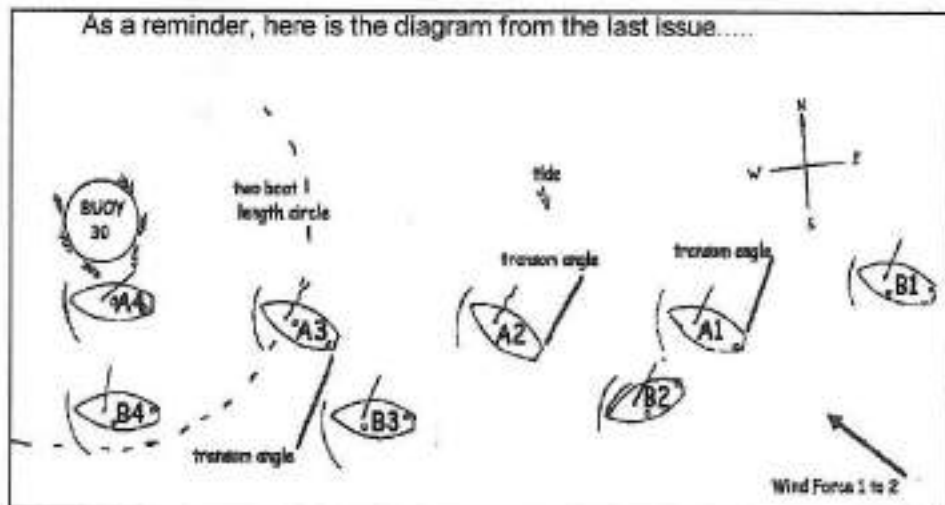
Answer to Question 2

Boat B had no right to claim right of way so should have allowed boat A to round the buoy without interference.

Rule 18.2b states: Rule 10 does not apply. As soon as boat B called "starboard" it breached Rule 18.

(For those of you who, like me, are hazy about what these rules actually say, I will include them in the next issue. In the meantime, are there any other rules riddles you know of? Send them in! - Editor.)

As a reminder, here is the diagram from the last issue.....



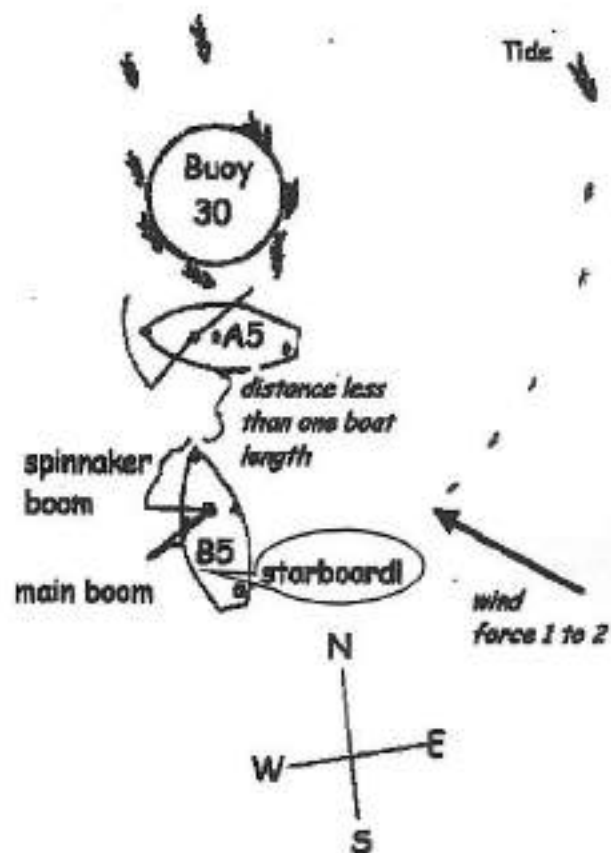
What happened next?

In the last issue, Alan Tibbs asked us:

Question 1 - What happened next?

Question 2 - What should have happened next?

There were no correct answers so the bottle of wine goes unclaimed. below is Alan's diagram of "what happened next", with the answers set out opposite.



was presented with a certificate, having either gained their next stage or passed the new higher requirement for the existing stage. Several of this group are clearly ready to start Red Racing Certificate training next year and so hopefully we will soon see more juniors racing at the club on Sundays.

The week would not have been possible without the considerable efforts of the many club members and parents who contributed in many ways: pre-course planning and administration, instructing, manning safety boats, preparing all the wonderful food, washing up, helping the youngsters launch and recover their boats, provision of boats (Kent Scouts), sorting out various emergencies (including clearing blocked drains and replenishing our diesel supply). A very big thank you to all of you.

Victor Crockett kindly agreed to be official photographer with the result that we have a really superb set of pictures. Do have a look through them and give Victor your order for any prints you would like.

Peter Horner (Senior Instructor)



THE MOTION:

The motion shall be - The River Medway is Too Big

Having learned to sail on a tiny puddle where one could, and frequently did, leave one's burgee hanging in a tree; or hit the shallows; or hit an island; or simply run out of water once the wind picked up; one tended to adopt a style of racing that tended to be rather busy. There isn't a great deal of scope for cruising on a puddle.



With legs between marks usually only a couple of hundred yards at most you can not only see the opposition but almost touch them as well. And if you haven't experienced the horror of rafting into a mark and playing the proverbial dodgems as you round, gaining or losing several places well, you just haven't raced. As for this going around in circles, multi lap type racing, well, if it didn't work too well last lap you can try something different next time.

Windshifts? No problem, they can't be missed, hitting oneself with a variation of at least ninety degrees at a time and almost always following you round as you tack and heading you back the way you came. Also it's quite normal to beat up to the windward mark only to find yourself being headed down to the leeward mark as well.

Those then are the basic conditions that are supplied with every pop out cardboard kit, racing so close that you are working hard all the time and in close contact with the opposition and are gaining or losing positions all the time. From the comments heard from the travelling circus, it seems I am not the only one to enjoy this sort of rough and tumble.

This is the type of busy racing that waves my flag and provides the peace and quiet that I took up sailing for. I find that sailing on the sea or estuaries provides a quite different type of racing usually in my case a lonely existence of sailing on my own hoping to meet the opposition at the next mark. Whilst still enjoying the races, they tend to be long

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Sun 9.30am - 1.30pm

OPENING
TIMES

Discounts for Wilsonian Members!

Miracle Southern areas



A total of 18 boats contested the Miracle Southern Area Championships at Broadstairs Sailing Club on 11th & 12th June, the event being won by Graham Watts and Hannah Brett from Staunton Harold SC.

5 Races were sailed over the two days on calm seas but fickle offshore winds which, together with the strong tide,

kept all the competitors on their toes and made for some close and exciting racing throughout the fleet. The lead changed frequently in the first race, but the eventual winners were Colin & Maureen Lown from Wilsonian SC. Second place went to local helmsman Deborah Thomas crewed by son Richard. After a 180 degree windshift, the 2nd race was sailed in a more steady force 3 to 4, with Colin and Lauren Treadwell also from Wilsonian coming out on top. Races 3 & 4 were dominated from the front, by the eventual Champions Watts & Brett with the Treadwells holding on to second place. The final race was again won easily by Watts & Brett but local crew Dave Adams and Richie Rebbeck held on to take second place from the Treadwells despite not using their Spinnaker.



Photos: David Hudson

1st	Graham Watts & Hannah Brett	Staunton Harold
2nd	Colin & Lauren Treadwell	Wilsonian
3rd	Colin & Maureen Lown	Wilsonian
4th	Dave Adams & Richie Rebbeck	Broadstairs
5th	Deborah & Chris/Richard Thomas	Broadstairs

drawn out straggles of races where one error of judgement on one leg can be disastrous and irredeemable. I do tend to miss the sheer rough and tumble and close quarter hustle of lake sailing.

And NOW towards the nub of the motion. It has been noticed by yours truly that members of any club, that only sail at their own club, tend to adopt a style of sailing that becomes unique to that club. Be it short sharp lapping courses or long legged distance courses, and usually with their own gentlemanly interpretation of the rules. Now take these same people out of their particular tank and drop them into another and the shock can be considerable. The reactions can vary from sheer fright i.e - "wot about the tankers?", to - "that was great why don't we do this at our club?". And judging from some of the comments to be heard by members of the travelling circus when swimming in somebody else's puddle one gets the impression that we on our river ought to think about varying the style of our racing to some degree. Y Yes we have the river (it's why I joined), and yes it's great, but we don't have to use all of it, all of the time. We have the option of having the best of all worlds. lets exercise it a little more.

Now, here's a tip for clearing those nasty hairs that gather in the plughole. Tempt them up with a carrot and pull them out by their long fluffy ears.

Sent in by Mrs Trellis of North Wales, AKA -

Colin Lown



MIRACLE FLEET NEWS

Summer am Series results

- 1st 3722 Colin & Lauren Treadwell
 2nd 3805 Peter & Douglas Horner
 3rd 1502 Chris & David Cherriman
 4th 2420 Lesley & Natalie O'Rourke
 5th 1808 Martin Smith & Mike Groom

Summer pm Series results

- 1st 3722 Colin & Lauren Treadwell
 2nd 3805 Peter & Douglas Horner
 3rd 1502 Chris & David Cherriman
 4th 1808 Martin Smith & Mike Groom
 5th 3795 David & Jackie Hudson

General

A warm welcome is extended to Sophia Oliver and Edward ???, and Richard Barkley with his son Billy.

As yet, we have still not held discussions with Weirwood S.C., as previously reported. I think it may be best to leave this matter now until the closed season. I'll keep you advised of progress.



The two races on Saturday afternoon were held in fairly strong winds and provided very enjoyable and exciting sailing. The three races on Sunday were in much lighter and fading winds but still sufficient to give good close racing. It was clear from the beginning that the race officer was not prepared to have a lot of time wasted in general recalls as in the first race after the first attempt resulted in a general recall, the black flag went up for the second go. For the last race the black flag was up straight away i.e. no second chance. This did mean, however, that the programme of racing was completed to schedule.

In the two Saturday races Douglas and I had several problems with our spinnaker which dropped us many places but somehow we still managed to finish with a good number of boats behind us. Sunday was our better day and in one race actually managed to round the first windward mark in company with the National Champion, but the spinnaker sheet over the end of the boom at the first gybe mark put pay to our potential moment of glory. My overall final position was not as good as I had hoped but Douglas and I were happy that three finishes in the top half was sufficient to win the First Bronze Fleet prize. Colin and Maureen Lown were hard on our heels finishing just one point behind for the Second Bronze Fleet prize.

Colin and Lauren Treadwell did best of the Wilsonian contingent, with an eleventh overall final position and gave the top guys a good battle in several of the races. Mark Heather and Adam Treadwell put a consistently good set of results to finish 13th overall and won the First Junior prize.

The event was won by David Southwell, current National Champion, crewed by Mark Atherton.

The Draycote SC hospitality was excellent, the clubhouse was superb, the food portions were massive and the beer was very drinkable. All this together with excellent sailing, what more can a sailor ask for. I thoroughly recommend Draycote SC as a venue and the Miracle Inland Championship as an event.

Peter Horner

Miracle Inland Championship

Draycote Water SC, 16th/17th September

I, along with other members of Wilsonian's Miracle Fleet, had been looking forward to this weekend for many months. From the time we had decided not attend this year's Nationals we were determined to put in a big effort to attend the Inland Championship.

The week leading up to the event was the fuel crisis week and it was looking like the event might have to be cancelled, or at the least that most of us would not be able to get to Draycote. So I spent most of the week feeling gloomy and cursing the fuel protesters for choosing this week for their blockade of oil refineries. However, by mid week things were improving. News from Draycote was that all filling stations had petrol and if one had enough fuel to get there, there would be no problem getting refuelled for the return.

The Treadwells, Heathers and Lowns decided they would definitely go, already having enough fuel to travel, and Chris Cherriman and I said we would if we managed to get fuel by Friday. Chris got some in London and that left me with still only a quarter tank on Friday evening. Fortunately, at ten o'clock Maggie persuaded me to have another try to find petrol. At twenty past ten I found a queue to join and eventually, at 10 minutes to midnight, got my tank filled. So now it was mad rush time - get home, open garage, dig out tent and anything else that looked useful or necessary, dive indoors and pack bags, go to bed at 01:10. Up at six, wake Douglas, get ready, drive to the club to de-rig and pack boat, hitch up and hit the road (08:00).

Setting off in pouring rain and feeling very tired I wasn't sure that all this last minute rush was actually worth it - would I be awake enough to race? But during the journey the weather improved to warm sunshine and the wind strength on arrival at Draycote was very inviting. So by the time we launched for the first race I felt the effort was definitely worth it.

The total entry was 35 boats and so for Wilsonian SC to provide six entries was an impressive achievement. As Mark Heather was helming the family boat with Adam Treadwell crewing, Draycote SC provided one of their club member's boats for Paul and Lucy to sail. This was typical of the warm and helpful Draycote members.

Please let me know if you've recently acquired e:mail capability, so that I can add you to my mailing list for messages. You would also benefit from the Miracle egroup, formed and organised by Chris Vincent-Bennett. For further details please contact either Chris or myself.

WSC Open Meeting - 3rd June 2000

We had an excellent Club turnout of 16 Miracles for this year's Club Open. It was a shame however that only one visitor turned up. The absence of wind put paid to the schedule 5 races. After an early lunch the breeze filled in, allowing the 3 afternoon races to be run.

Racing comprised of short lapping courses, around inflatable marks, in Hoo Bay making for some very close racing. This type of course meant that boats were always in close proximity with each other.

Results:

1st	3737	Paul Absolon & Suzanne Hall
2nd	36	Mark Heather & Adam Treadwell
3rd	206	Colin & Martin Lown
4th	1808	Martin Smith & Mike Groom
5th	3805	Peter & Douglas Horner

1st Silver Fleet:	3620	John & Sue Smith
1st Bronze Fleet:	1506	Steve Pettifer & Sarah Cotton
Winner of Steadfast:	210	Andrew Clarke & Jennifer Thackray

Chichester Fed. Week (Hayling Island Regatta)

A total of 17 Wilsonian boats travelled down to the South Coast, for our holiday week away at the Chichester Federation Week Regatta. There were enough Miracles to constitute our own Fleet, with the entire entry from our Club. This attracted special mention and a warm welcome from the Chairman of Fed. Week. I hadn't previously realised just how huge this event was. It had been running for some 30 years, at least, and entries numbered in excess of 400 boats. Despite this number, the organisation was excellent, as was the venue.

Chris & Nina Wallis kindly provided the following report:

HISG are the initials of Hayling Island Sailing Club, hosts of Federation Week and situated in an ideal location on the shore of Chichester Harbour. 12 Miracles, 3 Toppers, 1 Contender and 1 Optimist represented the Wilsonian Sailing Club at the event with the Miracles being given their own start and prizes after some skilful negotiation by Colin Treadwell.

Day 1

A stiff 4 – 5 wind meant that only the most adventurous were prepared to consider using a kite. Our greatest concern was that of being cut in half by one of the many airborne asymmetrics! With over 400 craft entering it was quite busy on the water at times. It very soon became apparent that the event was going to be as much a test of one's chart reading ability as sailing skill; it took us 30 minutes to find the committee boat, whereupon we took the opportunity to test our buoyancy and fill the boat with as much water as possible! The Treadwells came first and we came second – apparently we had gone the right way after all! Chris and David Cherriman came third. The evening was spent at the Sailing Club.

Day 2

The very nice race officer came to introduce himself as Nigel and to ask if all was well, whilst giving us a few tips on the peculiarities of this particular stretch of water. Then, looking directly at Nina and I, he made a point of telling us that he also ran the local lifeboat service. Obviously one look at us and he could tell that there was likely to be a heavy demand on his services during the week. Later that day the other race officers were treated to the magnificent sight of 4 Miracles on a broad reach with their colourful spinnakers flying, gliding their way eastward across the harbour led by Colin Treadwell. Although an impressive sight, these 4 just happened to be travelling in totally the wrong direction! Nevertheless Colin and Lauren still managed a first with Peter and Douglas Horner second and the two Kelths (Jeremiah and Steadman) close behind. Later that day Janie Townshend and Gordon had the benefit of some free boat-tuning, courtesy of one of the directors of Purple Sails. However, they hadn't bargained on a Laser taking a large bite out of their Miracle later in the week. That evening it was barbecue time at the Jeremiah's house, where even the

This year's Dinner & Dance, with a disco, is on Friday 1st December, at the Masonic Hall in Gravesend. This is the Club's main social event of the year, so please make every effort to come along. I'm sure you'll have good time. Seating for the meal is usually organised into fleets, so the chances are that we'll all be seated together on one long table. Why not come along and "let your hair down".

Fleet Evening:

The annual Fleet evening is scheduled for Saturday 20th January 2001, in the Clubhouse. Unless anyone has a different idea, I am proposing to follow the same format as the last few years, whereby we have a cooked sit-down meal for a modest sum of £3.50, followed by our prize-giving and discussions/business. If anyone has an idea of an alternative format, please let me know. Further details to follow in due course but, in the meantime, get the date in your diaries.

Finally:

I look forward to seeing many of you at the Firework evening and/or at the Tenpin bowling evening and/or at the Dinner & Dance and/or out on the water in the Frostbite series. For those I don't, I wish you a very happy Christmas and a healthy, prosperous New Year.

Colin Treadwell



picturesque route. Our tour leader, Chris Cherriman, eventually arrived at our agreed meeting place in Darenth, with an almighty hangover from the "Mad Mick" social event on the previous evening. He certainly looked like he was suffering. I wonder why.

The route took us along the valley, through the villages of Eynsford, Farningham and Lullingstone and to our planned destination of Shoreham, where we stopped in a quaint little pub for lunch and, in Chris' case, for the "hair of the dog".

The outward journey regrettably involved careful negotiation with numerous styles along the banks of the river. Having learnt this lesson we made our return journey return via some narrow country lanes, thus deviating from the river just a little.

An enjoyable time was had by all.

Fireworks party:

This year's Firework evening at the Club is to be held on Saturday 28th October. If you have any scrap timber you no longer require, please bring it down to the Club beforehand, for the bonfire. We only have one boat to burn this year. Now that Archie's left the Club, I'm sure we'll struggle to find boats to burn!

End of season fleet social:

I am in the process of organising a tenpin bowling evening at Imperial Bowl in Gravesend on Saturday 11th November. If you are interested in coming along please let me know by 21st October, so that I can book the appropriate number of lanes. This has been an extremely popular evening in the past, so it may have to be organised on the basis of first-come, first-served. Please let me know early to avoid disappointment.

2000 Frostbite Series:

This year's Frostbite commences on 5th November, so let's get fired up for a cracking series (!). If we achieve an entry of 5 (I believe) we get our own fleet status and start.

Annual Dinner & Dance:

rain failed to stop the determined Wilsonians from partying. Most of us headed for the empty garage and carried on regardless.

Day 3

Strong winds obviously favoured Tuesday's first three as the results were exactly the same for first, second and third places. A quiet stroll along the front at Southsea looking for a chip shop finished off the evening (and most of us as well I think). This was of course after a couple of beers in the very friendly clubhouse. The food served at the club looked excellent and good value too – so why did we go all the way to Southsea for chips one asks?

Day 4

You guessed it, the Treadwells came first and the Horners second but Colin and Maureen Lown were hard on their heels and came third this time in conditions which I thought were the most difficult of the week with a large swell and a 4-5 breeze gusting to 5-6. The evening culminated in the legendary Thursday night disco and what a popular event it was too. The whole club (which incidentally is due for a complete rebuild next year courtesy of a large lottery grant) was throbbing so much I thought it was in danger of premature demolition, though it wasn't too noisy for the kids apparently, who rated whole event as "cool".

Day 5

Everyone was inspecting Peter and Douglas Horners' boat for secret propulsion devices, as their lead was exceptional at the end of the 5th race. Chris and David Cherriman came a respectful 4th overall at the end of the week. (Chris's sailing prowess was only surpassed by his John Travolta impersonations at the club disco the night before). Colin and Maureen came a well-deserved third overall with the Horners second and the Treadwells first. The prize-giving was delayed significantly, though it wasn't surprising given the enormity of the event, and the number of prizes to be awarded.

Poor Martin Jessop and Helena Smith had no option but to stay in a hotel (we were told) as no other form of lodging was available! However, by the end of the week they were an authority on the eating

establishments of Hayling Island, and put this new found knowledge to good use by organising the end of week dinner – and what a great success it was too – thank you Martin and Helena!

Andrew Clarke and Jenny Thackray, apparently confused as to which event they were attending, seemed to enjoy the cycling as much if not more than the sailing, but still managed to make an appearance in a couple of races and enjoyed the experience as a result. However, whilst Leslie & Sarah O'Rourke and Sophie and Irena Oliver didn't take part in all the races they were noticed at all the social events! Many thanks to the Jeremiahs for the loan of their garden for a garage barbecue. Colin and Maureen's gentlemanly conduct deserves a mention, as they kindly pointed out that we had gone around the wrong mark on one occasion. Yet another example of the good sportmanship displayed by the club members at this event!

Adam Treadwell, Tina and Richard Wallis thoroughly enjoyed their Topper experience with Richard getting the best result 11th out of 35 overall. Mark Steadman came in 14th in his Contender in the Fast Handicap class, while his son Thomas did even better, getting 13th place in the Optimist class.

Everyone contributed in some way or another to make the week an enjoyable and memorable event. However, we think it is only fair that Colin and Jane Treadwell receive special thanks for their efforts, particularly in light of their misfortunes with flaming awnings and smoking car engines – most of us would have called it a day at Clackett Services.

Chris & Nina Wallis

Footnote from Colin:

I thought the week was excellent. The venue was great, the weather was reasonably kind (with the exception of the evening BBQ at Keith's) and, most significant of all, the company was terrific. As Chris/Nina mentioned above, everyone contributed to the spirit, fun and enjoyment of the event. I hope everyone who came along enjoyed himself or herself as much as I did.

I would like to add my thanks to Mark & Karen Steadman for their work

in finding a suitable venue, Chris & Nina for their report and to everyone for their very kind contribution to the whisky and Fed. Week sweatshirt.

"MAD MICK" social evening

Chris Cherriman kindly provided the following report:

Just imagine a bald headed man with a scruffy t-shirt, boots and shorts and you are probably thinking of a football hooligan. Then if I was to say that he rolls his eyes so they go completely white and while doing this comes up close to you. Quite intimidating, you are now thinking. Give him a saxophone, microphone and a tape player and you have Mad Mick.

A good crowd of the Miracle fleet went to see Mad Mick perform at the Red House, Tonbridge for a fleet evening. He sings and plays the saxophone to a number of popular songs. While doing this he leaps about all over the room going right into the audience and rolling his eyes. You could only loosely describe this as jazz and there is no way that Mick takes his performance seriously but somehow the entertainment value is exceptional and highly amusing, once you get used to his intimidating eyes. The act included Jerry Rafferty's "Baker Street", which is ideal on the saxophone, and The Rolling Stones "Brown Sugar" which is worth hearing partly on saxophone and partly sung.

I certainly had a good time and I am sure that everyone else did as well. Mick would be good entertainment for the clubhouse extension opening and I would be interested to hear what other members think as my opinion may have been influenced by alcohol causing me to take part in the fleet bike ride the following day with a hangover.

Chris Cherriman

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Darent Valley Bike ride

A total of 9 masochists turned up on a warm, sunny morning for the second bike ride of the season. The challenge before us on this occasion was the Darent valley, later discovered to be a very