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

New year
2001
Issue 70

31½

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From the Commodore

Many of you already know, but I regret having to tell you all, that John Yeo died on Boxing Day. He had been ill for a year or so, and sadly lost his battle against the illness. John was a self effacing, private man, who had looked after the safety boats for over a decade, carrying out lots of work during the week (as does our new Bosun incidentally) so a lot of members probably never knew him, or what he did.

We will miss John and his quiet manner enormously, and send his wife and daughter all our condolences.

Your new Bosun Paul Heather is continuing the struggle with the motor boats, and is establishing a pattern of working down at the club on Tuesdays and Thursdays. If you can spare time on any Tuesday and Thursday to help him it will be so appreciated, even if its to put some paint on, clear up or just to make him a cup of tea.

Very soon we will have to sort the Duty Lists out and allocate members to jobs and dates. This year we have not got a Duty List Secretary. The last one was driven out, as were some of her predecessors, by the disgraceful attitude of some members. If you are down on the list to do a duty, it is YOUR responsibility to do it, or arrange a swap or stand in, it is your fellow members you are letting down. It's no good just letting someone know, we must have a person to do the duty.

The AGM is on 16th February, at the club, please come. Its nice to know you support us, or if you don't, come and tell us what you think.

And finally, the season is not far away now, have a good year and lets hope for some better winds this time. I hope to be getting back into the Taser this year, so look out, I'll be dead rusty after 19 months off.

Ian Wyatt

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SAILING SECRETARY Brian Lamb	01622 741123

The News page gets updated approximately monthly and sometimes more frequently. If you have any item which you would like to put on that page please e-mail or telephone me. This a useful place to inform members of any changes or additions to the programme or to remind people of imminent events.

The Events page has the complete 2001 programme. This is always the first place available to all members (at least all of you who have internet access) to have the programme published each year. So you do not have to wait for the annual Sailing Programme and Duty List booklet to find out the dates of races, training courses and other events. This is also kept up to date throughout the year with any additions or amendments to the programme.

Two of the changes I hoped to do last year but never got round to are a revamp of the home page and the addition of a Junior page. The latter would have details of the Volvo/RYA race training scheme and how we as Volvo/RYA Champion Club link in to the Zone and National squads and also various items and photographs of interest to the younger members of the club. Hopefully this year I will be able to make time do this.

Finally I would like to thank the members who have taken the trouble to point out the errors and omissions when they have occurred (I do make mistakes) and made suggestions for improvements. It is also good to hear from members who have looked at other clubs' sites and say how much better ours is. I would like to think our web site is amongst the best both for usefulness to club members and as an advertisement and information source to potential new members. However, I alone, cannot judge that. So please do keep providing feedback and suggestions.

Peter Horner

As my time as Sailing Secretary draws to its end and, hopefully, I can pass the responsibility and files on, I would like to pay tribute to all those members who work tirelessly to keep our club running - few receive either the recognition or even the thanks they richly deserve. Although we do have some members who are as quick to complain and criticise as they are slow to volunteer to help overcome difficulties, I have always been impressed by the majority of members who are always willing to help out when necessary and who do fully support the committee members running the club.

Whatever happens, I'll still be around most Sundays and happy to chat as long as I can get my boat in the water before the Preparatory flag goes up!

Brian Lamb

Wayfarer 10201 - Final Gambol.

<http://wilsonian.mariner.co.uk>

This is a brief update on the web site. I have several ideas to improve the site but have not made any significant changes over recent months due to lack of spare time. However I have tried to keep the information reasonably up-to-date.

Usually the Results pages are updated the same day or within two to three days of a one off race or regatta (e.g. Ice Breaker, Topper Open) or within one to four weeks of the finish of a club series (e.g. Spring Points Series). The latter is variable as I depend upon the fleet captains publishing the final results on the results notice board in the clubhouse. I therefore request again that fleet captains or fleet representatives please put results on the notice board as soon as possible after each series. If you can e-mail me the results they will get onto the web-site even quicker.

On The House

Happy New Year to everyone. May I start by giving my thanks to all the House Committee and everyone else who has helped over the last season. My thanks also goes to Brian Ward whose sausages and burgers we enjoy every week. He also supplied us with the beef for New Years Eve which went very well, down in numbers from the previous year but never the less we all had a good time.

The annual Dinner and Prize Giving was also a great success, we had a disco for a change and the dance floor was never clear, so I think that tells you it was a good choice.

I look forward to seeing you all again this season and hope the weather is a little kinder to you for sailing. Once again many thanks.

Pam Smith

MINUTES OF SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING 25 JUNE 2000

Members Present:

Ian Wyatt (Commodore) and 40 other members were present.

Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from P Absolon, A & P Heather, B & T Sims, D & F Tozer, G & B Warwick, S Wyatt.

Election of Trustee:

Ian Wyatt explained that this special meeting had been called because Phillip Holmes, one of our longest serving members and a respected Trustee, had died. The club rules require that we have four Trustees. The Club's Officers have found a suitable willing candidate, Bernard Smith.

No one had any questions. The proposal "That Bernard Smith be appointed as a Trustee of the Wilsonian Sailing Club" was then voted on.

For	ALL
Against	NIL
Abstentions	NIL

Bernard Smith was therefore declared elected and the meeting closed.

What's Going On!

The end of one year and the start of the next. With this 31st should be the agenda for our AGM. Each year I invite members to be nominated to help run the club. Most years we do not get many coming forward although we always get lots of help when we ask for it. Come to this year's AGM and have your say in what we are doing.

As reported elsewhere in this issue John Yeo, our Bosun for fourteen years died on Boxing Day. Not only did he do a magnificent job for all that time; he always had a cheerful word for everyone. We all will miss him.

The Sailing Programme is nearly complete. WSC will be running the Medway Regatta (dinghy section) using our money but keeping any surplus. This weekend comprises four races, starting from our line, and has many outsiders racing. The Miracles will also be competing for their Southern Area championships. Lots of reasons for you to compete 14th and 15th July. We are also providing the race management for Hoo Freezer on 24th and 25th February.

The Clubhouse is progressing. The floors in the old changing rooms and toilets are currently being relaid with quarry tiles with proper drainage. The partition between Gents and Ladies changing will be put into its new position which approximately doubles the Ladies changing area. At present Leander is in Gents changing area for major woodwork, but should be removed outside again in March.

The extension roof - the balcony is now usable and gives a magnificent view of the river and the starts / finishes. When the balcony was first used Pam Smith presented Ian Wyatt with a directors chair with "Commodore" on the back in recognition of the work Ian has put into the extension.

Even though we are in the closed season the clubhouse is in use regularly. For the first time all the fleets are having their winter socials in the clubhouse.

The first winter work party was very well attended and all scheduled jobs except the track from letter box to car park (too muddy to work on) were completed. One job being progressed is to install a bulk diesel tank at rear of clubhouse so we will then get diesel delivered by lorry and pump it to the new generator instead of the labour intensive

We may have to delay the publication of the Members' handbook so that we can include any last-minute changes the ISAF might make to Sailing Instructions. The Fleet starts will remain as for 2000, with Juniors and Slow Handicap starting with the Miracles. Discussion has started about reorganising the Fast and Medium Handicaps and, provided we can sort things out early enough, we may amend the start procedure later in the season - if you are in either the Fast or Medium fleets, please make sure you find out what is going to be changed and let everyone know your views on those proposed changes.

It seems from discussions at Sailing Committee meetings that most members prefer Series racing to handicap events - the programme therefore provides the full ten races per Series with only one Series to be reduced should the South Kent have to be re-raced.

We are planning a club cruise on the August Bank Holiday Monday. We are hoping to get to or near Faversham, stopping for lunch and a drink at a pub, then returning with the tide to the club. Further details will be published later in the year. If this proves successful, we may organise more such events in the future.

Leander is having a complete refit during the winter, with almost all its woodwork replaced. It is intended that she be fitted out as a committee boat so that Race Officers will find it easier to organise committee boat starts this year. So make sure that you get down to the club a little earlier for major races to allow time to get to the start if it's further down the river than usual!

Roy Winnett has kindly agreed to run another 5-Race Regatta on 5th August - an excellent way of practising your committee boat starts!

There has been quite a lot of discussion recently about alternative methods of handicapping boats in mixed fleets, so we are going to try some alternative method, probably for the South Kent (29th July). Further details will be published nearer the time.

It would appear that the Blockhouse is moving, or rather sinking, so we will need to make regular checks during the season to ensure that the Race Officer's line corresponds to the one the competitors are using!

Sailing Secretary's report

Another season gone (my third and, I'm hoping, last as Sailing Secretary) with plans well on the way for the next. The Sailing Programme is more or less sorted and yes, I've double-checked the tide times (I can't help it if floods and whatnots mean that the tides don't follow the times I've been given), and yes, I'm assuming that we will have decent winds occasionally (if it's not the Race Officer's fault, then it must be mine) and I'd better get my boat ready or I'll miss another start.

2000 Season

The 2000 season must be one of the worst weatherwise for a long time, with more abandoned races, not to mention ones which should have been abandoned, than I can ever remember since I joined WSC. This in part explains why the average turnout was slightly down on previous years (27.5 compared with 29.5 for 1999), along with the slight drop in membership. However, I have been very pleased with the general improvement in Race Management, for which I would like to thank all those of you who worked hard to ensure that racing was managed so efficiently. I would also like to thank all those safety crews who volunteered to do extra duties and also did their part in ensuring we offered good, safe racing to all our members throughout the season.

I have been particularly pleased to see so many youngsters and newcomers out racing and I look forward to watching their continuing progress this year - I hope they don't spend every weekend at other events, even though they seem to be increasingly disparaging about my own sailing competence!

The club now organises and helps to run several Open events with varying success, from nearly 50 entries for the Topper Open to no visitors at all for the Creeks Race! Hopefully our growing reputation and perhaps more favourable weather will improve things yet further this year!

2001 Season

There are no major changes proposed for the new season, apart from adopting the new RYA-approved starting sequence we tried out during the Frostbite (5, 4, 1 instead of the 6, 5, 1 system we used last year).

current method. If you cannot get to your scheduled work party the last main one is on 7th March. There are also several small ones to do specific jobs - contact Ian Wyatt (clubhouse) Colin Treadwell (general), or Paul Heather (safety boat work).

Renewals are looking good with twice as many renewing as same time last year, with fewer resignations to date. One retiring member, Patrick Reid, has donated his Wayfarer, complete with two sets sails, new combination trolley/trailer and two lighting boards.

As I said at the start another year, sooo - Happy New Year!

Bob Jones

JOHN YEO

JOHN Yeo was the Wilsonian Bosun from 1986 until he resigned due to ill health in the last twelve months.

Although John had major surgery the cancer continued to spread and John died on Boxing Day, 26th December 2000.

His funeral at Medway Crematorium saw so many well wishers they only just managed to squeeze into the chapel. The priest from the hospice John had been in for his last days conducted the lovely service.

At both John and the Family's request donations to RNLI (Sheerness), instead of flowers, were made. Janet Yeo has said donations have now exceeded £1000.

Safety on the Medway

Following recent discussions at Sailing Committee meetings concerning safety, I thought that a few personal comments might be useful, especially to those who may not yet have had experience of problems when racing. For many of you, most of what I have written will be obvious, although please get back to me if you disagree with anything. Throughout this article, my emphasis is on what you can do to improve safety when sailing.

Everyone knows that you must wear 'adequate buoyancy' at all times, that is, a buoyancy aid which will support you fully when in the water. If you have never actually been in the water wearing one, I strongly recommend you try, preferably on a nice warm summer's day - you'll soon see how difficult it is to even swim. You'll also notice how important it is to make sure your buoyancy aid is firmly attached to your body.

After your personal buoyancy, your next most important item of safety equipment is your boat, so you must be absolutely confident that it will remain afloat when capsized. Don't wait until you capsize in a race to check this, test it in front of the club near the shore on a nice day. Make sure you have a suitable towing line and paddle aboard, both are required by the club, and it's useful to carry an anchor too if you can.

Clothing is another vital factor - always err on the side of caution when dressing up for racing - shorts and T-shirts are fine on a warm summer's day with a light breeze, but after a capsize you could end up with hypothermia as that wind freezes your body. I always take an extra woolly of sweatshirt as well as a waterproof to keep the wind off.

So, you're ready to set off - I assume that everything on your boat is working perfectly and ready for racing. You know there are a couple of safety boats around to keep an eye on you all, but you also know that, for some of the race at least, they will be out of your sight, especially as the boats spread out along the river.

It is therefore important for you to understand that you have responsibilities, not only for your own safety, but for the safety of your fellow-racers. Agreed, you are trying your best to beat them, and a boat ahead which is in trouble is another place you've gained, but you have a duty to ensure that, if a safety boat is not standing by, you keep

Medium Handicap Report

This year's sailing season has come and gone without really getting going. There was a slow start with only 14 boats in the spring series rising to 25 boats in the autumn series. Competition has been close with a couple of series going down to the last race.

I must also mention that Andrew Smith and Justin Sluce (Laser) and Malcolm Ivey (Phantom) have been attending Opens, promoting the Wilsonian name.

For those who fancy Winter sailing, Bough Beech are holding their Icicle series starting 21 January for 4 weeks.

Our Fleet evening took place on 13 January combined with the fast handicap. I have decided to stand down as fleet captain for the coming season, hopefully our new fleet captain will have been elected!

Neil Lamprell

Editorial

I thought that I would never get enough copy - and then a whole load of articles arrived in the last two days before the deadline. This always happens! Maybe I should be more creative when setting the deadline.

This issue demonstrates the range of activities that Wilsonian members get up to. We go skiing, travel to regattas abroad, have regular fleet socials, are involved with the Scouting movement and maintain our website. We are a thriving club, but it's worth remembering what we owe to members past who worked hard to create facilities we now enjoy. Can anyone write more articles about past club exploits?

A reminder - there are two issues to go before a new editor is required!

Paul Absolon

199 Church Street Cliffe Rochester Kent ME3 7QE

Fast Handicap Report

This years sailing has again as always been an exciting one. The close racing that we have experienced has seen races won and lost by seconds on many occasions. Tony Hunt in the fireball has dominated the fleet along with Martin Jones in his Contender and David Mason in the Laser 4000 in the Strong winds, whilst the lighter winds have been domination by Chris Ashby and John Parsons in the RS400 class along with the Osprey sailors.

Hard work from many sailors this year, some even giving up their sailing to help, has meant that we have seen a dramatic improvement to the facilities at the club. When the new season starts I am sure that we will all benefit dramatically from these changes. I think that a special thank you should go to all people involved, especially Ian Wyatt who did not seem to stop working on the extension even for a single weekend. When we see Ian I think that we owe him a pint or two.

Unfortunately my time as fleet captain has been brought to an end due to my relocation to the midlands. However, being weak willed I am unable to give up sailing on the Medway completely, and will be making the odd brief appearance in what looks likely to be an RS700.

If you fancy the job of looking after our fleet, please contact Brian Lamb or myself to find out what's involved.

I will look forward to seeing you all again in April and welcoming any newcomers. I am sure that this years sailing will prove even better than the last.

Chris Mason



an eye on them and, if necessary, stop racing to help them out if necessary - if you do, you can claim 'redress' so you don't lose your position in the race. On one occasion at Bough Beech, the entire Wayfarer fleet stopped racing until a youngster was rescued then sorted out their original positions before continuing to race. Of course, this applies to anyone you see, racing or cruising, while on the river.

Capsizes usually occur for one of the following reasons - (a) crew error, (b) mechanical failure or (c) severe weather conditions. If (a) is the cause, then get the boat up and carry on sailing, making sure you learn from your mistake. If (b) is the cause, check quickly to see if you can repair the damage - if you can't then drop the main (and spinnaker) before you try to right the boat - that way, you'll find it easier to right and everyone will know you've stopped racing and require assistance. Finally, if the cause of your capsize is (c), after you have made sure that both of you are OK and once you have the mast flat on the water, ask yourself if you have any chance of righting the boat and carrying on racing - if everyone else around you has also capsized, chances are you won't stay up very long! In that case, get your sails down before you right the boat and sail as best you can on jib only.

At this stage, remember that the safety boats may well be overwhelmed with boats capsized all around and will be trying to find out who is in real trouble - they will only be concerned with rescuing people, not with picking up boats (they will have been instructed to make sure everyone is safe and accounted for before even considering returning to tow back abandoned boats).

Having already filled two pages of the magazine, I realise that there's a great deal I have missed out, so maybe I'll write another article in the next 31½. I hope that, having read this article, you'll get back to me with your comments and views, all of which will, I hope, make for safer sailing for us all.

Brian Lamb

(the new 'Capsize makes Perfect' Champion for 2001!!)

From the Archives

How many of us, as we park our car in the car park and walk down the concrete track to the dinghy park, think about those members that made this possible? Before the winter of 1973/74 you could not have done this. There was no car park, the track was vestigial and there was a pond where the clubhouse is now.

These photographs were taken on Sunday 17 and Wednesday 27 March 1974, at two work parties which must have been just a small part of the work required. I understand that the whole operation was masterminded by Sam, which I have taken to mean Sam Brookes, but no doubt someone will write in and correct me if I'm wrong! I cannot remember how they arrived at the Editor's desk now, but at some time



The car park, before it was one. Taken from the south east corner, below the gate, looking west.



Taken at the same time, looking northwards up the track to the car park. This shot is taken from the spot where today, the "short cut" path leaves the concrete track near the top.



Taken from the same spot as the photo above, but looking south west down the track.

2000 Season prize-winners

Spring Series:

Gold Fleet	3795	David & Jackie Hudson
Silver Fleet	2420	Lesley & Natalie O'Rourke
Bronze Fleet	263	Chris Vincent-Bennett

Summer AM Series:

Gold Fleet	3722	Colin & Lauren Treadwell
Silver Fleet	2420	Lesley & Natalie O'Rourke
Bronze Fleet	3718	Chris & Nina Wallis

Summer PM Series:

Gold Fleet	3722	Colin & Lauren Treadwell
Silver Fleet	2420	Lesley & Natalie O'Rourke
Bronze Fleet	263	Chris Vincent-Bennett

Autumn Series:

Gold Fleet	3805	Peter Homer & David Brooker
Silver Fleet	2420	Lesley & Natalie O'Rourke
Bronze Fleet	3718	Chris & Nina Wallis

Steadfast Trophy	1502	Chris & David Cherriman
Best Improver	263	Chris Vincent-Bennett

Well done to everyone who entered each Series and Club event, and congratulations to the above prize-winners, particularly to Lesley for her "clean-sweep" in the Silver Fleet.

To conclude, I wish you all an enjoyable season in terms of both sailing and socially.

Colin Treadwell



MIRACLE FLEET NEWS

This report will be much shorter than the last one ("thank goodness for that" I hear everyone cry!). Apart from having less to report on, the fingers are still sore from the last one, I've left my report a tad late and I am informed that space in this edition of the magazine is at a premium this time around. That's good to hear.

Autumn Series Results

1st	3805	Peter Horner and David Brooker
2nd	3795	David & Jackie Hudson
3rd	3722	Colin & Lauren Treadwell
4th	2420	Lesley & Natalie O'Rourke
5th	3737	Martin Smith & Mike Groom

(14 entries in total)

Key Events and Dates for 2001

March 31	Chinese meal(details to follow)
April 28	Taplow Lake Open Meeting
June 16/17	Inland Areas at Rutland Water
June 30	Broadstairs Open Meeting
July 14/15	Southern Areas at Wilsonian (Medway Regatta)
July 29	Lancing Open Meeting
August 4-10	National Championships at Plymouth
September 8	Crawley Mariners Open Meeting
Sept. 15/16	Midland Areas at Draycote

Cruise

The Club is organising a cruise this year to Faversham Creek.

Social

27 people enjoyed the Tenpin bowling evening at Gravesend on 11 November.

Thanks to everyone who returned the Social Questionnaire. This will be used as the basis for organising our social activities for the foreseeable future. By the time you read this article discussions would have been held at the Fleet Evening and plans put in place as a result. Details will be advised in due course. Thanks to Chris Cherriman for organising and planning the questionnaire.

they were forwarded on their journey by Barry Cann, another very active member from the past.

The scope of the work must have been enormous and it was mostly done by spade and shovel. A drainage ditch was dug around the top and side of what is now the car park, and this area was made more level.

Then the track down through the woods was cleared and levelled. It had more bends in it then - the route from the car park started at the point where, today, we have a small "short cut" path that leads from near the top of the concrete track to the car park. I believe the Fire Brigade made us straighten it when the club house was built, to help fire engines gain access in an emergency!

At what is now the first bend in the track going down (then it was the second bend). It's hard to imagine driving down this!



Taken from behind where the clubhouse is today. In the fencing on the left we now have the side gate to the dinghy park and the clubhouse.



Wot, no clubhouse! Here is the pond. It looks a little small for fishing. Ten years after it was drained and filled, we built our clubhouse here....



The work on the track appears to have been substantial - the area where the double bend still is today was manually built up with clay and then chestnut staves were driven in to stabilise the area from slippage. I wonder if they are still there, underneath the concrete!

The pond (it must be the mark of a real "Old Wilsonian" to remember the pond!) had to be drained by laying pitch fibre pipes. These were laid in the dinghy park, somewhere near where the barbeque is now. The stream that filled it had to be diverted by digging a channel. Part of this channel is still visible, outside the dinghy park on the upstream side, and indeed often still has water flowing through it. Then the pond was filled in by the mechanical digger.



The dinghy park. The blockhouse does not seem to have changed greatly.



Taken from the shore in front of the blockhouse, looking west. It is possible to see that none of the built up concrete base that people walk along today existed then.



Taken from where the clubhouse is today. I think the trees on the left and the right are still there, but the ones in the middle have gone.



short gondola lift ride to the centre where we hired lockers to store our ski equipment immediately under the ski lifts. Adrian's Land Rover Discovery was useful for transporting the gear at the beginning and end of the week.

The party split into four reasonably competent skiers who were able to range over the three valleys area whilst the others attended ski school and practiced on the easier slopes around Meribel itself. In the afternoons and the one day with no ski school, the whole group got together with the more experienced skiers giving the others the doubtful benefit of their advice and example. We also made one trip together deep into the Courchevel valley which turned into a rather hair raising and character building experience for the novices as we negotiated a tricky red run on the way back to Meribel.

We had marvelous weather and pretty good snow conditions except for icy patches on the over used lower slopes leading back to the village at the end of the day. Fresh snow on Friday made us very envious of those taking our place for the next week.

Most evenings were spent chatting and playing cards round a blazing log fire in our comfortable chalet where the food, wine, facilities and service were of a very high standard. On Wednesday, we enjoyed an excellent dinner at a nearby restaurant where starters sampled included snails (Adrian), frogs legs (Douglas) and very hot onion soup and the main courses were of a size which precluded us trying the indecently vast sweets.

As the end of the week approached talk turned to the timing and venue for a repeat trip, the younger members showing less concern for the constraints of next year's mock GCSEs than the adults. We were a little disappointed that the early enthusiasm did not result in greater numbers on the trip but all those who did go had a great time and look forward to doing it again, perhaps with a few additional people.

Keith Jeremiah

Getting back to 2001, we have an active programme sailing planned at the club; some new programme ideas, with Kent Scouts, to attract more youngsters to sailing; a sail camp between Upnor and Whitstable; plans to put some of the Scouts through their RYA training and GMDSS (Global Maritime Distress and Safety System) conversion courses for those in our team with VHF Marine qualifications. Over the last year we have also had members complete their RYA/DoT Small Craft Basic Survival Course - great fun but hopefully something we will not have to use to often in 2001.

So that us up to date, we hope to meet you all during the new season and catch up with your news.

David Wraight



Miracles in Meribel

The idea of a Miracle fleet skiing trip was proposed at a well attended Chinese meal organised by Colin Treadwell last winter. A high proportion of those present were either skiers or interested in trying the sport. The Jeremiahs offered to look into the possibilities and, following the meal, Christina put together a brief report on accommodation and resort options and costs which was circulated to all the fleet and one or two ex members who we knew to be interested.

Final take up of the trip was rather lower than hoped but on January 13 2001, Peter and Douglas Homer met up with Keith and Christina for the air and coach journey to Meribel in France and were joined by Adrian, Carol and Michelle Linder and their friend Peter Bohee, who had travelled by road all the way from Telford.

We were staying in a small catered chalet a little way outside and below Meribel. This proved very satisfactory with a gentle walk and a

These photographs are poor quality because they have been scanned in from a contact strip but I also have the negatives - black and white film, of course! - so if anyone has the inclination to enlarge them please get in touch.

While we are about it, does anyone have photographs showing the "Bleriot"? This was a feature of the club every Sunday up to 1984. For newer members this might be a rather strange and cryptic reference. I promise all will be revealed in the next issue!

Paul Absolon

(with help from archive material sent in by members)

This photo shows the pipes being laid to drain the pond. it was taken in the vicinity of the barbeque.



A busy work party. Does anyone remember being there on Sunday 17 March 1974? Fashions certainly change - not a fleece in sight.



Not quite sure what it's doing here, but this was the beast that filled the pond.



Frostbite Series 2000

The Millennium Open Frostbite Series held at the club from Sunday 5th November to 17th December disappointingly only attracted twenty-four entries, all from the home club.

The series should have consisted of thirteen races, seven to count. But three of the races had to be abandoned due to near gale force winds and additionally the long course fleet lost out when lack of wind prevented a finish within the two-hour time limit. This left five races to count for the long course and six the short course.

Overall Results - Long Course

Class	Sail No	Helm	Crew	Pts	Position
Fireball	14608	Tony Hunt	Ian Parris	7	1
Phantom	985	Neil Lamprell		8	2
Laser4000	4496	David Mason	Stuart Mason	17	3
Osprey	555	Tim Kift	J Shenton/S Offer	17	4
RS400	964	Chris Ashby	Mike Smith	18	5
Contender	614	Martin Jones		24	6
Wayfarer	9700	Brian Lamb	Brian Warwick	25	7
Laser	143524	Gordon Belcher		29	8
Osprey	1182	J Osgood	Mathew Wynn	32	9
Wayfarer	84	Bob Dutton	Peter Good	35	10
RS400	409	Chris Mason	Richard Brewster	48	11
Wayfarer	10129	Brian Ward	Alan Bailey	63	12
RS400	648	Bruce Parker	Andrea Etheridge	70	13

The final race of the series was crucial for deciding the top placing in both fleets. However, with calm conditions it became apparent that the wind would become a major factor in the outcome.

The contenders for top spot in the long course event were Tony Hunt and Ian Parris sailing Tony's Fireball with three firsts and two seconds and Neil Lamprell in his Phantom on three firsts, a second and a third, but Neil had to win this race to claim victory overall.

The start was postponed for fifteen minutes when the wind appeared to be picking up. Soon after the start though the nine strong fleet was

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38th Strood Scouts

So, 2001 and nearly the sailing season, what are we hoping for next? Decent sailing weather would be a start. Like many club members, our sailing last year was severely curtailed by the variability of the weather. While we had some good days, there was often too much wind or too little wind and many sailing activities came to nothing.

JAWS, the premier sailing event for Kent Scouts, which aims to provide an introduction to sailing, canoeing, windsurfing, offshore sailing, scuba diving, power boats and banana tows over two days at Whitstable, saw instead Scouts playing five-a-side football, visiting the oyster museum, hiking and just about anything that had nothing to do with the stormy waters.

For our own Group too much wind can bring a particular problem. Having old boats we know a bit more wind can push the sailors' performance; however, it also pushes the boats and we know (mostly through bits falling off in the past) just how far our boats can be pushed. Don't get us wrong we are not sailing around in balsa wood craft just craft that need a bit of TLC.

One of things we will not be doing next year is managing two Topper Topaz dinghies. We took these on both to support Kent Scouts and as a way to develop our Group's experience in the direction sailing seems to be going. It was a promising idea but like the club our Group has a limited amount of support and as the Topaz dinghies both had the early and more "fiddly" (read "too many bits to get lost on assembly or to damage while sailing") mast rig we found that we spent more time maintaining them than using them, particularly as they were in great demand around the county. In future they will be left permanently rigged and used only on Bewl Water - that will at least save on lost shackles.

Like the club, our Group has been refurbishing its headquarters in 2000. Now we have an impressive new hall for the times we are not at the club. We are currently applying for grants that will allow us to complete work on the rest of the building and provide a dinghy storage and repair area. The Cub Scout leaders tend to complain if they have to climb over the boats the Scouts have left in the hall - strangely the Cub Scouts seem to think it is great fun.

drifting back over the line on the ebb tide. However, David and Stuart Mason and Tim Kift and John Shenton eventually discovered a light breeze sufficient for them to round the club buoy.

After struggling downriver for over an hour they were put out of their misery when the race was shortened to finish at buoy 30. The Masons crossed the line for first place followed seven minutes later by Kift/Shenton. They were then tied on seventeen points but their win secured third place for the Masons with Tim, John and Steve being relegated to fourth.

Although Neil persevered and came in third, he had to settle for runners-up spot on aggregate with Hunt/Parris taking the title by a one point margin even though they had been unable to round the windward mark and had retired. Chris Ashby and Mike Smith (RS400) finished for fifth place in the series. Martin Jones was unfortunate not to be in the top five. He picked up two firsts, a third and a fifth in the early races of the series but on the other occasions when he had been available, racing had been abandoned, so could only claim sixth place.

Overall Results - Short Course

Class	Sail No	Helm	Crew	Pts	Position
Topper	40065	Adam Treadwell		16	1
Miracle	3795	David Hudson	Jackie Hudson	17	2
Laser R.	167977	Andrew Smith		20	3
Laser	160330	Justin Sluce		23	4
Miracle	3718	Chris Wallis	Nina Wallis	29	5
Miracle	3805	Peter Horner	David Brooker	30	6
Laser 2000	2328	Bob Jones	Terry Eaglestone	34	7
Topper	37332	Douglas Horner		40	8
Miracle	3722	C Treadwell	Lauren Treadwell	43	9
Miracle	2420	L O'Rourke	Paul Morley	56	10
Miracle	263	Chris Vincent-Bennett		70	11

The situation was similar for top spot in the short course with Adam Treadwell (Topper) going into the final race on 16 points and David

and Jackie Hudson (Miracle) on 17 points.

The Hudsons needed to come out on top to achieve overall success, but this was not to be. Of the nine starters only Andrew Smith (Radial Laser) and Justin Sluce (Laser) were able to complete the shortened one lap course within the two-hour time limit. Andrew did remarkable well to find enough wind to finish on the hour, fifteen minutes ahead of Justin, getting respectively third and fourth places overall.

Meanwhile, Adam had decided to take an early lunch soon after the start but the Hudsons persevered to the end, only giving up when they were unable to finish within the time limit. This gave a well-deserved victory to Adam and the Hudson duo had to be content with second slot. Chris and Nina Wallis had done enough previously in their Miracle to take fifth prize and Peter Horner and David Brooker had the consolation of being awarded the first Miracle prize.

Roy Winnett

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TRAINING 2001

Here is the training programme for 2001:

RYA Level 2 Course

- ♦ 14th April
- ♦ 22nd April
- ♦ 19th May
- ♦ 9th June

Junior Week

28th August to 1st September

- ♦ Start Sailing Stages 1, 2 & 3.
- ♦ White and Red Racing badges

Arrangements can be made for Power Boat and Safety Boat Courses. Other levels in the Autumn if there is a demand.

Tom Sims

We knew when we bought our RS200 we would not sail together for long, Katie does not have my passion for sailing and now has study and social commitments, although her priority is social and then study. Where did I go wrong with her? If I hit her any harder my hand would hurt; I might not be able to lift my tea.

So why do I want light winds?

As I am now crew less, I have decided to change to an RS600. Those of you who saw me sail Neil Ashby's, should be really laughing by now.

Having decided for such a radical change in boat, I have reflected on previous sailing goals :-

With the Fireball and the last full season Neil Ashby sailed with me, we set out to win every club event for which we were eligible. Did not achieve that goal, last event of the season, Laying-up-Cup was a flat calm. Renowned for my love of light airs sailing, we did not go on water.

With RS200 and Katie, to improve on last year and win two events this year. Did not achieve this goal, thank you Mr Lamprell. Slipped in a late goal for 2000 to win both Bosun's and Commodore's trophies, which I achieved but it takes a lot of explaining so I won't bore you.

Goals for first Season in RS600 -

- ♦ Not to be a liability on the water - never achieved this goal previously
- ♦ To keep the mast facing upward and air in my lungs - we won't vote on this one
 - ♦ To finish a race - it's a miracle e.g. the song by Queen not the class of dinghy
 - ♦ To finish a race in a position equivalent to the 600's speed e.g. not beaten over water by slower dinghies
- ♦ Hope to see you on water soon, I will probably be in it.



Ian Parris

Sailing without my daughter

Or, please can we have light winds (did you ever think you would hear me say that!) and I need another cup of tea.

You may remember an article last year by my daughter Katie (Ratbag) Parris, "Sailing With My Father". A year on and we have moved on!

Extract from Katie's article:

"For those that don't know us, my sailing experience is very limited and dads' previous crews, have gone in to caravans, started a family, gone round the world, had major heart surgery or just done anything short of suicide, to get away from him! Not that I am suggesting he can be argumentative or just plain awkward, but others who have sailed/suffered with him know the truth!" (Don't ask Tony Hunt he makes me look a Saint).

Katie decided that her way out of sailing with me was to break a finger, while playing Basketball at school. She came home with finger at a funny angle, I came home to be told don't take your jacket off, we are taking Katie to hospital, no you can't have a cup of tea. The jury is still out on if this is an acceptable way to get out of crewing for me!

It did introduce the Parris household to the new Dartford hospital, first impressions were good, it was clean, light bulbs worked in the signs and we quickly located the A&E unit. Katie (Ratbag) was really P????? off when the receptionist informed her she was a child (ha, ha) and directed us to the children's waiting room, nice pictures of Pooh Bear and Postman Pat. However, no tea machines! You can't have hot fluids in here sir, except your blood pressure. £2.50 for the car park (that came out of Katie's pocket money) later we left. Conclusion - nice hospital, staff were great, same old wait and car park is expensive.

Denise and Katie went back to hospital next day to see specialist, he forbade her from sports for six weeks. Katie asked if this included sailing with me, the specialist had no hesitation in giving her a certificate, stating she was not fit to sail, or get tea for me. However, she was not excused from homework or keeping her room tidy (ha, ha).

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RS 300	56	90	120
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Wanderer	26	35	37
Wayfarer	31	45	54

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

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Turkey and Back in 5 Weeks

We had a Brand new Volvo courtesy of the makers and a Mercedes from the RYA. We had the drivers - Ian Clinghan, Dave Mellor, Brian Lygoe and myself. Thames Water subsidised the fuel costs and then we were ready to go to the Laser Radial Worlds.

I met the others in Belgium for the Flanders regatta and with just one night spent in a very wet and very leaky tent and we were off! The drive was fantastic only stopping for fuel and a change of drivers we rushed through the Benelux countries into Switzerland and beyond into Italy. We stopped in Bari for the night which was just as well because I managed to get the trailer stuck on a tight corner and we took ages to free it with a 100 Italians helping us by blasting their horns.

We drove the next day to Brindisi to wait for the ferry. We had a panic when the Volvo's battery went flat but a friendly Turk jump started the car for us. We spent a couple of days on a ferry that Humphrey Bogart must have used in Casablanca. The highlight of the trip was the cruise through the Corinth canal.

The sailing was great and the trips out in the coaching boats I had with the coaches (both Olympic hopefuls) was so informative. Andrew found the competition tough with many teams fielding their own Olympic stars and so he was pleased to finish in the 100's with the odd good result in the 20's.

After the third week the



Volvo set off for home with the boats that were needed for the Nationals. We were to take the Mercedes at the finish of the Open event. The sailing eventually came to an end and we were on the long journey home. We got off the ferry with a sigh of relief that we had arrived in Italy safe and sound. We had on a scare whilst we watched the crew trying to learn how to put on a life jackets and most of them getting it wrong.

We drove through Italy with smoke pouring out of the Mercedes. By the time we were in Italy it was really bad and as we passed the boundary into France the Mercedes broke down in a lake of oil. There was bad news at the Garage, because the Merc was just out of guarantee the garage were refusing to fix it for a week. The RYA swung into action and pressure was applied and Mercedes instructed the garage to do the work. Several hundred pounds poorer and we were on our way home.

Next year the worlds are at a local event - Barcelona!

John Smith

(Editor's note: there are lots of pictures and reports available at <http://www.laserinternational.org/radwrids>)

