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*Spring 2003*  
*Issue 75*

# 31½

*The Wilsonian Sailing Club Magazine*



**On the cover:** Colin and Lauren Treadwell aboard their floating invitation to 'Kiss My RS' (publication of boat names does not signify approval - Ed.) Photo: Dave Vettergreen

## Editorial

**Tony Hunt**

Thank you to all those who returned their questionnaires. In general you liked the present format and content, but wanted a slightly more frequent publication. At the same time you were all conscious of the cost implications of changes, especially those of more paper and better quality reproduction of photos - very desirable, but...

In response, it is planned to issue supplemental e-mail bulletins if newsworthy material comes up between magazine publication dates. Apologies to all those who don't (yet) have an e-mail address (you really should get one you know!), but printed versions of the e-mails will be available in the clubhouse.

As to the photos, you very much liked them, but their number depends on you, dear readers, supplying them. Surely in these days of digital cameras you'll all be taking them along on your patrol boat duties - just e-mail me the results, please.

Racing rules brain teasers/"what happened next" you either loved or hated. Maybe those in favour could let me have some material: perhaps from a recent racing incident of your own?

Finally, you are of course all dying to know who is getting the free drink. Well, after excluding the Editor's cronies (we're not politicians, after all), the editorial computer chose Ian Wyatt. Given all that Ian has done for the club over the years, a very proper decision by the pc, and I'm sure he'll enjoy his glass of water when he gets it.

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Or use the box at the top of the club stairs, please... someone?

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## Calendar

Date	Time	Event	Contact/Notes
30th March	14:00 BST1	Ice Breaker Season Opener	
5th April Saturday		First RYA level 1/2 training session	Peter Horner
6th April	11:00	Spring Points start	
19 April Saturday		First Saturday-Sailing session	Peter Horner
4th May	12:30	Three-Race Regatta	
11 May	13:00	South Kent Race	
18 May		Commodore Series -Race One Ladies & Juniors Races a.m.	
26 May Monday!	12:00	Pursuit Race	Tony Hunt See page 10
31 May Saturday		Topper Open	
7th June Saturday		Club Open Day & Evening Race	
8th June		Summer Series start (except Fast) MYC Medway Marathon *	Tony Hunt
15th June	12:00	Creeks Open *	* Denotes WSC/MYC Challenge Event
28 June	11:00 Even'g	Medway Regatta BBQ	Steve James Jane Treadwell
29 June	10:00	Medway Regatta Prizegiving	
28th-30th August		Junior Training Week	
7th Sept	11:00	Autumn Points Start	
28th Sept	11:00 14:00	Crews' Race Leigh Trophy	Tony Hunt
11th October Saturday		WSC v. MYC Inter Club Finale Races*	
28th October	10:30 13:30	Last Autumn Points Laying up Cup	N.B. Times not GMT not BST

## Duty List till end of April

DATE	ODO	AHO	RO	ARO	PATROL BOAT	PATROL BOAT	NOTES
EVENTS							
30th March	Ray Craddock	Bob Dutton	John Goudie	Suzanne Hall	Displ. Boat	RIB	14.00 Start
Icebreaker		Christine Godber			Peter Good	Malcolm Levey	BST Begins
6th April	Ian Wyatt	David Hudson	Paul Tyler	Jim Tyler	Andrew Cox	John Parsons	
SP 1 & 2		Jackie Hudson			John Mucker	Brian Dunmall	
13th April	Alan Wynn	Steven Pettifer	Paul Tyler	Jim Tyler	Matthew Wynn	Tanya O'Rourke	RYA Advan PB
SP 2 & 3		Sarah Cotton			John Ireland	Lesley O'Rourke	RYA Level 1&2
20th April	John Shenton	Duncan Griffiths	Gordon Belcher	Brian Reeve	Tony Coulson	Ricky Knights	21st Sat Sailing
SP 3 & 4	Janet Sherton	Yvonne Griffiths			Kevin Griffiths	Katie Parris	Easter Sunday
21st April	Club not officially open			Bank Holiday	Munday		
27th April	Alan Wynn	Ann Heather	Tony Hunt	Peter Wislenholme	Matthew Wynn	Paul Heather	PBT Training
SP 4 & 5		David Gawler			Andrew Cox	Mark Heather	

## From the Commodore

Brian Lamb

The start of the new season looms, still a lot of work to do on the boat before the Ice Breaker and what about that fitness training I was supposed to do? Anyway, it's always a joy to get back on the river, however unfit I am and whatever state the boat is in.



*"Getting down to spring-cleaning on the Commodore's boat" (one of the kinder captions suggested...)* Photo: Dave Vettergreen

Although a great deal of work was achieved during the winter work parties – the five days were all well attended with several members attending more than one – there is still a lot left to do, so work will have to continue after the start of our sailing season. Those few members who, for whatever reason, were unable to help on any of the work parties, could either help out on a summer work party or perhaps volunteer for an additional Sunday duty.

The club is still looking for a Dinghy Park Secretary – having spent a considerable time trying to check who has left their boat over the winter and has not paid the winter fee, I am very keen that someone should be appointed as soon as possible! By the way could you please

follow instructions and clearly label your boat or trailer – ferreting inside dozens of boats trying to find boat numbers is not my idea of fun! And please remember to pay for winter parking when you receive your renewal forms rather than expect someone to chase you for the money.

The setting up of the Patrol Boat Team has made sorting out duties easier this year, although there are still gaps, especially for kitchen duties – any volunteers to help here will be gratefully accepted. Remember the club makes a considerable profit from kitchen and bar sales, which help to keep membership fees low. Race Officers and their assistants are reminded that part of their duties include the cleaning of the changing rooms at the end of the day – indeed, apart from the PBT who are doing 6 or more duties a year, every member of a duty crew is expected to help clean the clubhouse at the end of the day. Remember too that eventually all Patrol Boat crews will be expected to have done some training – see the Powerboat Training programme and contact John Gore for further details.

As was explained at the AGM, we are encouraging 'job sharing' – rather than expect one person to cover all aspects of a post, we are organising groups to share the work. So, if you would like to help but don't feel you could devote a lot of time to the club, let us know and you can become part of a team.

Peter Horner has set up a series of RYA Dinghy Sailing courses for members and we intend running others on Saturdays. We also need new – and younger! – members to become qualified instructors. We are currently finding that we need to run more courses with fewer qualified instructors available, so contact Peter if you can help.

We always need to recruit new members – although our total membership is fairly steady, we are some way below our maximum. A few additional members raise our income, improve the turnout of boats and therefore improve competition and ease the burden of duties for us all. So, whenever you get the chance, do promote your own club and encourage friends and colleagues to come along and visit us. You, the members are, after all, our best source of new recruits. *[Make a start by displaying the centrefold at your workplace etc. – Ed.]*

I seem to have done a bit of moaning in this letter, but perhaps I'm getting my own back for all the complaining I receive during the season!! As long as it doesn't get in the way of my sailing...

Finally, many thanks to the team that works so hard to ensure the continuing success of Wilsonian Sailing Club.

## My 2002 Season

by Ken Flowerday

I just want to make the members who have to work jealous.

I sailed across the Bay of Biscay five times last year.

One time, a mate wanted to take his boat to the Mediterranean, first leg was to La Rochelle. Two weeks later, Ian Wyatt's crew, of which I am one, sailed Jolie Brise from the Hamble. For anyone who does not know, the Jolie is a gaff rigged cutter, built in 1912 and sails in the tall-ship's races. We took it to Gijon (hee hon), Spain, and came back on the ferry, two weeks later.

Then there is a rally called the Bay of Biscay Triangle. I boarded the yacht at Shamrock Quay, Southampton, sailed to Torquay for the start; first leg to La Corona, Spain, which took four days. Fairly rough, wind speed up to forty-four knots, waves five metres high, no cooking done for three days, stayed there for two days receptions at the local sailing club, back across the bay to La Trinite, France. Weather nearly the same, only three crew on boat, doing one hour on the helm, two hours off *[this is not making me jealous, Ken - Ed.]*. Stayed at Trinite for two days, same as before at the local sailing club, on our way back to Torquay, we did day-sailing, stopping overnight at Belle Ile (an island), Glenan Iles, Auderene, L'Aberwrach, across to Torquay, pretty rough there. Nine boats taking part. It was not a race, but we all tried to beat the others, there for two days for recovery and presentations, back to Southampton. I was away for three weeks.

Just to finish off, I've just come back from the Med, my friend wanted his boat moved to San Tropez *[jealousy level rising\* - Ed.]* a trip of one hundred and fifty miles. Started off in gale force winds *[or maybe not...]* – as we had flights booked we had to go

I only sailed two thousand eight hundred and eighty miles last year. Don't cry lads, your turn will come...

*Sorry, Ken, but I'm sure we all agree that this in no way compares to beating up Cockham Reach in a blustery NW rain squall, does it? ...anyone?... OK, I just said it doesn't compare, that's all... - Ed.*

## Chilly Willies on New Year's Day

by Roy Winnett

Three visitors joined the club members in the wet and blustery conditions for the New Year's Day race. The vast quantities of rain over recent days produced a torrent of water coming down river which, added to the outgoing tide, made upriver sailing a struggle for the slower boats. However, there was sufficient wind for all boats to get around the short course. As the four faster boats (Fireball, Vortex, RS400 and Buzz) were completing their first lap, the wind dropped significantly and so the race officer took the reasonable decision to shorten course for the rest at one lap. As it turned out, the wind then picked up again and the faster boats completed their second and final lap in a quicker time and occupied the top places on corrected average lap times

Class	Sail No	Helm	Crew	Corr. time	Pos
Fireball	14606	Tony Hunt	Ian Parris	2032	1
Vortex	1205	Grahame Smith		2055	2
RS 400	964	Chris Ashby	Mike Smith	2098	3
Buzz	570	Mark Heather	Lucy Heather	2184	4
Wayfarer	10201	Brian Lamb	Brian Warwick	2338	5
Radial Laser	171989	Andrew Smith		2354	6
Laser	77750	Peter Belcher		2388	7
Radial Laser	171716	Nick van Tieren		2400	8
RS Vaneo	201	Phil Harris		2414	9
Laser	172348	Gordon Belcher		2530	10
Laser	149430	Paul Heather		2532	11
Laser II	5455	Dave Fry	??	2558	12
Miracle	3805	Peter Horner	Duncan Griffiths	2646	13

## What's Going On?

with Pam Smith

Nothing much to report beyond that mentioned in the AGM Minutes.

We have a stock of **clothing** for sale from last season which we would like to sell at **cost price**, also we have a new stock of clothing. We need someone to help sell the merchandise. If anyone is interested please contact Pam Smith.

Please note that the **refund of deposits** for old dinghy park keys will cease as from 30th June 2003.

Happy Sailing

## Medway in June

As many of you may be aware, we've produced a flyer that we've been giving out to all and sundry promoting this June's sailing events. A check of the calendar will show that a number of major events are happening in quick succession, and we're hoping to use this to attract visitors who can then sail several events for the hassle of one boat-trail.

The idea is to put Medway more on the sailing map of people from outside the area, enhance our own racing and, who knows, this year's visitors might be next year's members.

The events are:

**6th/7th WSC Open Day/MYC Medway Marathon**

**15th WSC Creeks Open**

**28th/29th Medway Regatta.**

In addition, we're offering people who do more than one of the above events free boat parking at the club over the period, and the chance to join in our club racing on 22nd.

Please help to promote this initiative: if you have friends at other clubs, or know people with your class of boat, suggest they join in. Let's make the sailing this June something to remember!

Copies of the flyer can be had from Tony Hunt (see inside front cover for contact details) either on paper or in an e-mail attachment.

## Sailing Secretary's Report by Colin Treadwell

### Commodore's/Bosun's

As you are no doubt aware, we experimented during the 2002 season with a revised Commodore's format, comprising of a single event/start for all classes, utilising a committee boat start/finish and average lap times. The reasons for doing so have already previously been stated, so I won't go over old ground. However, at year-end each Fleet Captain raised the matter as an agenda item at their respective Fleet Evening during the closed season, to seek feedback for the Sailing Committee's review of the experiment. We learnt that there was a diversity of views across, as well as within, all fleets. The committee boat starts were generally liked. However, average lap racing, the single mass start and the style of courses selected were all generally disliked. Most significantly of all, the length of time taken to get between the Club and the start/finish line was found to be excessive. Consequently, we have revised the event(s) again for 2003, the key features of which can be summarised as follows:

- There will be two separate events – Commodore's and Bosun's, the only difference being that the Commodore's will be raced over a longer distance course than the Bosun's
- It is intended to start from a committee boat wherever possible, and to finish at the Club line
- Commodore's and Bosun's fleets will start together, but boats will be split according to speed in three staggered starts at 10 minute intervals. Boats with a PY of 1131 or greater will start first, followed 10 minutes later by boats with a PY of 1001 to 1130 and then 10 minutes later again by boats with a PY of less than 1000
- Competitors can choose whether they enter the Commodore's or Bosun's on any given occasion, but should bear in mind the number of races required to qualify for either event, as laid down in the Sailing Instructions.
- Average lap racing will NOT be utilised. Generally, fixed navigation marks will be used, along with inflatable Club buoys where desirable.

The foregoing is intended to retain the prestige element of the Commodore's, to enable participation in the Commodore's by slower boats

LONG COURSE				Points	Position
Class	Sail No	Helm	Crew	to count	
Fireball	14606	Tony Hunt	Matt Wynn	9	1
Vortex	1205	Grahame Smith		17	2
Laser 4000	4496	David Mason	Stuart Mason	18	3
Osprey	1196	Martin Jones/Jon Osgood/John Shenton	Jon Osgood & ?	21	4
RS 600	889	Ian Parris		23	5
RS 400	964	Chris Ashby	Mick Smith	25	6
Osprey	555	Tim Kift	Steve Offer	25	7
Laser 5000	5302	John Tinnams	Steve Tinnams	32	8
RS 400	772	Sonia Riley	Peter Curl	39	9
RS 300	481	Chris Mason		54	10
<b>Total Starters</b>	<b>20</b>			<b>Starters average</b>	<b>9.8</b>
SHORT COURSE					
Scorpion	1939	Adrian Smith	Rob Smith	7	1
Scorpion	853	Mark Lee	Sally Taylor	12	2
Wayfarer	10201	Brian Lamb	Brian Warwick	14	3
Wayfarer	9471	Nick Stewart	Brian McKenzie/ Simon Pierson	27	4
Laser Radial	172348	Gordon Belcher		30	5
Wayfarer	84	Bob Dutton	Peter Good	34	6
Miracle	3795	David Hudson	Jackie Hudson	37	7
Hawk 20	177	Arethusa	Sailability	57	8
Laser 2000	2588	Roy Winnet	John Gurnett	66	9
Wayfarer	9468	Richard Stone	Olly Hul	68	10
<b>Total Starters</b>	<b>23</b>			<b>Starters average</b>	<b>11.2</b>

## 2002 Winter Series

from Roy Winnett

The Winter Series attracted 47 entries, including 8 visitors from Medway YC, Royal Engineers YC, Whitstable SC, Bough Beech SC, Weston SC and Arethusa Sailability.

The 13 race series (six to count) was held from 3rd November to 15th December, with choice of long or short course.

Light to moderate winds prevailed most of the time but racing was abandoned on three occasions when calms prevailed.

The host club picked up all the prizes in the long course event with Tony Hunt/Matt Wynn (Fireball) comfortably taking the title in the end, with three firsts and three seconds to count. Nonetheless, seven boats had stood a chance of the top slot at the beginning of the final day, and the other placings were decided in the final race with all the contenders on the start line. David/Stuart Mason (Laser 4000) mastered the wet and windy conditions well for second that lifted them to third on aggregate while Grahame Smith (Vortex) crossed the line for fifth that was just sufficient to hold onto runners-up spot for the series.

John Sherton/Jonathon Osgood (Osprey) and Ian Parris (RS 600) finished at the back of the fleet, so had to settle for fourth and fifth prizes based on their previous results. While Chris Ashby/Mick Smith (RS 400) finished in third but just missed out on the prizes at sixth overall.

The short course prizes were also up for grabs in the last race of the series and here visitors were in contention. Unfortunately, the current fleet leader, Mark Lee/Sally Taylor (Scorpion) Medway YC was absent and second placed Brian Lamb/Brian Warwick (Wayfarer) from the host club were on patrol boat duty. However, the other contenders, Adrian/Rob Smith (Scorpion) Weston SC, Nick Stewart/Brian McKenzie (Wayfarer) Medway YC and Gordon Belcher (Laser Radial) were present.

The Smith pair already had four firsts and a second under their belts. They stormed to an outstanding victory finishing over 5 minutes ahead of the rest of the fleet to promote themselves to a well-deserved first place on the podium, pushing Lee/Taylor and Lamb/Warwick into second and third places respectively. While Stewart/McKenzie held for fourth prize, Belcher for fifth and David/Jackie Hudson sailed the leading one of six Miracles in the series into sixth place.

**Overall results opposite.**

and to provide more uniform conditions of wind and tide for all competitors.

### Club Cruise

Regrettably, last year's cruise to Aylesford was rather poorly supported, despite all the efforts of Peter Hampson in organising the event (thanks Peter). Let's hope we get a better response to this year's cruise, to Queenborough, on Saturday 21 June.

### New Year's Day Race 2003

This year's race realised 13 entries and £100 for the RNLI.

### Winter Series – earlier start times

Those who competed in last year's Winter Series will know that we experimented with start times 30 minutes earlier than in other long series' events. This seemed to work very well, enabling racing to finish before the customary Autumn late afternoon dying breeze and minimising the break between races where it is all too easy to begin to feel cold and uncomfortable. We intend to repeat this feature this year.

### Inter-Club Challenge

Last year's Inter-Club challenge saw us competing against Medway Yacht Club in a very informal, yet competitive and enjoyable, event. Whilst the qualifying races coincided with the WSC Creeks Open and the MYC Marathon, it nevertheless concluded with a dedicated Regatta Day in October, followed by a meal and an entertaining quiz night. Needless to say we thrashed them in both!!! The Challenge proved very enjoyable and will be repeated this year, hosted by MYC. It is great to see our two clubs competing and socialising together, so please try to join in this year if you possibly can. It only involves taking part in the Creeks Open, the Medway Marathon and the Grand Finale regatta day on Saturday, 11th October. I must also stress that it is not just for the faster boats. It would be great to see some more of our other boats getting stuck in.

### Open Meetings

This year's Open Meetings will be the Topper Open on 31 May, the Medway Marathon on 8 June, the Creeks Open on 15 June, the Medway Regatta on 28/29 June, the Winter Series between 2 November

and 14 December and the New Year's Day Race.

### **Changes/new decisions affecting Club handicap racing**

After lengthy deliberations at each Fleet Evening, and thereafter at Sailing Committee, the following decisions have been taken and will be implemented in Club handicap racing this year.

- Miracles may be sailed single-handed with a PY 1156
- Other classes may be single-handed with existing PY as allocated by WSC
- All classes may be sailed with more than the requisite number of crew, with no adjustment to existing handicap as allocated by WSC
- Single-handers with multiple rigs (eg Laser with "full" and "radial") may change their rig throughout the Commodore's/Bosun's series whilst still counting as a single entry in the series. However, the PY handicap applied to a given race will be determined by that corresponding to the actual rig used.
- The results in the Commodore's/Bosun's series will be allocated to the helm, NOT to the boat. Thus, two different helms racing the same boat in different races would count as two separate entries

**The foregoing applies only to Club handicap events, NOT to Open meeting events (the latter being subject to the rules of the event and of the competing classes).**

### **Pursuit race (see also separate article - Ed.)**

This year we have introduced a Pursuit Race on Bank Holiday Monday 28 May. This is a fun race for all-comers, arranged to give those who do not usually win a better chance by using personal handicaps. It is possible that starting could be from the beach under the instructions of the Race Officer, departing in reverse handicap order, slower competitors first, faster later. The finish will be at the Club line, with results allocated by finishing order over the line with no subsequent calculation. In other words, the handicaps determine the starting order rather than the finishing order.

### **Crews' race**

We have also introduced an informal crews' race on the morning of the Leigh Trophy race on 28 September, thereby giving those ever-unappreciated victims the chance to get their own back! Single-

### **Thursday**

Non-spinnaker and single-handed race observed through a telescope thoughtfully provided by the B&B landlady for our bay window. Perfect conditions. Wind 3-4, fantastic sunshine. After lunch lighter winds made for very competitive racing as leaders guarded their position and contenders fought to nudge up the ranks.

Later, the Miracle AGM. A number of points were made about the health of the association and we were reminded of our personal responsibility to promote Miracle sailing, if only for the selfish reason that without the association our boats would be worth nothing. Food for thought was followed swiftly by food for the stomach and the entire Wilsonian contingent (17) sought out an excellent carvery in the town. The many and various hotel cabaret performers serenaded us as we walked back along the seafront. One might have imagined one was in..... Llandudno, the cheesy-listening alternative to Ibiza.

### **Friday**

Perfect sunshine, blue skies but light and fickle winds. The start was repeatedly postponed and then we were recalled on account of the many boats over the line. Despite the fantastic weather, we felt sorry to have to take leave of the beautiful view from the sea and come ashore for the last time. After all, we felt we had only just got into it. We were honoured that the prize giving was held in a splendid banquetting suite in the civic centre, and by the warm welcome from Llandudno sailing club. Our chairman and two local councillors handed out the prizes and awards. Truly the achievements of our fellow sailors were and are both an inspiration and a challenge to every one of us. And so, till the next year.....good racing.



Photo by David Hudson

**Monday**

Terrible storms in the night, awoke 5.30 am in a panic and ate the B&B custard creams. Winds calmed to a 4-5 but still plenty of the white stuff. Cooked breakfast churned unhelpfully whilst we awaited an end to the postponement. Finally we were off, launching from the beach into the surf, and from there into quite a swell. The back of the fleet were finished at the third leg, but we had had our little trials and triumphs. Miracle 1506 (Sarah and Steve Pettifer) had to rethread the mainsheet when it slipped a knot, and crew of 210 was seen doing an Ellen MacArthur up the mast trying to unravel the spinnaker halliard. Full marks for self-sabotage. Fantastic sunshine for the second race in somewhat lighter conditions.

Disco in the clubhouse provided an opportunity for the young and glamorous Miracle sailors to check out the Danish Hobie 405 team sharing the venue for the week.

**Tuesday**

Misleadingly calm on the beach.... Very gusty 4-5 (occ. 6) just off the beach! Hence capsize on way to start line (must remember the dangers of a dead run in those conditions). Quite a chop on the start line and a postponement while we awaited the go ahead from the harbour-master. The air was filled with howling wind, cracking sails, and shouts across the water. Exciting stuff and an opportunity to shuffle the line-up a bit with Miracle 1506 (Sarah and Steve) earning a cool 11<sup>th</sup> place. Apparently the second race was a bit calmer, but more than that I don't know cos we like... retired...

Karaoke in the clubhouse. Bar-staff cheesed off, Adam Treadwell's singing single-handedly emptied the clubhouse.

**Wednesday**

Noticeable deterioration in physical condition of fellow guests at Hillary's B&B. Sarah has appearance of attempted garrotting which she assures me is due to chafing from drysuit. 5<sup>th</sup> points race in very unpredictable conditions Start postponed due to massive windshift, which was handy as a number of boats were stuck in vacuum, leeward of committee boat. 10mins later we were pelting along uncontrollably. The 6<sup>th</sup> race was in somewhat steadier conditions. A cheery evening was spent at Miracle 206's holiday home in the beautiful walled town of Conwy were joined by the remainder of the Treadwell family and Nina Wallis. Tales of the sea were recounted, beer was imbibed and lightly barbequed meat was consumed. Yum.

handlers may enter, but unless the sailor is usually a crew they will not be eligible to win.

**Pre-Season series**

This was introduced this year, on a trial basis, to accommodate the needs of the idiots, sorry, hardened few. From what I have been hearing it has proved very successful, and enjoyed some brilliant weather. What I particularly liked about this event was the teamwork involved. Every competitor helped to open and run the club and then, at the end of the day, to clean and close the club. It made for a very clean club, very efficient organisation and a very early finish to the day, with no one individual having a disproportionate workload. If only every Sunday could operate so well!! Thanks to Ian Parris for all his efforts in organising things.

**Training – sail and power**

The following sail and power-boat training has been organised this year:

**Sailing** RYA Level 1/2 on 5/12 April 3/17 May

**Power-boat** RYA Level 2 on 1/18/15 March, 10/17/24 May and 6/13/20 September

**Power-boat** RYA Advanced on 22 February, 12/13 April and 18/19 October

**Patrol Boat Team training** on 9 February, 29 March, 26 April, 31 May, 21 June, 19 July, 23 August and 4 October

**Bank Holidays**

With the exception of the Pursuit Race on 26 May, please be advised that no organised activity is planned for Bank Holidays. Whilst the Clubhouse may be opened when a key-holder is on site, there is no guarantee that it will always be open. The Club may still be used on these days, but please come along adequately prepared for the Clubhouse to be closed.

**Signing On/Off procedures**

By way of an early warning, we may well have to review our existing procedures for all club racing next year, by replacing the traditional "signing-on" forms with a tally system whereby each competitor (crews as well as helms) removes and replaces a tally. Further details will follow during the course of the year, but it is quite likely such a system will be implemented for this year's Medway Regatta.

**Finally**

I wish everyone a very enjoyable season and look forward to seeing you all out on the water, capitalising on every penny of your subscription fee. Let's hope we'll see some brilliant breezes, coupled with plenty of warm sunny weekends. See you out there.



## The "New" Pursuit Race

The eagle-eyed among you will have noticed a novelty in the sailing calendar this year. On Bank Holiday Monday, 26th May, we are having a pursuit race. Now, before the longer-established members all write in: yes, we know that holiday Mondays and pursuit races have both been done before, but not quite in this year's form, we can assure you. The new form should feature easier starting and a less spread-out fleet at the end of the race, and, most importantly, be more enjoyable.

For those that do not know, a pursuit race is one in which the slower boats are started first and the faster ones later, thus in reverse order to their handicaps. If the handicapping is perfect, all boats should cross the finish line together. It doesn't work out quite that way, of course, but it should avoid that feeling of "by the time I'm back in my Topper the bar will be closed"; indeed, there's no reason why you shouldn't be back first in your Topper. And first over the finish line is the winner, as the handicapping is all taken care of in the starting times.

"Ah," I hear you saying, "but I'll be beaten home by the hot guys". Not so in this race. This time we're introducing personal handicaps based on everybody's performances last year; many boats will be starting singly, the hot helms an appropriate time after the 'yet to be hot'. So if we've got it right, anyone sailing a bit better than they did last year will be in with a chance of a win, even if they are usually last (or first!).

It's not to be taken too seriously, of course - our handicapping won't be that perfect, but we do think you'll have fun, exciting racing, with no long, lonely sail home and no wait for handicaps to be worked out.

## 2002 Miracle Nationals at Llandudno

### A personal account from Jenny Clarke

Looking back on the week's sailing and socialising in Llandudno, as a newcomer to the Nationals scene, I can hardly believe that a more enjoyable, thrilling and relaxing holiday formula exists. The town of Llandudno straddles the peninsula of the Great Orm in Northwest Wales, and is set against the peaks of Snowdonia National Park. The pretty pastels of the perfect Victorian promenade set against this rugged backdrop viewed from the sea (in the slightly less hectic moments on the water), is reminiscent of childhood storybooks. Though the sailing itself was no child's play, we were offered all assistance, advice, and spare parts unquestioningly by fellow Miracle sailors right up until the starting sequence. The bronze and silver fleet were paired off with buddies from the full cream gold fleet to facilitate this. One of our main concerns was not to spoil the racing for those we perceived to be more experienced than us. A fairly groundless fear since the good sailors were generally miles ahead, and at the back of the fleet shared the same concerns and with the help of a few basic rules we managed to avoid any major mishaps. Another worry, having recently sailed in disaster movie seas at Broadstairs, was safety, and safety boat cover. The latter could not be praised highly enough, for within minutes of capsizing a rib would appear alongside to offer advice and faithfully retrieve floating bottles of suntan lotion etc. Not satisfied with seeing you right the boat, they hung around until the tub was underway and the crew stopped wailing. Miracle 210 boasts her original fixtures and fittings, which does not include a Highfield lever, or spreaders. Nor did we splash out on new sails or a fancy paint job but I don't think we had any less fun than other competitors, and I am sure we had considerably more fun than those who stayed at home. Though we came 25<sup>th</sup> out of 25, we can still claim to have beaten every single Miracle who did not enter. So to all those reading this article to whom this applies... see you at the Nationals 2003, if you think you're hard enough!

### Sunday

Hours spent fiddling with fittings and mending a puncture in the launching trolley. And finally we are off for the practice race, which yields our best result of the championships. Certain amount of confusion over the course, which is discussed later in, the clubhouse along with analysis of the 4 way all-Wilsonian collision at the 3<sup>rd</sup> mark.

## The Hoo Freezer 2003

by Tony Hunt

This year's Hoo Freezer was great. No matter that, for reasons entirely of our own doing, we under-performed in the Fireball. Never mind the freezing cold, with ice on the boat cover on the Saturday. And notwithstanding the fact that I still don't think that the Medway and courses for 'average lap timing' are suited. It was great.

The wind was planing strength most of the time, but not so strong as to give anyone too many problems, and the sun even came out on Sunday, making life in a drysuit pretty comfortable. So the sailing, for sailing's sake, was good: I hadn't been missing it before the Freezer, but by the time the weekend was over found myself lusting for more - in less than six weeks since the Chilly Willies, I'd forgotten what fun it could be; sparking water, splashing wavelets, the rush of spray.

But what really made the weekend was the quality of the competition. As we milled around the start line on the Sunday, I found myself saying to Peter, "this is a big event!". There seemed to be at least one or two boats from almost every class going (except Ospreys - where were you?!), and the boats were generally-speaking from the top end of the rankings in the class. And yet there were also people there who were clearly relative novices, taking the opportunity to get out on the water in their new boats and suffering no ill-effects - since everyone seemed to be so *gentlemanly*. Maybe it was because most of us were from different classes and didn't know each other, but it seemed to me that the fast fleet start, crowded though it was with experts, was a very well-behaved, give and take affair. Indeed, the only shouting I noticed all weekend was among a cluster of boats belonging to the same class.

I guess the appeal was a bit like that of the Amazon Jungle, in that the sheer richness in different species was intriguing. There was even a Merlin Rocket there - going well too, by the look of it. And to be planing pretty fast in a Fireball with the kite up, then notice a 49'er gliding effortlessly (apparently!) past to leeward as it lapped you was a surprise, to say the least!

As usual, there was a good atmosphere along at Hoo Ness Yacht Club, as people ate, drank and chatted about the race and the season to come, while waiting for the results. That was something that could be enjoyed even if you hadn't sailed. So thanks very much to all the organisers and helpers - many (most?) of whom were from our club.

See the video at Yachts & Yachting on-line or the Hoo Ness YC site!

## MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD 21<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 2003

Brian Lamb (Commodore) was in the chair and 43 members were present.

1. Commodore's opening remarks: Brian Lamb welcomed all the members to the 45<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of WSC.
2. Apologies for Absence: these were from C Ashby, A & P Heather, E Rose, J Gurnett, B Dunmall, M Groom, T & B Sims, B Reeve, B Smith, P & P Moncrieffe, J Shenton, A Clements, R Craddock, J Craddock, K Flowerday, J Shenton.
3. Minutes of 2002 Annual General Meeting: There were no corrections to these minutes, which were signed by the Commodore.
4. Secretary's Report on the operation of the Club in 2002: A written report has been circulated. There was an error in the total membership for 2002, but the Renewals Sec & Treasurer sorted out the difference, making the total at 174

### Membership

Our figures over the last few years are: -

Year	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Membership	187	200	205	200	175	172	174
New members in year	29	26	22	29	21	21	19

First of all we have tried to make it easier for a few members of the Committee by job sharing, instead of leaving it to one individual person. For instance The Treasurer, Trish Ayris will be helped by Gill Warwick, who will bank the takings each week. The final accounts will be prepared by Ken Crundwell and then audited by an Auditor (not yet elected). The Membership Secretary, myself, will be helped by the General Committee in overseeing prospective new members when they visit the Club in my absence. I will be responsible for sending out the forms. Tony Hunt who will take the minutes at the Sailing Committee meetings will assist Colin Treadwell, Sailing Secretary. Lastly the Bosun, Brian Warwick has put together a team of people to help with different aspects of engineering expertise to keep the Patrol Boats and RIBs on the water.

### Publicity

The Web site has been very popular and kept well up to date, which is down to Peter Horner. Web address [www.WilsonianSC.org.uk](http://www.WilsonianSC.org.uk). Roy Winnett has continued to write articles to the local paper each week and published the results to go onto our web-site. Ray Craddock has resigned as Publicity Officer, this is quite an important post as it advertises the Club around the borough and also work with Medway Tourism Association and Medway Marketing Group.

### House Committee

The House Committee has laid on some very successful events during the season, including the Medway Regatta BBQ and Committee Dinner. Our annual Dinner and prize-giving once again took place at the Lloyds' Sports & Social Club in Gillingham and proved a great success. The firework night went with a bang, always a well-attended event. Lastly the children's party, a good social event for both children and adults alike.

### Training

John Gore, Peter Horner and others have put a lot of effort in training, for sailing, from juniors and powerboat, which quite a few people have benefited. A full training programme has been organised for 2003.

Thanks go to everyone who has helped in some way during the year, especially those retiring or standing down from office.

Once again could I ask those of you who have an email address and have not received anything from me over the past month please let me know.

5. Treasurer's Report: The Audited Income & Expenditure, Current Assets & Liability accounts and the depreciation schedule were circulated. The members present formally approved these.

2002, yet another good year for the Club's finances.

The year ended with little money left in the Bank, but there was no cause for alarm. £1725 of the 2003 subs. arrived early, but they were not needed. The books were closed with a balance of £4136 in addition to the new subs. - 10% of annual expenditure.

Over £9,000 has been spent on improving safety cover for crews by purchasing new engines, radios and another RIB in 2002. At the same time nearly £5,000 has been spent on improving and maintaining site facilities.

The policy of modest annual increases in subs continues, this is to cover increasing fixed costs of rent, rates, insurance and increasing variable costs of

## Still More Power

with John Gore

For some the year has already started in earnest. So far this year there has been a Level 2/ Safety Boat course, a Patrol Boat Team training day, the Hoo Freezer and the Pre-Season Series to cover. Not bad for the close season!

I was originally encouraged by the response to the training requirements forms distributed with the renewal forms. However, when it came to allocating bodies to courses the response was not so good. So much so that it was necessary to cancel the Level 2/Safety Boat course, due to start 1<sup>st</sup> March, as five out of the six people for whom places had been reserved could not make it. To date I have had no response at all from those allocated places on the May course. Out of the three who requested advanced training, and were allocated places, two have withdrawn and the third has not responded. Therefore, rather than hit my head against the proverbial brick wall, I have decided to ignore all the training requests that I have and revert to the tried and tested method. **Anybody who requires powerboat training should put their names on the forms on the general notice board.** If there are more than three names for a particular course it will be run, otherwise it will be cancelled. Unfortunately, it will not be possible to run ad-hoc courses this year, as they were last year, as time is extremely limited. **The safety boat course due to be run on March 29<sup>th</sup> will still go ahead, for those who have already sent me their cheques.**

I sincerely hope that it will not be necessary to cancel any more courses this year, as I like to think that they are great fun, as well as educational. It's also a good way, once qualified, to get out of kitchen duties!



*The sort of friendly chaps you'll encounter in patrol boat duties.*

Photo by Grahame Smith.

## Wot!

### No Wayfarer or Medium Fleet Reports?

Indeed, members of the Medium and Wayfarer Fleets hoping to see their names in print will have to wait till the next issue for their chance of fame. But not to worry, the next issue is due out as soon as the end of May, and for this reason your Fleet Captains seem to have decided to hold fire till then. They clearly feel that they can rely on you to find your own way to the start line for the start of the season on 30th March, and to judge by the enthusiasm displayed at your fleet evenings (both of which the Editor had the pleasure of attending), they are unlikely to be disappointed.

To a dispassionate observer, the main questions seem to be: 'will any of the Wayfarers be able to mount a consistent enough campaign to knock the Commodore off his perch?' and 'will the two-man boats be able to withstand the swelling ranks of assorted singlehanders in the Medium Fleet?'. With regard to the latter question, watch out for the Laser 2000 versus Comet Race feature in the next issue - two classes whose popularity can only be good for the club owing to their high ratio of sailing reward to (crewing) difficulty. Meanwhile, there are new handicaps for at least the Laser 2000, Phantom and Vaneo, all in the directions you'd expect, to make the racing even tighter this season.



water, sewage disposal, printing, licences etc. It costs £200 a week to keep the Club going whether the Club is open or not. This is why it is a good to make use of the Club as much as possible.

Good news on petrol costs which is the bulk of our expenditure. The Club is eligible to receive Excise Duty relief for fuel used in Patrol Boats operating for safety duties at sea. H.M. Customs & Excise accepted the area defined as Chatham to Sheerness. The operating hours and fuel used by our "Safety Boats" over the past three years is being calculated by Ken Crundwell.

The income from Kitchen/Bar sales is up by £1100, which is good but the cost of those sales are up by nearly £1200 reducing the profit margin by over 3%. As this is our third largest source of income after subs, and dinghy parking, the House Committee has been advised to increase prices to rectify the imbalance. A healthy margin on Functions demonstrates good management by the House Committee.

The rise in Subs/Joining fees/Parking received is equally due to an increase in membership in and to the small increases in subs. It is still important to encourage new members.

Boat maintenance was lower with only one displacement boat in use. RIBs maintenance may be lower but could be offset by higher replacement costs, this should be a programmed expense, something for the Committee to think about.

The Site maintenance was higher than budgeted due to the clearing up after the extension and major works on the top track.

Printing costs were higher than 2001 due to the purchasing of car and boat stickers.

Water & sewage costs were up 22%. An alternative method of dealing with waste will be looked into.

The locks and keys were replaced in October at a cost of £605.59 the deadline for refunding deposits on old keys has been set at June 30<sup>th</sup> 2003.

Without the capital expenditure of £9943.91 we would have a surplus of just over £5,000 this is reflected in the increased value of fixed assets after depreciation.

Total current assets are almost £2,000 higher than at the end of 2001

#### INTERVAL

6. Appointments: With the exception of Dinghy Park Secretary, individual persons were nominated for each of the following posts, who were therefore deemed to be elected:

ASSISTANT OFFICERS (Appointed by General Committee)

DINGHY PARK SECRETARY	VACANCY
DUTY LIST SECRETARY	Christine Godber
MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS	Trish Ayris
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Pam Smith
TRAINING PRINCIPAL	Tom Sims
CHIEF TRAINING INSTRUCTOR	Peter Horner
EDITOR 31 ½	Tony Hunt
PUBLICITY OFFICER	Brian Reeve
MEASURER	Tom Sims
TROPHY SECRETARY	Ian Parris
KENT SCHOOLS/YOUTH CO-ORDINATOR	Ann Heather
POWER BOAT SECRETARY	John Gore
SITE SERVICES MANAGER	Alan Wynn

NOMINATIONS RECEIVED

<u>POSTION</u>	<u>NOMINEE</u>	<u>PROPOSER</u>	<u>SECONDER</u>
COMMODORE	Brian Lamb	Tom Sims	Ann Heather
VICE COMMODORE	Ian Wyatt	Brian Lamb	Ken Crundwell
REAR COMMODORE	Roy Winnett	Ian Wyatt	Colin Treadwell
SECRETARY	Pam Smith	Roy Winnett	Ian Wyatt
TREASURER	Trish Ayris	Ann Heather	Peter Horner
BOSUN	Brian Warwick	Brian Lamb	Colin Treadwell
SAILING SECRETARY	Colin Treadwell	R Knights	Brian Lamb
HOUSE SECRETARY	Jane Treadwell	Pam Smith	Tom Sims

GENERAL COMMITTEE

(6 places)	C Cherriman	]
	Ian Gore	]
	Ricky Knights	]
	Steve James	] Brian Lamb Roy Winnett
	Brian Warwick	]
	Duncan Griffiths	]

HOUSE COMMITTEE

(5 places)	Gill Warwick	]
	Christine Eaglestone	]
	Carol Wynn	]

## Fast Handicap Fleet Report

 from Grahame Smith

Well, festivities over, plenty of work done in the club and the dinghy park and, for some, a little sailing.

The Hoo Freezer was as cold as its name but the Fast Fleet were out there again. Well done to Martin Jones in his Contender *Splash & Dash*: 9<sup>th</sup> overall and a member of the three strong first place club team, along with Ian Parris in his RS600 *Patience Joy* and Grahame Smith with his Vortex *The Bandit*.

The Pre-Season Series is underway for those who have entered, enjoying some gentle, bright and relatively warm conditions.

It seemed as though most of the club had migrated to Ally Pally for the dinghy show, each with his purpose in mind. For me, after having negotiated a discount on six buoyancy aids, three wetsuits, one drysuit, two pairs of gloves and a pair of boots, the purpose was to investigate the addition of a 15m<sup>2</sup> kite to the Vortex, which, having seen it, I am now even more impatient for it to be adopted by the class.

On the organisational front Ian Parris was returned as the Fast Fleet Captain for this year and Grahame Smith has volunteered to act as the Vice Fleet Captain. Our thanks to Chris Ashby and Tim Kift for their work last year as the joint Vice Captains. If you have any thoughts or suggestions with regard to the Fast Fleet, or just want some assistance then please feel free to contact myself or Ian and we will do our best to help.

We would both like to welcome the new members to the Fast Fleet and look forward to seeing you all on the water when the main season begins.



Ian & Martin sandwich the Maskell's Fireball at the Freezer.

Summer p.m., Autumn a.m., Autumn p.m.

### Commodore's and Bosun's Trophies

Last year saw a trial change to the above series incorporating the Bosun's into the Commodore's and setting lapping courses to give all classes of boat a similar time racing. The majority of Miracle fleet members considered the sail to and from the racing area (usually at the other end of the island) was too long. Committee boat starts were liked but should start no further down-river than buoy 28 and we would prefer the finish to be nearer the club. The strong majority wanted to return to separate Commodores and Bosuns series. I am sure the Sailing Secretary's article will detail the changes for 2003 and so I will not give them here. Suffice it to say that the other fleets were fairly evenly divided in their views and the Miracle fleet vote was a major influence in the decision arrived at at Sailing Committee. I think most of the Miracle fleet will be happy with the resulting format.

As you can see, your views and suggestions do count.

By the time this goes to press we will have had our next fleet gathering – the Chinese Meal organized by Angie. I look forward to seeing you all out on the water soon. Hopefully, I will not have to spend quite so many weekends transporting Doug to various events this year and can get to race with you more often. David and I have yet to toss the coin to decide who is helming in the morning series and who in the afternoon but we are looking forward to the new series format. I have the feeling it is going to be an excellent year for Miracles.

**Absent friend.**

Photo by David Hud-



	Ken Flowerday	] Pam Smith Ian Wyatt
	Ricky Knights	]
AUDITOR	Roy McLeod	]
TRUSTEES	Martin Fish	]
	Bernard Smith	]
	Roy McLeod	] Colin Treadwell Brian Lamb
	Dave Vettergreen	]

<u>FLEET</u>	<u>CLASS CAPTAINS</u>
Miracle	Chris Cherriman
Wayfarer	John Goudie
Handicap (Fast) Ian Parris	
Handicap (medium)	Roy Winnett
Handicap (juniors)	VACANCY
<u>Class Representatives</u>	
Laser	Andrew Smith
Topper	The Heather Family
Saturday Sailing	Martin Jessup & Peter Horner

### 7. Sailing Secretary's Report:

#### 2002 Season – key features

- Entries down on previous season, though not a complete surprise given the falling membership numbers.
- Only 3 races lost through weather conditions.
- Revised Commodores/Bosuns event – brief explanation given as to why we changed the format
- Race management generally went very well.
- Cruise to Aylesford (low support)
- Inter-Club Challenge vs MYC went very well
- Earlier start times for Winter Series – no problems
- New Year's Day Race – 13 entries, raising £100 for the RLNI.

**2003 Season – key features**

- Sailing Programme complete
- Please see the Sailing Secretary's report elsewhere for details.

**8. Bosun's Report:**

A secondhand RIB was purchased and the engine sold. 2 new 50 hp engines were purchased and have been serviced. The RIBs are to be relied on more, therefore courses for RIB training are a must. These are being organised by John Gore. Leander is running ok while Wilsonian is having a new keel fitted, also the engine and gearbox to be fitted.

**9. Closing Remarks:** The Commodore thanked everyone for coming to the AGM and to the team who had supported him and the Club during the last year. He also gave his thanks to Ken Crundwell for all that he has done for the Club as Treasurer.

This year's Annual Dinner & Prize-giving will again be at Lloyds Sports & Social Club, Gillingham, on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2003.



*A blast from the past, maybe, but such an excellent photo by David Hudson, we couldn't resist including it*

# Miracles

with Peter Horner



Our Fleet Captain, Chris Cherriman, is in Australia at the time of writing and so you have to put up with my scribblings for this issue of the magazine.

Fleet evenings serve three main purposes (in my view). First an opportunity to get together socially during the period when not much sailing is happening. Second to elect the Fleet Captain for the coming year. Third to have some lively discussion about how the past year went and, more importantly, ideas and suggestions for the coming year. The Miracle Fleet Evening on 11<sup>th</sup> January certainly achieved all three. Three major topics were discussed and voted on with the resulting proposals subsequently taken to the Sailing Committee.

**Single-handed sailing.**

In the Miracle fleet we have always allowed people to sail single-handed. Originally it was on the understanding that the result in a race did not count i.e. the results were the same as if you had not been there. A few years ago the fleet voted to let single-handed racers be awarded points provided they had made every effort to find a crew first i.e. you had to intend to race double-handed. Over the past year this rule has been overlooked in the results without the fleet's formal agreement. The issue was discussed at this year's fleet evening and the resulting proposal was that a boat can be sailed single-handed but with modified PY number proposed by the Sailing Committee, provisionally 1156, to allow for less displacement. This has been accepted and applies to all single-handed Miracles regardless of whether you have tried to get a crew. This is felt to be fairest to all and maintains the desire to encourage as many boats as possible onto the water.

**Review of Points Series Format**

In our fleet we have several members who can sail only in the afternoon or only in the morning. We also have several boats in which the occupants wish to share helming and crewing on the same day. To enable these members to complete all races in a series, the proposal taken to Sailing Committee was for the Spring Series and Autumn Series both to be split into two separate morning and afternoon series. This was agreed at Sailing Committee and the General Committee has agreed to provide two additional trophies. So we now have six Points Series rather than four i.e. Spring a.m., Spring p.m., Summer a.m.,

## 28 Wilsonian Sailing Club Magazine

Club Laser - Peter occasionally sailed his dad Gordon's newer boat, generally with worse results (nice excuse there for you, Gordon!)

A straw poll amongst the racers gave the series the thumbs up, so that 31½ would be very surprised if the Series was not a continuing feature of future seasons. A co-operative, pioneering spirit among the competitors meant that everyone was happy to chip in with the cleaning up of the club at the end of the day, while catering was either a DIY affair or, on several occasions, provided by various 'angels in the kitchen', who kept the supply of baked spuds coming. Mention should also be made of the volunteers who performed CDO, patrol boat and race box duties, and who were kindly rewarded at the prize-giving with cards and bottles of wine by Ian (with first choice over the racers, to boot!).

And the results were:

Pos	Class	Helm	Crew	Pts
1st	Laser	Peter Belcher		8
2nd	RS 400	Chris Ashby	Mick Smith	12
3rd	RS 600	Ian Parris		20
4th	Laser Vortex	Grahame Smith		21
5th	Miracle	David Hudson	Jackie Hudson	34
6th	RS 300	Matthew Wynn		35
7th	Laser/ Radial	Gordon Belcher		37
8th	Miracle	Peter Horner	David Brooker	38
9th	Laser Radial	Doug Horner		41
10th	Contender	Martin Jones		48
11th	RS 300	Chris Mason		70
12th	RS Vaneo	Tony Coulson	Harry Coulson	72
13th	Miracle	Tina Wallis	Michelle Watson	88
14th	Miracle s/h	Chris Wallis		90

## Dating Agency

Are you looking for a crew or looking to crew? Have you been to the club three weeks running and put your name on the blackboard only to receive no interest, then the fourth week stayed at home to watch the Grand Prix just as a limousine-full of supermodels turned up all eager to crew? Or do you avoid putting your name on the blackboard for fear that Jonah will come over and ask you to crew, and you don't want to hurt his feelings? Would you be happy to team up with a novice if (s)he was prepared to stick with you for a bit once trained up?

If any of these apply or if you just want your crewing situation sorted, then you need 31 ½'s **new crew-matching service**.

Simply send the editor (contact details inside the front cover), *in confidence*, details of what you're looking for and we'll try to match you up. If you don't want a supermodel but would prefer Jonah, have no fear, your secret is safe with us. Likewise, if you want a crewing job but don't fancy a trapeze, we'll try to sort out the right skipper for you. Only when your mutual requirements appear to match will we put you in touch.

Obviously, the effectiveness of this service will depend upon how many people choose to use it and it may take some time to get going properly. But you may leave your name on the list as long as you like (please tell us if you're settled), and at least there is some chance that your crewing problem will be sorted out before you arrive at the club.



# HERE WE GO AGAIN

Well, another year has passed and I've still got a lot of party mood in me yet. What about all of you, ready for another year of sailing and fun by the water?

We rounded the year off with a great New Year party, and well done to those who got the New Year's Day race in after the late night. I would also like to thank all the members and families who supported the activities I arranged throughout the year.

This time around I have had to give Planet Lazer (sic) and ice skating a miss due to a busy winter around my house. But now the sun is coming, John and me have stripped the boat ready for a new varnish and can't wait to get on the water again [so how about 'Planet Lazer' soon, then? Maybe a Bank Holiday? - Ed.]

With all of the Saturday sailing, I was thinking, 'why not use this great site we have?', and if anyone has any ideas which we can run along the same day/evening please approach me (disco, bbq, gamesnight, sax/night, racenight!").

I am looking at the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2003 for the annual bowling night, but this year at Chatham. As long as we book ahead, we might get 3 games, 3 drinks and a basket meal for £17 pp, so think now and come forward with the names and I will try to fix a deal.

Have a great year, see you all around and please, Tony, get a slower boat.

## Ricky (Osprey 1167) Knights

[Did anyone else see the Virtual Skipper race game on the Y&Y stand at Sailboat? The multi-player option would make a great focus for a club night. All we need is a large-screen TV, a computer and some practice... - Ed.]

## The First Pre-Season Series

This year, over the five weeks following the Hoo Freezer, the Club ran for the first time a Pre-Season Series. Some of you may have encountered the early publicity for this when it was billed as an 'Extended Series', before the present title was found (any ideas for a better one?).

The man we have to thank for this initiative is Ian Parris, that incorrigibly keen sailor whose enthusiasm even carries him along when coping with the handful that is his RS600 (that's a pencil-thin single-hander with a trapeze for anyone new-ish to sailing). For Ian and 18 other intrepid sailors, the season just wasn't long enough, so they decided to start early. Despite fears that they'd be sailing in blizzards after chipping the ice off the cover, the weather was amazingly benign, indeed sunny, and most of the time you could have been forgiven for thinking it was May or September. Only one week was howlingly windy, sending most people swimming, but even this was a sunny day and nobody seemed to mind very much, apart from the usual frustration about losing time in the race.

Given that the boats involved ranged from the aforesaid RS 600 (PY 920) to a cluster of Miracles (PY 1178), it was decided to use average lap timing, starting and finishing at the club line. While the need to have enough laps per race entailed setting rather short courses/laps, missing out on the best parts of the river for sailing, and leaving the sailors prey to turbulence of the new building on St Mary's Island, the lack of moored craft at this time of year was a help. The scarcity of boats on moorings meant that it was possible to use the ones that remained as marks of the course, and this meant that setting a windward leg in Short Reach was considerably easier than in summer. Also, advantage was taken, where possible, of high tides to use various pieces of river furniture lying around Hoo Bay (we're reliably informed that these pontoons are leftovers from the work on the Medway Tunnel), giving more angles.

The racing saw success spread among the various classes participating, with each of the Miracles scoring a 2nd place and an RS 300 and an RS400 each winning two races, but the outstanding sailor of the series was Peter Belcher, newly returned to the club. Peter sailed the battered club Laser into four 1st places, and confounded those of us who thought that a) the Laser's handicap has been pushed hopelessly low by the likes of Ben Ainsley, and that b) club boats can't win races; maybe more of us should go away and practice at gliding... Or sail the

be helpful if everyone who is willing to take a turn at safety cover contacts me as soon as possible with their name and days you are prepared to do it.

The format of the sessions is completely free and flexible. It will be up to everybody who wishes to have the safety cover to ensure they stay in sight of the safety boat. If anyone wishes to organise any specific activities e.g. informal short races, please feel to do so, but no-one should feel pressured to join in if they do not want to.

If you have any questions or suggestions about the Saturday Clubs, please contact me.

## The "New" Pursuit Race by 31½ Hack

The eagle-eyed among you will have noticed a novelty in the sailing calendar this year. On Bank Holiday Monday, 26th May, we are having a pursuit race. Now, before the longer-established members all write in: yes, we know that holiday Mondays and pursuit races have both been done before, but not quite in this year's form, we can assure you. The new form should feature easier starting and a less spread-out fleet at the end of the race, and, most importantly, be more enjoyable.

For those that do not know, a pursuit race is one in which the slower boats are started first and the faster ones later, thus in reverse order to their handicaps. If the handicapping is perfect, all boats should cross the finish line together. It doesn't work out quite that way, of course, but it should avoid that feeling of "by the time I'm back in my Topper the bar will be closed"; indeed, there's no reason why you shouldn't be back first in your Topper. And first over the finish line is the winner, as the handicapping is all taken care of in the starting times.

"Ah," I hear you saying, "but I'll be beaten home by the hot guys". Not so in this race. This time we're introducing personal handicaps based on everybody's performances last year; many boats will be starting singly, the hot helms an appropriate time after the 'yet to be hot'. So if we've got it right, anyone sailing a bit better than they did last year will be in with a chance of a win, even if they are usually last (or first!).

It's not to be taken too seriously, of course - our handicapping won't be that perfect, but we do think you'll have fun, exciting racing, with no long, lonely sail home and no wait for handicaps to be worked out.

### **WANTED: PERSONS OF CHARACTER & DETERMINATION FOR EXPLORATION OF MEDWAY CREEKS by Brian (Franklin) Reeve**

I am trying to put together a small team of people to spend time visiting, by sailing or powered craft, the less well known parts of the river.

The aim is to have, scattered amongst the fleets, people who have a better idea of where the marks are if we go off main channel e.g. in the Creeks Race and Leigh Trophy. This will also cross over into club racing when appropriate tides allow us to use more of the river.

It would be hoped those undertaking this exploration will be happy to pass on their new-found knowledge by, say, having a ribbon on their boom to identify them during the Creeks Race, so that visitors and others would, if confused, feel they had someone to follow that may have an idea where they are going (please remove ribbon if retiring!!!)

If interested, please ring me on **01322 863858**, or have a chat at the club where you will find me by the Comet Race. Provisionally, I propose outings on 3rd & 17th May, and 14th June (before the 'Creeks'!)

### **WANTED by the House Committee**

Please help us to supply music nights for you all by donating a sound system for the clubhouse.

We need **CD** and **cassette** players, **speakers** and an **amp**, but please also let us know if you have only one or more of these to offer. Speak to Ricky Knights on **01634 831374** or **Knights\_fish@yahoo.com**

### **Chandlers**

Our loyal advertisers, the Pirates Cave, located on the business estate by the Medway Tunnel, have asked us to draw attention to the fact that they now stock a range of Hoyt fittings suitable for dinghies and smaller boats, as well as the usual chandlery items, ropes, books etc.

More details in the advertisement before the centrefold.

## The Centrefold

How do you get: - **better racing**,  
- **less duties**, and  
- **reduced increases in membership fees?**

Why, by having more members, of course!

This month's centrefold is a poster designed to be pulled out and pinned up on your work/school/other club noticeboard.

There's space for you to insert your own name and phone number as a contact: think back to before you could sail, visiting a sailing club could be a pretty daunting notion. A personal introduction will ease things greatly. Just a chat on the phone can be very encouraging.

Still better, get your prospect out for a sail, ideally without them needing to get involved in the mechanics of sailing but simply able to sit there and soak up the sensations. Pick any suitable Saturday, or how about our Open Day on Saturday 7th June? There are plenty of sedate boats available - maybe the club Wayfarer?

If every member introduced just one new person or family to the club each year, the impact would be enormous. So turn to the centrefold now, pull it out and stick it in your briefcase or whatever; you'll already have taken the first step in doing your club a great service.

If you've any other ideas for publicising the club, or indeed do anything to publicise it, please tell our new **Publicity Officer, Brian Reeve** (of the Comet Race), **01322 863858**, so that he can coordinate things.

## Roy's Results

Some racers may not know that many of us have been receiving a weekly e-mail including an Excel file showing the results for the previous weekend and current standings in the series.

If you'd like to be included on the mailing list, send an e-mail to Roy Winnett at [roywinnett@care4free.net](mailto:roywinnett@care4free.net), who'll be happy to include you. Alternatively, if you prefer you can look up the club web-site which now also has an up to the minute results service. That's at [www.wilsoniansc.org.uk](http://www.wilsoniansc.org.uk), of course.

Health Warning: too close attention to your standing in the points series can spoil your sailing pleasure and damage your health!

## Saturday Club

with Peter Horner

- Would you like to sail on Saturday afternoons but are not happy to do so without safety cover?
- Are you thinking of changing boat or making some changes to your existing boat but would first like the opportunity to try other members' boats?
- Do you want the opportunity to do some boat-to-boat tuning with another member or get someone else to teach some new techniques that there is never time for on Sundays?

Would you like to have the opportunity to sail in the company of others to build your personal confidence before starting to race?

From talking to many members during the latter part of 2001, there seems to be strong support for programmed practice sessions to satisfy all the above. Thus you will see that this year's sailing programme includes ten Saturdays, in the warmer half of the year, entitled "**Saturday Club**". This is not a completely new idea as there was a similar set-up a few years back. It was very popular then and for some time I have thought the club would benefit greatly from its re-introduction.

I started to explore the concept firstly with juniors in mind as we always have a large number attending the training sessions but do not see many of them in between. However, there is also a significant number of adult members who have completed training courses but are not getting "bum in boat" time to practice all they have learnt and to build their confidence. So the Saturday Club is open to absolutely everyone: beginner, expert, young and old.

The plan is that sessions will start at 13:00 i.e. safety boat up and running ready for dinghies to launch at 13:00. Finish time will probably be 16:00, although, safety crew willing, we could carry on to 17:00 when it is a nice warm, sunny day.

One proviso for this happening is that there are always two or three members willing to man one of the displacement safety boats to provide the safety cover. This could be a small group doing it for all the days, different people each Saturday or several people taking turns at safety cover and sailing during the day. To be confident that the Saturday Club is going to happen on each of the designated days it would

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**Winter** Mon - Sat 9am - 5pm  
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# Find Sundays Boring?

Then try dinghy sailing and enjoy a great social life at Wilsonian Sailing Club ( [www.wilsoniansc.org.uk](http://www.wilsoniansc.org.uk) ).

A family-friendly club located on the north bank of the Medway near Hoo, opposite St Mary's Island, Wilsonian S.C. offers excellent sailing between Aylesford and Queenborough.

Members race every Sunday from March to the New Year, and many cruise too, usually at weekends, though launching is possible at any time.

If you sail already, we can offer you space for your boat and/or possibilities to crew. If not, we offer training to RYA standards to get you started, with continuing support thereafter. Club boats can be hired at very reasonable rates, though most people soon choose to buy their own.

We also have a modern clubhouse and bar, in which we run a programme of social events throughout the year.

Sound interesting? Then call our membership secretary,

Pam Smith, on

**01474 705651** or send an e-mail to

[esdoorn@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:esdoorn@tiscali.co.uk)

Alternatively, contact

tel.

who will be happy to tell you more about the club.

