



31 1/2 Autumn 2015

Welcome to the Autumn edition of 31½

As the time comes round for the thicker wetsuits or a drysuit its also time to reflect on the year so far; of local racing, Nationals, sailing holidays and the honing of skills. Hopefully this latest edition provides all of those things and a hint of things to come.

Talking of things to come remember to look out for your winter service dates. It is the enthusiasm of our volunteers that make the club the continuing success it is.

Thanks to Jacqueline Hudson for the Medway Regatta 2015 cover picture and also to all the contributors who have made this edition another good read.

David Wraight

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From the Commodore...



We have had a good summer at the club, with lots of activity on the water. I hope you have been able to get out the water this year and enjoy sailing at our club.

This year the Medway Regatta was well attended with 73 participants, including around 30 Juniors at the event. Many thanks to our sponsors MTS for the polo shirts and Pirates Cave for the racing mark.

At our Open day we welcomed many visitors and attracted a few new members. During the year we have welcomed many new members to the club.

Saturday Skimmers has been very popular, both Juniors in the morning and Adults in the afternoon. We have a couple of additional 2 man club boats that should be ready for next year, a Pacer and Gull dinghy which are lighter than the Wayfarers and 2000, smaller and suitable for beginners. Thank you to everyone who has been helping to make Skimmers a success this year, in the galley, race box, shore support and on the water.

Hopefully you will have found Dutyman a help with duties this year. As we approach the end of the year, even though we are asked to do 2 duties a year, there are a few vacancies for duties in November and December. If you would like to help by volunteering for any dates, please contact me. For next year we are looking at further changes to enable members to volunteer for the dates they would like to do their duties.

For Sunday racing, the Sailing committee are considering changes to the programme. This includes Long, Medium and Short courses, instead of calling them

Fast, Medium and Slow fleets. There always has been the ability to take part in a race that isn't within the set handicap numbers. Another idea is to have morning and afternoon series to enable those members who have other commitments on Sundays and would like to be able to complete a series. Please talk to your Fleet Captains to give your opinions and ideas regarding racing.

After lots of hard effort, emails, meetings, phone calls and documents, the work on the upstream slipway is scheduled to start in November. Boats in the area between the blockhouse and upstream slipway (below the path to the fence where most of the Lasers are located), will need to be moved to provide space for the builders equipment.

During the winter we will have our usual work parties to carry out the necessary major works to maintain and make various improvements to the club.

As we approach the end of the year and look forward to next year, offers from volunteers to help with the running and club organisation on the various committees including House committee and General committee are, as always, welcome.

Martin Vinton

Junior Week 2015

This year's junior week ran from 26th August to 29th, and was a great success. A large number of juniors, with a range of abilities turned up. Despite poor weather, the strong wind and rain didn't stop the juniors from developing their skills. However, as the week came to an end the wind eased, giving the juniors a good break from the hard sailing that they had endured all week; a welcome respite!

The regatta turned out to be quite successful with a large number of boats willing to take on the challenge of a strong tide and little wind. All the hard work throughout the week had paid off to all those exhausted sailors, showing that practice really does make the difference! Even though it wasn't a first place for a Wilsonian sailor, we still managed to take second and third, but most of all an excellent show of brilliant head to head sailing was viewed from the committee boat.

I would like to thank Martin Smith for being race officer for the regatta and the rest of the volunteers who made the day run so smoothly. I would also like to thank all the other volunteers and organisers that made both the Regatta day and the whole Junior week possible, and a great success.

Thanks to Kevin Downard for the great pictures over the page. There are plenty more on Flickr so contact him for the link.

Jo Wicken



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Blaze Nationals 2015, from my perspective

This year's nationals were held at Hayling Island sailing club, a fantastic venue with great facilities and access to some great water although not without its faults which is something we will come back to later.

For me the weekend started early, picking up the boats on Thursday afternoon and then driving down in convoy with Stuart Bailey and their caravan, to arrive at the Fishery creek campsite by tea time. Then it was just a matter of pitching the tent and caravan and taking the boats over to the club to rig. So after a busy day we had everything ready for the weekend by 20:00 so we treated ourselves to a large portion of fish and chips, couldn't be better.

Friday was to be a lazy start as we had registered for the event on Friday evening and the sailors briefing wasn't until 12:30. So fully refreshed and ready for action we finally stepped into our boats at 14:00 ready for the long sail out to the race area. Today's racing was to be held in peachy F3 south easterly breeze out in Hayling bay. This entailed a long sail out of Chichester harbour against the start of the incoming tide, right out off shore to miss the legendary bar (again, more of this later) and then a long run down to the other side of the bay to find the start line.

I had a plan for this weekend's sailing although it wasn't a very adventurous one. I was going to start in the middle-ish of the line each time to a) avoid the squabble that always occurs at the ends and b) avoid getting it

wrong by picking the wrong end... and then I was going to stick largely to the middle of the race track for the same reasons.



My first start was a little unusual. To begin with I missed the 5 minute gun, and then pushed the wrong button on my watch for the 4 minute warning so I just sat in the middle of the line, as per the plan, waiting for the 1 minute gun. At the one minute warning two things happened. Firstly I managed to push the right button on my watch so I now new the time and secondly the fleet had lined up as might be expected, but had lined up two boat lengths behind me? So far as I could see I was still 3-4 boat lengths from the line so now I'm thinking, I must be looking at the wrong line. So as the gun went I was a little hesitant thinking I'd done something wrong but there was no second hoot so off I went, still in front of those around me. I sailed a reasonable race, not at my best but ok all the same and came home 9th result!

Race 2, the wind has eased a little but I stuck to my plan and plonked myself back in the middle of the line at the 5 minute horn again, and once again the fleet line up behind me only this time at the one minute gun they are probably

3 boat lengths behind me! So this time, being a bit more confident in my starting, sailing and feeling a little racy after the good first race result, I tell myself that I'm going to start my approach with 10 seconds to go. The plan was to bear away hard build some speed and hit the line at pace... easy to do when there is no one alongside you. Unfortunately this time there were two hoots and not being able to see the committee boat I naturally had to assume I'd got it wrong. It turned out however that a few people had been a bit racy at the committee boat and pushed over so I may have been ok. I like to think that I was over though because otherwise I threw away a fantastic start and lost loads of time trying to get back to the line. With the frustration of the start and the lighter wind I struggled to get it going all race but had some good luck on the last run picking up some places and then passed a couple more on the reach to the finish (something I was to make a habit of) to finish in 17th. Not the best of results but all things considered not bad either.

So that was day one over and I found myself in 12th over all, pretty good given the poor second race.

Day 2 arrived and it's another relaxing morning. Warm, sunny and a peachy F3-4 rising to 5 from the south west and a first start at 11:55, in fact sailing doesn't get much better than today.

Race 3 and it's the same routine for me. Once again I set out my stall early in the middle of the line and once again the fleet line up behind me, although now they are only just behind me but I get a cracking start all the same.



Broadly speaking the fleet is split between going inshore to avoid the tide and those going offshore looking for more wind! I stuck to my plan and went broadly speaking up the middle and rounded the top mark inside the top ten. I had gains and losses throughout the race but the highlight for me was during the last reach. Dave Angwin was 8th, Rob Jones who ultimately came 2nd was just behind him and I was just behind the pair of them. Long and short of it we all had a battle trying to get over the next boat to windward but with little luck. Rob had already given me one of those looks that says don't even try sunshine, when half way along I caught a good gust and wave, and shot off to leeward. Working hard I eventually passed Rob Jones to leeward and almost caught (less than a boat's length behind) Dave, winding up in 8th place.

Race 4 and it was more of the same. Same start, same decisions on the beat, similar position rounding the first mark and so on. I sailed a good race and once again I had an excellent last reach to the line this time catching and

passing Ian Sanderson (the winner of race 3) to finish up 6th. I'm sure Ian would have made more of a race of it but I came from so far back I was on him before he recognised the threat.

Race 5 and the conditions move up a notch. It was like someone flicked a switch and engaged the turbo. The wind veered a little to the south and stepped it up to a F5 and the sea state increased from slight to moderate... all of which combined to give us a pretty full on race.

For some reason I switched from my tried and tested starting routine to join everyone in the line-up, 6 boat lengths from the line, and consequently had a mediocre start. But in the stronger conditions boat speed and handling were going to be more important than tactics and the small gains I had been making at the start.

I didn't sail a particularly good first beat but I was comfortably inside the top half of the fleet at the first mark, then it was a reach over to our side of the course where we would bear away onto the first run of the race. Blazes don't do runs particularly well, especially when the conditions are strong but I came into the wing mark hot on the heels of a gaggle of other boats so bore away hard trying to get an underlap (is that even a word?) on the group and gain some control. As it happened I made good gains here and passed 3 or 4 boats so I decided to head up a little so that I had room for the gybe, or at least have the option of wearing round should I need to. It then occurred to me that with the shift in the wind and the deep course that we were running at in this breeze... that with a little thought I could avoid

the gybe and just go around the right hand gate for the next beat. What an idiot, I gave away a lot of depth here in trying to find space but fortunately I managed to go deep enough from here on to get it all back and thus rounded the right hand gate mark in about 12th. Next mistake came on the following beat, once again missing the wind shift. I over stood the next layline and had to fetch for about a mile back up course to the windward mark, in practice it didn't really cost me anything and I headed back down the last run in touch with the group... that was following the front group if you follow me.

This time we didn't get the choice, one way or another we had to turn left. My decision was made easier as I approached the mark. Of the 5 boats immediately in front of me, two wore round and three gybed. Of the gybers only 1 stayed up right so I decide to wear round!

The final reach was hard work. You just couldn't sail slow enough to avoid the waves and I couldn't get out on the racks to lock myself in for best control so it was to be a wallow'y half run half reach to the finish but as it turned out everyone else did the same thing so I finished up in 10th place and chuffed with the sail.

Getting back to the club was to be rather eventful though as I capsized on the legendary Hayling bar and it would appear that I only narrowly got away with it as when the mast came up the burgee was a mess and many a better sailor than me has broken their mast here. Stuart and I well remember a Buzz and Iso nationals held here ten years ago were literally half the fleet

got trashed in Hayling bay on a day similar to this. You get some large standing waves on the bar itself and some horrible chop all around, definitely a place to avoid if at all possible.

Day 3 and both the wind strength and wave size got turned up another click, combine this with a tide that was still flooding out at race time giving a pretty severe wind against tide chop to contend with... as well as the standing waves that always set up around Hayling bar etc etc. Well let's just say it was hard work for even the ribs to get out so the race committee first postponed, then cancelled our days racing. About 1/3rd of the Finns went out (it was their nationals as well) and I don't know how they got on as we packed up and went home early, but I've heard stories of ambulances being called and 7 masts being broken (out of maybe 20 boats)!!

So 10th over all, all things considered I was really chuffed. My aim was to be in the top half ultimately hoping to make the top ten, so I achieved that on both counts. Even more encouragingly I was in the race. In a parallel universe some where there is another me that would have made 5th so there is hope of more to come. The class is really keen to have an open meeting at Wilsonians next year as well, so you to could join in the fun at our own club... you just need to buy a Blaze and come join us.

Ian Foxwell

Medium Fleet Report

Summer is here and now on the way out - we've had a cold May but at least there has been wind. Yes, there's been plenty of wind and of course the more experienced sailors enjoy a breezy day because there's the thrill of the speed, and because of their experience normally no fear of coping with it.

For the less fit and less experienced I hope we get plenty of sunny days with a force 3 and we can have plenty of boats out enjoying the extra adrenaline which comes from racing. The Blazes have enjoyed some close racing with one day no less than 7 boats out, but on a grey windy 31st of May something went wrong and there were just two in the morning and one in the afternoon. Mind you there were only two boats in total in the Fast Fleet!

The Medium Fleet is now the biggest fleet in the club and the Spring Series was comprehensively won by Ian Foxwell with nothing but firsts and seconds to count. John Goudie crewed by Stan Sprot came second. Then the two Blazes of John Tinnams and John Hewat and its nice to see Gordon Belcher in 5th. Many moons ago (I think it may have been a quarter of a century ago) I recall coming to WSC in my Laser for an open meeting and being thrashed by Gordon.

That's 22 boats, the Fast Fleet managed only 12, the Slow only 4 and the 2000s 10. I would say the Medium Fleet is the growth fleet in the club and that's probably down to the Blazes and you'll notice there were 8 in this series.

I can't help feeling that we might be moving back to class racing. There

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was a time when clubs adhered to a policy of encouraging only certain classes and I believe at one time Wilsonian had a Fireball fleet and a Tasar fleet. We still have a vestigial Miracle fleet. Could it be that we are moving towards fleets of Altos, Blazes, Lasers, Laser Radials, 2000s, Streakers and Miracles? I think that would be a good thing. You can learn so much when you race in the company of boats of the same class, as the Blazes can testify. So if you know anybody joining the club or switching class please encourage them to choose from the list above - they are all good boats in their way.

By the way several of the Blaze helms are very experienced and if you sail another class they would be good people to ask if you need advice. Also, speaking as a Blaze owner, I know several of the Blaze sailors would gladly lend their boats if anybody would like to try one. I think the reason is that they are a strong and easily sailed boat with some particularly safe characteristics. I mustn't get too carried away but they are stable, take a lot to turn turtle, are easily righted and carry a wide weight range.

I have to say if there are any aspiring Fast Fleet sailors out there, then do get an Alto - they are a fabulous boat and with good racing at Wilsonian. But if there are any Fast Fleet sailors looking for class racing they should look at the Blaze and any lightweights you should consider the Streaker. If however you want to develop your fitness and have a boat with a good circuit then the Laser, or if you are a lightweight the Laser Radial is the boat for you.



I'd better just mention the Wayfarer and the Buzz, they are the other two classes we get regularly in the Medium Fleet and it would be great if we could get more of them. They are also the only two handed boats in our fleet. Sadly there are really only two of each that get out more than a couple of times a year. They both happen to be good boats of their type so if you are encouraging somebody to join and they want a trapeze boat (but not too fast) by all means get a Buzz and if they want something really big with some racing then the Wayfarer handles beautifully unlike many other big cruising/training dinghies. We are blessed with good classes of boat in our Medium Fleet, perhaps because Wilsonian SC has been here for some time we know what works and what doesn't. If anybody reading this sails some other class of boat please feel welcome, join in and have fun. If you need advice then ask, we are keen to make your sailing enjoyable.

But I digress, we are now into the Autumn Series and the Early Summer Series was won by yours truly - not by any great skill - I just keep turning up. I

was followed in the positions by Matt Love, John Tinnams, and John Hewat - all Blazes, and then Gordon Belcher in 5th in his Laser and the Blazes of Martin Jones and Ian Foxwell. I quake at the mention of Ian Foxwell, he is the real "Best Blaze", he only had first places to count - but not enough of them! Also did you notice that was seven Blazes out of 22 competitors and in one race we had six out together.



The Late Summer Series was won by another really good sailor and not in a Blaze - Neil Lamprell in a Laser. I kept turning up but I can't match his speed and came second with John Hewat 3rd and Graham Jenkinson in another Laser who came 4th. There were a total of 26 entries and 8 Blazes. Just as an aside I notice our turnout is about double the Fast Fleet and three times the 2000s. Clearly the Medium Fleet is the place to be for good dinghy racing and particularly in a Blaze. It is very close racing in a Blaze I recall one incident during the summer when

there were 5 Blazes, line abreast, on a run into buoy 26 and we frequently finish four or five within a couple of minutes of each other.

Now there are a few races during the year when we compete not in fleets but all together . One that springs to mind is the Leigh Trophy Race - which is a long race around the creeks at high tide. This was won with a good margin by Brian Lamb and Sam Pygall in their Wayfarer. A similar race is the Wilsonian Grand Prix - it used to be called the Creeks Race and this year it was very similar course to the Leigh Trophy and that was comprehensively won by Fast Fleet members. There were only 12 boats and yet good weather. If you were put off sailing that weekend because of that race please let me know as we will be putting next year's programme together soon and it will be important to know what people want.

However the South Kent Race - down to Garrison Point and back - was won by myself with a margin of 19 seconds over Brian Lamb and Sam Pygall in the Wayfarer. Quite a tight margin for a race which lasted over 4 hours.

Completely different was the Three Race Regatta. Three short races, back-to-back, and close to the club with a start from a committee boat. Brian Lamb and Sam Pygall won that with Tim Kift in an Alto second, and Ian Foxwell 3rd with 7 Blazes competing. I should also mention there were at least 4 Streakers out there and I believe we now have 10 Streakers in the club. The total competitors were 25 boats so allowing for the Fast Fleet hardly being represented I would say that was a popular event and we

should have more like that. If you are a junior or less experienced keep your eye open for that event next year it might suit you as this year you were always in sight of the club house.

For completeness I'll mention the Medway Marathon, which is organised by Medway YC. Sadly it was on the same weekend as the other big long distance race of the area - the Island Race, organised by Sheppey YC. I think the first seven places were taken by Wayfarers, Brian and Sam were amongst them but apart from the Wayfarers it wasn't a great race, rather processional, and too light for Blazes or any of the Fast Fleet to make an impression.

Now we have only 2 months left before the water gets cold and some special clothing is required. Some with drysuits or steamers will sail right round to Christmas, and why not, it's not until January the water really cools down and it's not until March it starts warming up again. I say only 2 months but that is stacks since if you started in say May you are still only two thirds of the way through your season; enjoy it.



Stewart Robertson (Blaze 609)

Minorca sailing 2015

From the fifteen happy sailors Thank You John Hewat for organising this year's successful and thoroughly enjoyable week at Ses Salines, Fornells, Minorca.

With temperatures averaging 28*, falling into the bay was almost a pleasure. A full range of wind speeds satisfied everybody. Catering for the cautious and fool hardy amongst us, the week commenced with light winds 2-3 increasing as the week progressed to a full 5-6 by Thursday. This enabled the adventurous Wilsonians to try out most of the boats on offer. These included:- RS100, RS200, RS400, RS500, RS800, Aero, D Zero, RS Venture, 29er and the 2000 . Natalie and Andy perfected their wind surfing skills. Natalie making world breaking speeds of nearly 12.5 knots! We even had a few champions, David and Alison came third in the three race Regatta. John and Chris coming second in the advanced asymmetric handicap race. David's son Lewis came 2nd in the laser class but the Piece de la Resistance, Our overall champion, Número Uno, who came 1st in the RS Fever was Jimmy our 8 year old superstar (Alison's grandson) !

As with most holidays a few incidences didn't go unnoticed.

The medical emergency on easy jet during the incoming journey. A trip the wrong way around the roundabout. The great celebration when a certain lady beat Andy in a race. There was the lapsed moment when someone else's fridge was stocked up and kitchen chores performed before it

was realised that a certain person was in the wrong villa. Feel free to come to my villa anytime. A cautionary note to David 'Don't let Alison be your nurse!' David now knows the difference between Germaline and insect repellent.



Overall fitness improved, as after a full day's sailing there was the half hour walk to Fornells or Tirant for a hearty three course meal and a slow meander back to the villas for 'dippy toes in pool'.

Nina, Chris, Pete and John spent a pleasant day out in Mahon mid week. The boat trip around the harbour is a 'must experience'. Thanks to the recommendation of the boat man, we luncheoned at Cap Roig restaurant overlooking the scenic view of Sa Mesquida.

A 90 minute delay on the plane on the run way was made good when Captain Mark let passengers view the cockpit and ask questions. Overall good sailing, great weather, fabulous sailing, excellent food and stimulating company. What more can one want?

Nina Wallis

Saturday Skimmers

The end of season Saturday Skimmers finale took place on 3rd October. Despite the poor visibility and almost non-existent wind, the turnout was amazing for the time of year. We actually ran out of junior club boats (and we must have at least 15 in the dinghy park!).

Eighteen sailors in fourteen boats participated in the Pursuit Trophy race and there was a similar number sailing with the Beginners/Intermediate groups.

Organised by Tony, the pursuit got underway with the launch of Gavin in his Tera at 11:02, closely followed by Martin (Topper 4.7), Reuben (Topper) and Hannah (Taz). For twenty minutes they battled trying to beat upriver against the tide in nothing more than the occasional zephyr. The wind appeared to fill in a little as the three Club Fevas launched and by the time the Lasers were on the scene it looked as though they would quickly overtake the early starters. Yet the wind was fickle. As the tide changed and began to flood, Reuben and Gavin (just half a metre behind) managed to round the first mark. Against the tide again, but this time with what you couldn't exactly call wind behind them, the pair opened up a gap between themselves and the rest of the fleet as they crept along the south shore towards Gillingham.

Eventually the Fevas and Lasers reached the downwind leg and began to close the gap. Several strayed further out into adverse tide and paid the consequences. Reuben kept very still in his Topper, weight well forward, and slowly pulled away to round the

downwind buoy. After much patient racing, eventually the whistle blew. Apart from the four leading boats, the rest of the fleet was in a close pack at the finish.

Congratulations go to new racer Reuben Causer who won the Pursuit Race.



In second place was Gavin Cope and third was Jem Causer (Laser).

With all groups back ashore, everyone enjoyed an end of season lunch in the clubhouse. Skimmers concluded with the prize giving. Results for the year:

Spring Series:

1st Richard Tutt, 2nd Jem Causer,
3rd Jack Dann

Early Summer Series:

1st Richard Tutt, 2nd Morgan Tindall,
3rd Tazmin Tindall

Summer Series:

1st Robert Crane, 2nd Gavin Cope,
3rd Ben Harris

Autumn Series:

1st Jem Causer, 2nd Robert Crane,
3rd Morgan Tindall

Championship Series:

1st Jem Causer, 2nd Morgan Tindall,
3rd Richard Tutt

Jo Wicken

Which Duty Do You Volunteer For?

Ever struggled over which duty to volunteer for? As you weigh up the differences between CDO (first in, last out), AHO (what lunch break?), Safety boat driver (need level 2 power boat etc.) or Safety boat crew (coldest job in club) why not consider RO or ARO? After all, don't they all get in wrong, surely you could do better ? Consider some of the many advantages –

- Race box is dry
- Race box is cosy with warm air heating, courtesy of Tony Hunt
- No qualifications needed - just a thick skin.....
- Hot drinks service provided morning and afternoon – biscuits as well if you are lucky
- A chance to see from on high why some competitors are always in the lead and still are as they pass buoy 31 (starting on time work wonders)
- An opportunity to upset all competitors, the safety boat crew and Peel Ports or possibly all three if you really try.....
- As others have missed this golden opportunity you can pick your date with little competition
- As ARO you get instant promotion if RO goes missing – or hides
- An opportunity, preferably on April 1, to fly the “I” flag and see what happens.....

And the disadvantages – I struggle a little but I'm sure you can avoid the odd Committee boat start, which would deprive you of coffee.

So next year why not try RO, just remember the RO motto “**Ego sum semper falsus**” and enjoy the experience.

If your Latin is not to good, and it must be better than mine, I think “Ego sum semper falsus” loosely translates as “I am always wrong”.

Martin Smith RO Rtd.

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2000 Fleet National Championships 9-14 August 2015 Abersoch, North Wales

Arriving in picturesque Abersoch, North Wales for 2000 National Championships on a glorious hot and sunny Saturday afternoon, the beautiful sandy beach was packed with day trippers, probably most of the population of North Wales. Some early arrivals were able to drop off and unload their boats on the beach, whilst others were met by one of the car park wardens, who was across between Battery-Sergeant Williams and Inspector Blakey, so boats were left on trailers in the car park. It was off to the welcome drinks in the bar then back to the car park later to unload and set up, with thanks to the Army for their assistance.

There were 6 boats entered and additional support from friends and family. Colin was sailing with Lauren (22258) and had the Treadwell family in support for their annual family holiday, David and Janice (2643) with Penny planning lots of trips to plant sales (hopefully she has managed to sneak a few in the garden without David noticing them), Nina and Bernard (21405) as we all stayed in the same house. Adam and Claire (2350) who were staying in the village in a B&B and Andy and John (21914) who were otherwise known as the motorbike boys, as John had modified the road base to take their bikes, and they were camping in nearby Hells Mouth. I had been lucky in finding a crew, thanks to

the Class Association and I was extremely pleased at the Millennium Series event in Weston SC in June when I was greeted with 'don't worry Rachel, we'll find you a soldier to crew the Nationals' well, who can resist an offer like that!!

Typical of the Nationals, over the week we had every condition from calm waters, with a 2 hour postponement, through to survival sailing; there were 43 boats entered.

On The Water:-

Day 1 Sunday 9 August 2015, Race Day 1, we woke to rain and grey skies so I guess that was the end of the Welsh summer. There we all were on Sunday morning rigging and launching from the beach, David taking some great photo's, when unfortunately the first of several equipment failures across the WSC fleet happened as Nina and Bernard (21405) were just launching when the mast fell down as the furling block failed. For the rest of us, it was a challenging first sail with strong winds and high waves – I think I capsized at least 4 times!

As Chris Jordan wrote on his blog... [The run downwind to the starting area was lively - and the look back up wind could be described as "scary"](#). The dogs weren't on the chains anymore, and even the chains had been blown away! The race started, and at each windward mark rounding, one or two more boats decided that

heading in was better than the sleigh ride and swimming downwind.



Day 2 Monday - Arriving on the beach we were greeted by a dull and very cloudy day. A gentle wind was blowing on the sheltered beach - but the forecast was for somewhere between 24 and 35 knots! The boats were held on the beach for 20 minutes (the class doesn't race if it is blowing over 25 knots), and when released quite a number of boats were noticed with their covers still on - sensible people! Bernard had been working hard on a scheme to repair the broken foredeck jib furling and David & Janice were 2 of those sensible people. Although Colin & Lauren started, they retired, and I also noticed Andy and John complete the first mark rounding, then heading in, so this just left Adam & Claire who finished in 12th place and me & Paul who finished in 25th place. The Race Officer very wisely decided, that for the safety and pleasure of the fleet, the second race should be postponed and sailed another day.

Day 3 Tuesday – We had a 2 hour postponement due to lack of wind.

Down on the beach, ready to launch for three races starting at 11.00. At 12.00, after the breeze had gently built and swung from south to west, the fleet was released. The wind, of course, turned off just at that point! Nina & Bernard launched – hooray!! We sailed and drifted out to the start area - some reaching on port, while others 200 yards away were reaching on starboard. We then drifted around for a bit, Lauren got some great photo's, and then the wind started to fill in from the NW forecasted direction at around 6 to 7 knots. The course and the start line was laid, and the race officer had the 5-minute flag in his hand ready to be hoisted - only to notice that the boats around him had all stopped moving! Another hour of waiting for it to settle down, until finally we were all sent ashore at 16.00 (and we sailed back easily in a reasonable 8 knots! But from directions that varied through 40 to 50 degrees).

Day 4 Wednesday – this was supposed to be lay day but with 3 races postponed, the pressure was on the Race Officer who made the sensible decision to start at 4pm with 2 races planned. Many sailors had made plans and that meant a slightly smaller fleet but no less challenging the sail. Nina and I had a lovely early morning walk along the Lynn Peninsular, spotting dolphins as we rounded the headland towards Hells Mouth. It was the quiz night at the club and shooting stars could be seen overhead in the pitch black skies.

However the late start caught up with some of us so an early night whilst others were telling tales from the quiz night of the Blue Peter challenge of building the tallest structures out of straws and assorted objects, and answering all sorts of obscure questions.



Day 5 Thursday – the clear leaders were emerging, with 6 first place wins, Fergus and Serena were almost unbeatable. There were many good sailors snapping at their stern, with all the play for in the top 5 places. The wind forecast varied between dropping from 10 knots to 2, or dropping from 15 to 10. We hoped for the second, but the first turned out to be more accurate! But before it dropped the fleet did manage to squeeze in 3 races of very close (and often frustrating) racing with some very tight buoy rounding's and finish lines.

I almost forgot to mention the jelly fish. There had been a change in

the current and big blue dinner plate sized jelly fish were everywhere – a good reason not to capsize!!

Day 6 Friday - It was dull, grey and misty on the beach on the last day. The wind as we launched was 2-3 knots, but it picked up to 10-12 as we sailed out to the start, and then to 15-18 knots for the first race. Fergus Barnham / Serena De Nahlik were taking things easy on the first lap, as they just needed a result, but on the second lap they turned the speed on and sailed back into the lead as the wind picked up a little. And the jelly fish – even worse than previous days, now there were giant orange ones, the size of space hoppers – I heard that someone sailed over one and it lifted the centre board!! Protests Committee sat, results confirmed and finally the Prize Giving.

Off the water: -

Most evenings there was a get together social at the club or off site. On Monday, the 2000 fleet met up in the evening for a Barbeque and the Class Association AGM, which was surprisingly well attended - maybe the offer of a free drink was enough to encourage people! LDC reported selling 54 boats in the past 12 months (their best year so far), and the boats are now built by the same builder as LDC use to build the very popular RS Aero - all overseen by a Quality Control Manager who used to race 2000's a few years ago. LDC also reported

over 30 sails were sold to Class Association members in the sail deal leading up to the Nationals. The Tony Slade trophy was awarded to the Class Treasurer - Helen Phillips - for her outstanding contribution to the management of the class finances since 2004.

Tuesday evening was a WSC meet up at the fish and chip shop then walk back to our house to share with David, Penny, Janice and Bernard, followed by an invite by the Army to their 'house' for drinks. I think we felt like youngsters again, with John & Andy riding their motorbikes as an escort to my van, with Adam hanging on in the back amongst sails, bikes and kit, and myself, Nina and Claire as the girls in the front!!

The Sidmouth Pecker started off in the boat with the Natalie (the People's Pecker Picker) due to an incident of running aground on a concrete slipway with the kite up, just after her crew had abandoned ship due to the impending crash. But there were plenty of nominations or the Pecker during the week, with some great nominations - from launching boats across the soft sand, without putting the retaining pins into the trolley wheels; thru capsizing with a mast head float (obviously a sensible precaution), but going racing without the float being blown up. Natalie also wanted to award the Pecker to the RAF (something about the Senior Service first, then the Army and finally the RAF want to be involved): But the real award

was to the Class Association President and his helm: Mark Foley / Trevor Bradley had made sure the main halyard wasn't blown away by tying it securely to the Army's quadruple stacker trailer. When trying to move the boat down the beach, they couldn't understand why it was moving - had they fallen into a big hole in the sand? No: They were still firmly attached from the top of the mast!

New for this year in the feet is the Chairman's Champagne moments. Again, there were a number of nominations from each days racing. Fergus and Serena obviously deserved the final champagne moment - with eight bullets overall final results.



The Buddy System was continued from last year, some pairing worked, lucky Adam & Claire with Fergus and Serena, and other didn't. Enough said by me I think!!

Unfortunately there was no organised photographer this year, so its thanks to David and Lauren for a few pictures. On the plus side, this means that at least the website won't be filled with the most photogenic couple, Adam and Claire, as every time I click on they

seem to pop up!!

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We've come back to WSC as a couple of teenagers, a couple of twenties and a couple of thirties....oh I'm talking about our results, not our ages!!! There were 6 boats entered and overall results are:

16th place 22258 Colin and Lauren, with highest result 11th place in Race 2

19th place 2350 Adam and Claire, with highest result 12th place in Race 3

21st Place 2643 David and Janice, with highest result 16th place in Race 5

27th place 21914 Andy and John, with highest result 16th place in Race 10

33rd place 2229 Paul (Army) and me, with highest result 25th place in Race 3

37th place 21405 Nina and Bernard, with highest result 27th place in race 10

Please see website link for more details.

http://www.2000class.org/content_topic.asp?c=results&GET_ID=3483

At the AGM, they announced next years **Nationals 2016 at Castle Cove, near Weymouth in August 2016**. Lets go Team Wilsonians!!

Rachel Sheridan

Showing Promise on the Commodores Race 2015...



... or not



Thanks to Jacqueline Hudson

Sailing Programme for 2016 - by the Medium Fleet Representative

The Sailing Committee is almost certainly going to change the names of the fleets. The same boats will sail in the same fleets they do now but in order to encourage the less able to enjoy their sailing we will call the fleet sailing the shortest course, the "Short Fleet", rather than "Slow" - nobody wants to be slow. Naturally the Medium Fleet will keep its name but the "Fast Fleet" now becomes the "Long Fleet". It is hoped that those in the Medium Fleet who find the courses a bit too testing will be happy to join the "Short Fleet". We need to do this because many of the races in the Medium Fleet in 2015 have lasted less than 60 minutes for the leaders and so in 2016 we hope to set courses that will last more like 75 minutes. Similarly there may be people in the "Long Fleet" who are new to high performance boats who would rather sail a shorter course - such as that sailed by the "Medium Fleet". They will be welcome and provided they do enough races will qualify for the prizes.

Less certain next year are some other changes and the Sailing Committee would like some feedback and hope that these subject will be discussed in the fleets - maybe during their "Fleet Evenings".

It is proposed to join the Early Summer Series with the Late Summer Series but make it into an AM series and a PM series. This will have little effect for the keenest racers they will be there all day anyway but it might encourage those with other commitments on a Sunday to at least attend for half the day - we'll see.

As you may already know the Wilsonian Grand Prix is going to revert to its original and more descriptive name of the Creeks Race. During this last year we've often held a pursuit race in the morning before the long distance races. We've found that these have often been delayed due to lack of wind and this has impacted on the long distance races - we are therefore looking into an alternative arrangement.

Now here is something that will be contentious. The Medium Fleet want more windward starts and often that can only be provided by starting from left to right across our start line. There are a few days - not many - when there is a dead beat up the river towards MYC and there is some really quite open water above buoy 32. We want to experiment with this and see how it goes. We already know that rarely does it work to have a club buoy laid a few hundred metres up river from our line - all the boats arrive together. We need a decent beat to somewhere in the vicinity of buoy 32 - in fact 32 will do nicely. We also want to encourage the people new to racing and the youngsters and we are not doing that at the moment when sending them off down Gillingham Reach, both out of sight from a safety point of view and out of sight from a spectators point of view. Much better for them to sail up the reach towards 32.

There are implications with safety boats and there are often problems with chopped up wind. But there are times when should try this and we intend to.

Finally I have heard the comment that the Commodore's Series is a shadow of the former self. Yes we have lost the committee boat start and this is because for the slower boats and less able sailors we have had the Bosun's Series running in parallel - which is a lapping course. It's not possible to have a lapping course and a committee boat start. There's also a complication with tides and shallows in Hoo Bay which make this doubly a problem. Therefore, so that we can have a truly long course in which all boats can compete we have had to drop the committee boat start. Yes recent Commodore's races have been too short - the last one only took 90 minutes.

So let me state the intention of these races. The Commodore's is the only series where all boats compete on the same course, it's the only series where Blazes, Lasers, Wayfarers, Streakers compete with Altos, RS 800s and whatever. The races are over the same course and the only adjustment is the faster boats start a half hour later so that, by in large all boats race in the same wind. Surely we should have some series in the year when this occurs? I admit the races have been too short, next year please remind the Race Officer that the Commodore's is a long distance race - one that will last around 150 minutes and if there are any people who feel that is too long then we do provide the Bosun's Series.

Stewart Robertson

Bart's Bash 2015



2000 Fleet Report

I'm pleased to be the 2000 Fleet Captain at Wilsonians SC for a second year and I wanted to take the opportunity to say hello and welcome. I know that some members have a choice of boats to sail but we're a friendly bunch in the 2000 Fleet and it's always good to meet new members. At present I do not have a regular crew and I am happy to take anyone out for a sail. I think a few other members would also welcome new crew from time to time. If anyone would like to go sailing, please let me know in advance and I am happy to ask the 2000 Fleet on your behalf.

We have an active 2000 Fleet with 16 boats at the club plus the new style 2000 which is used for training and regularly get about 6-8 boats racing on Sundays, plus we have our own fleet start. There were 6 Wilsonians entries that competed at the 2000 National Championships in beautiful Abersoch, North Wales in August 2015 – I have a separate article for this in the newsletter. A number of boats regularly enter events in the 2000 calendar including the Millennium Series which is held across sailing venues; I have entered 3 events this year at Broadstairs SC 2nd/3rd May 2015, Chichester SC in Andy's boat on 23th/24th May 2015 and Weston SC again in Andy's boat on 4th/5th July 2015, plus the one day Weir Wood 'turbo event' on 19 September 2015. James MacGregor is the Sailing Secretary in the 2000 Class Association and he regularly sends out email reminders which I forward on to the Fleet. There's an end of season Winter Championship event at Queen Mary SC on 7th & 8th November 2015.

Here's the link for the 2000 Class Association:-

<http://www.2000class.org/index.asp>

Results so far:

Looking back over the season, there's been some great events which include the Medway Regatta on 18/19 July 2015 with 65+ entries across all fleets and 10 entries including visitors for 2000 Fleet – congratulations to Colin and Lauren in first place, Medway Marathon on 6 September 2015 with 15 WSC entries in various fleets and Barts Bash on 20 September 2015 with the combined fleet start at 11am, these events have their own write up. During August there were a quiet few weeks for 2000 Fleet Sunday racing at the club but super busy during the last week with Junior Week which sounds like it was lots of fun and very exhausting for both kids and adults alike, which was topped off with a great Junior Regatta on Saturday 29 August 2015.

At the club sailing, four 2000 competed the Leigh Trophy on 2 August 2015, there's a good write up by Stewart Robertson and well done to Roy & Geoff in 8th place, Paul & Paul in 10th place, welcome to Jeremy Drummond & John in 13th place and Lesley and Rebecca in 14th place. Sunday 9 August 2015 was the epic South Kent Race with 15 minute interval starts for this year and

a total of 20 entries from all fleets, took just over 4 hours and 48 minutes for the last competitor but and well done to Paul & Paul in 9th place. Sunday 16 August 2015 saw the return of some of the Nationals boats to the club with helm and crew exhausted, so with a small fleet of 10 boats, there were no 2000 entries for the Pursuit Race. Over the season, the choice of Commodores for a longer race or the Bosuns for a shorter race has been popular, with 7 entries from the 2000 Fleet in the Bosuns Race – something about you have to be in it to win it is certainly true with Roy and Geoff currently leading as they have raced 3 out of 5 so far. We are almost at the end of the Autumn Points Series with the final Race 7 plus Laying Up Cup on Sunday 25 October 2015. David has some great photos from the Late Summer Points.

Coming up:

At the 2000 Class Association AGM, they announced next years Nationals 2016 at Castle Cove, near Weymouth in August 2016.

We are midway through the Late Summer Points and Roy will be collating the results ready for the Prize Giving on 21 November 2015. I think that both Lesley and I will have to make extra space as we both seems to have sailed with lots of different crews during the season.

For the hardy sailors, the Frostbite Series will start soon on Sunday 1 November 2015 with race 1&2 and continue until Race 15 on Sunday 20 December 2015 which is followed by the Prize Giving.

To burn off some of those Christmas and New Year calories, the Chilly Willies Handicap Race will be on Friday 1 January 2016, with enough time to recover from the hangover as its 11.55 first warning signal for the start.

Thinking ahead to our Fleet evening, does anyone have any preferences? I would like to be a bit more organised for this year, so all suggestions very welcome.

So now for an update of what I hope will turn out to be some good news. I've started the discussion with 2000 Class Association, Sailing Committee, Medway Regatta Committee and General Committee with a view to encouraging them to include the Medway Regatta as part of the 2000 Class Association events calendar 2016 and potentially a Millennium Series event. We've got a long way to go before anything is agreed.

Rachel Sheridan

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