



Preparing for the Spring Series

31 1/2 SPRING 2017

Welcome to the spring edition of 31½

So it's time to put that those New Year's resolutions in practise and get back to a full year on the water. No doubt the New Year commitment to a fitter lifestyle and regular visits to the gym and going well and all those planned tweaks on the boat have been implemented and you are going to be meaner and faster than ever before; or maybe you're thinking good grief is it that time of year already. Whichever it is let's look forward to a good season and if you have time there are always jobs to be done at the club so don't hesitate to talk to any of the officers or committee members about how you can help.

Putting on one of my other hats I recently attended the National Sea Scout Leaders Conference and meet up with the RYA's environmental team and heard about The Green Blue. This is an environmental programme promoted jointly by the RYA and British Marine with plenty of information and resources at www.thegreenblue.org.uk including some ideas that would be suitable for Saturday Skimmers and easy guidance on avoiding species contamination of those members who regularly travel to open events.

David Wraight

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Commodores Report

At last the days are getting longer, the weather is warming up and the main sailing season has started. I'm looking forward to getting out on the water and enjoying the summer ahead.

There are lots of opportunities to go afloat, with Junior Skimmers on Saturday mornings, Adult Skimmers on Saturday afternoons, plus racing on Sundays. For the new season we have expanded and improved our Club boats hire fleet, with 2 extra Laser 2000's and replaced the 2 Lasers with much better boats. We are also expecting a new Wayfarer soon. All the existing boats have been checked ready for the season. We have a large club dinghy hire fleet including 6 Oppies, 2 Teras, 9 Toppers, 3 Fevas, Pacer, 2 Lasers, 2 Wayfarers and 3 Laser 2000's. If you would like to hire these boats, please see the CDO.

Over the winter and early spring many members have completed Powerboat courses (more to be arranged). Sailing courses have been published on the web site and club handbook.

Many thanks for members help during the work parties when lots of work was carried out to maintain the club ready for another season. Powerboats have all been serviced ready for the season. One of our RIB engines needed replacing due to a broken crankshaft, which was uneconomical to repair on a 10 year old engine.

Duties for the year ahead have been published on Dutyman and in the Club Handbook. The new race starting system is explained in the club handbook but ask the race officer or fleet captains if you have any queries.

Hopefully we will see more of the members out sailing this year that didn't go out very often last year. If you have any queries, please come and chat to me, I'm down the club most weekends.

My challenge to members this year – we have a great club, so let us all get out onto the water more this year and enjoy our sailing!

Martin Vinton

Can you help us please?

We are appealing for help with getting ready for the Medway Regatta and Junior Week with grass cutting and strimming, marking out the car park spaces, putting up bunting and many more jobs.

On the last day of both events, we are also after some help with the clearing up, as a gesture of thanks to those who have worked so hard to make the Medway Regatta and Junior Week, such successful events, both for the participants as well as for the club.

If you are able to give a few hours of your time to help, it will be very much appreciated. A list can be found on the main notice board as you come up the staircase to the club house for both events. Please indicate if you are able to help with the preparations or clearing up.

Many thanks for your anticipated help.

Bernard Smith

Thursday morning cleaning at the clubhouse

Come and Join the few on a Thursday morning, who clean the clubhouse. We are always pleased to welcome anyone who can come along between 09:30 and 13:00 to help, so that we can achieve more. We do stop and have coffee/tea break and the odd bun or two and I can guarantee that you will see results for your efforts.

Bernard Smith

Rear Commodore

Club clothing now available

With older members kit now wearing out and with new members wanting to identify with the club the club is now circulating prices for t- shirts, polo shirts, sweatshirts, rugby shirts, fleeces and other items.

There is a catalogue at the Club so if members wish to purchase a different item with the Club logo we can obtain a price from the supplier.

If you require more details contact Jo Wicken at the club or at jo@wicken.net

Slow Fleet

I am very excited to be the Slow Fleet captain once again. Last season was great with good attendance and I hope the season ahead of us will be full of excitement and good sailing. I extend a warm welcome to those who, during the last season, joined us from Saturday Adult Skimmers and started racing with the fleet. We hope to see even more

people coming along on Sunday racing. The club has now few more boats available to hire including two additional Lasers (all rig sizes).

The Streaker Class has now adopted a track and traveller centre main, for more information have a read at

<http://www.streaker-class.org.uk/index.asp?selection=news-detail&nid=137>

Lots of interesting articles on tuning your Streaker <http://www.streaker-class.org.uk/tuning>

I am happy to report that I have spotted another Streaker in the dinghy park, a fully wooden one, and I quite look forward to also see it on the water.

Upcoming events for the Streakers in the southeast:

01 April - Bough Beech Sailing Club

21 May - Downs Sailing Club

for more information have a look at

<http://www.streaker-class.org.uk/meetings>

Upcoming events for the Miracles near the southeast:

22-23 April Southern Area

Championships - Broadwater Sailing Club

for more information including the

Nationals near Southampton have a look at

<http://www.miracledinghy.org/events2017.html>

Happy Sailing!

George

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Medium Fleet Report

Greetings from your Fleet Captain, I feel a bit out of touch but I'm building up to getting my boat afloat for the coming season. I had hoped to go to an open meeting over the first weekend in April but although I ordered a new sail at the Boat Show it hasn't turned up yet, so you may well see me at the club.

In early February we had our annual class meeting where we discussed the season past and looked forward to the new season. There was a discussion about the roles of safety boats which means their emphasis may well be more on the juniors and novice sailors. I hope we won't find them too far away in an emergency but I'll take this moment to remind you that we sail on an estuary. An estuary is a hazardous environment and if you feel unsure of your ability to keep safe until rescue does arrive you should choose to sail one of the shorter course where rescue cover is more likely to be close at hand. Fortunately we sail quite safe boats, one of our fastest, the Blaze, although fast, has some very safe characteristics and provided it is well maintained is not easily broken. Another often raced boat in our fleet is the Wayfarer which has a reputation for safety.

Also mentioned at the Fleet meeting was the hope that we could have more, but shorter races. Nothing much along these lines is in the sailing programme but we agreed to see what we can do unofficially during the season. We certainly intend to run some of our races upstream when conditions allow and apart from making for more challenging racing this will also make the races more interesting for any spectators. Hopefully some of the people on the riverside will notice us too and maybe get interested in sailing.

We also awarded prizes. Those that won series and individual special races got their prizes at the annual Prize Giving Dinner, but second place was recognised at our meeting and here is a list.

Medium spring points	2nd	WAYFARER	10934	Brian Lamb	Nik Antoniadis/Anna Crane/J Spears
Medium summer AM	2nd	BLAZE	609	Stewart Robertson	
Medium summer PM	2nd	BLAZE	732	John Hewat	
Medium autumn	2nd	V3000	3603	Tony Hunt	
Frostbite	2nd	Medium	715	Ian Foxwell	
South Kent	2nd	BLAZE	715	Ian Foxwell	
3 race regatta	2nd	BLAZE	679	Stuart Bailey	
Commodore's Trophy	2nd	V3000	3603	Tony Hunt	Suzanne Hall/M Wolstenholme

Bosun's Trophy	2nd	LASER RADIAL	171348	Gordon Belcher	
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If you were not at the meeting and you'd like to claim your prize please let me know, I have put the prizes to one side for you.

Blaze Fleet

Now I'm looking forward to the new season. We have some well known personalities who have switched to the Blaze. Neil Lamprell of Laser fame has bought Ian Foxwell's Blaze. Hopefully we'll see Jeremy Drummond participate in a few races - he's had the boat for almost a year but been very involved in training on Saturdays - so he has an excuse. Less strong on excuses is Jason Ramsden - he has had his boat for a year but never been out! Colin Treadwell has bought a Blaze from Stuart Bailey, Colin I'm sure will be keen. Finally we welcome a new member with a Blaze - Alastair Smith, well known in the Osprey national fleet. Good to have you with us, good to have you all with us.

Stewart Robertson

2000 Fleet

I am pleased to say, with some pride, that the 2000 Fleet have had a good season in 2016 and it's been a real pleasure for me to be 2000 Fleet Captain, particularly after the nomination for Tony Slade Trophy at the National Championships, and I look forward to continuing this role for a third year. I would like to take this opportunity to also pass on my thanks to David Vettergreen and Roy Winnett for their continued support and advice as Vice Fleet Captains. Looking back over 2016 season, it was a busy year both at the club as well as at 2000 Class Association events. There were entries from 2000 Fleet at every WSC race series as well as the single race events and our most successful sailors were David Vettergreen and Janice Smith (2643) closely followed by Roy Winnett and Geoff Lambert (21792) placed either second or third in most series . The season saw some outstanding racing; I particularly recall the some closely fought battles. It was a great pleasure for me to be able to recognise the success of 2000 Fleet at our fleet get together and AGM on Saturday 4 February 2017. Please see season results below:

2000 fleet prize list 2016				
	Rank	Sail No	Helm	Crew

Chilly Willies	3rd	22111	Brian Lamb	Sam Pygall
Spring points	1st	2643	David Vettergreen	Janice Smith
	2nd	2924	Darren Horton	Ken Jerrad
	3rd	21792	Roy Winnett	Geoff Lambert
Early Summer points	1st	22258	Colin Treadwell	Lauren Treadwell
	2nd	2643	David Vettergreen	Janice Smith
	3rd	21792	Roy Winnett	Geoff Lambert
Late Summer points	1st	2643	David Vettergreen	Janice Smith
	2nd	21792	Roy Winnett	Geoff Lambert
	3rd	22258	Colin Treadwell	Lauren Treadwell
Autumn points	1st	2643	David Vettergreen	Janice Smith
	2nd	21403	Nina Wallis	Bernard Smith
	3rd	21792	Roy Winnett	Geoff Lambert
Three Race regatta	3rd	22258	Colin Treadwell	Lauren Treadwell
Commodores Trophy	6th	21914	Andy Hockey	Lucy Hockey
Ladies cup	1st	21914	Lucy Hockey	Andy Hockey
	2nd	22115	Lesley O'Rourke	Rachel Sheridan
Junior Cup	3rd	21914	Lucy Hockey	Andy Hockey
Evening race	2nd	2643	David Vettergreen	Janice Smith
	3rd	22115	Lesley O'Rourke	Jane Drummond
2000 fleet trophy	1st	2643	David Vettergreen	Janice Smith
Gun Wharf trophy				
2000 & Streaker	1st		Lesley O'Rourke	
Merlin Chalis	1st		Lesley O'Rourke	

The 2000 Class Association travelling Millennium Series had entries from WSC with the overall MS series results 9th Andy Hockey and Lucy/ Felix /Anna (21914) competing in 6/8 events, 11th Rachel Sheridan and others (2229) competing 7/8 events, 38th Colin and Lauren Treadwell (22258) completing in 1/8 events. The National Championships were held in Castle Cove SC in August 2016 with 6 entries from WSC and Silver Fleet results were 27th David and Janice (2643), 28th Andy and Anna (21914), 29th Trevor and Rachel (2229), 32nd Colin and Lauren (22258), 33rd Adam and Claire (2650), 45th Nina and Bernard (21403). So let's look forward to another brilliant season 2017.

The Warm-Up Series has already started on 19 February 2017 to 19 March 2017, with entries from a couple of hardy 2000 sailors. To mark the 'official' start of the season, the Ice Breaker was on Sunday 26 March 2017 with first warning signal 11.55BST – after the clocks change. In addition to our sailing series and the individual races, there are a couple of other season highlights to look forward to, on 13 May is Push the Boat Out/ Club Open Day, our premier event on 8th and 9th July 2017 is Medway Regatta, National Championships at North Berwick SC will be from 5th to 11th August, at the end of our Junior Week the Junior Regatta on Saturday 26 August 2017, and finally the season will 'officially' end with Laying Up Cup on 29 October 2017. Then it's into the Frostbite series for those hardy sailors.

Training at the club has seen a boost with the purchase of 2000's so now there are 3 of them, so I hope to encourage new and novice sailors to join our fleet. One of the great strengths of the 2000 fleet is the willingness to give advice to others, to take out new sailors, to swap boats/ helms/ crew, to swap boat spares and sails and the general friendship amongst the fleet, particularly if you're feeling tired after sailing and face hauling your boat and trolley up the beach, there always seems to be a welcome party to help. I was also struck by the friendliness of the 2000 Class Association when 'Team Wilsonians' entered the Nationals and other class events.

I'd like to say a welcome as I know we have a couple of new sailors joining us. However I was very sad to lose a couple of sailors from the 2000 fleet but good luck and best wishes to Adam and Claire as they swap to yacht sailing and to Colin who is moving to single handed Blaze sailing, and hope they all have a successful season.

The 2000 Class Association has an interesting calendar of events for 2017 with a good mix to suit all sailors. It was great to see some familiar faces and meet new sailors at last weekend's Dinghy Show at Alexandra Palace where I helped out the 2000 stand. There's a number of Open's as well as the Millennium Series and Nationals, here's the link <http://www.2000class.org/>. MS1 will be at Chichester SC on 13th/14th May 2017. I hope to go to Bough Beech on 24 June 2017 for an Open event as well as entering a number of the MS series. I'm definitely going to the Nationals and so is Andy but I'm not looking forward to the drive, and so far it's only 2 WSC entries.

On a personal note, I bought Lazy Grey (22321) in mid January 2017 and I've really enjoyed the Bough Beech Icicle Series, and after 16 races in all conditions, I won the Asymmetric Fleet with my son Rich at the helm – however I must admit some of those roll-tacks were pretty scary!

Happy sailing

Rachel

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WSC sailors win Bough Beech Icicle Series 2017

Bough Beech Icicle series got off to a postponed start on Sunday 8 January 2017 as the two main ingredients for sailing, water and wind, were both missing! However over the following weeks both were in abundance, and perhaps too much on some occasions! An amendment to the Notice of Race was posted which allowed for all 16 races to be held for the series. There were a number of entries in both fleets from WSC; Asymmetric Fleet Alto 117 Chris Ashby and Ian Parris, Alto 110 Jo Wicken and Lesley Le Gassick, 2000 22321 Lazy Grey Rich Sheridan and Rachel Sheridan; Conventional Fleet RS600 8 Richard Smith, Wayfarer 11170 Brian Lamb and Rob Parnham/ Sam Pygall.



Bough Beech SC was very welcoming and a choice of delicious lunch was available each week. With new boats purchased, and eagerly awaited maiden sail, the Icicle series was the first opportunity to start the never ending task of fine adjustments for the boat tuning.

With more than 100 entries overall, there was some great racing against old foes and new ones, with competitors travelling from South Coast clubs from Eastbourne,

Pevensey and Bexhill, and some interesting courses set, especially when the fleets crossed each other. The final day of the series was exceptionally windy and almost every boat capsized.

The overall series winners were: Asymmetric Fleet 2000 22321 Lazy Grey Rich Sheridan and Rachel Sheridan, and Conventional Fleet Wayfarer 11170 Brian Lamb and Rob Parnham/ Sam Pygall. Not surprisingly, both winners were delighted with the performance of their new boats!

The Alto

Well, where does it all begin!!!

Having spent many a year in the beautifully designed and seaworthy boat which is the Osprey, I couldn't see myself sailing any other type of boat at all. So with my blinkered look on for 25 years or more, I was happy in the bliss and contentment of one class of boat.

On a nice sunny afternoon, with a warming breeze filtering through the trees and a nice glass of ale amongst friends, there came a bolt of lightning, saying "You will go to your grave in one boat alone. Why don't you look outside the box and try something more rewarding?" A 59er was suggested. I could make this quite a long-winded rambling but will try and keep it short. The 59er was indeed a very good dinghy, would be a lot of fun, once mastered, rewarding, challenging and uncompromising.

But all good things will come to an end and especially when every little thing you wanted for the boat always came with the reply "You'll have to wait 8 to 13 weeks before we can get it in," which does get a bit tedious when you're in the height of the season. We were always worried about breaking it and not been able to get the parts. If only they had supported the

boat properly maybe we would never have found the Alto.

I had to go to Southampton on business to the Boat Show but unfortunately the deal did not come off so I was left stranded at Southampton with nothing to do apart from feeling fed up and thinking after all that investment, time and effort it's gone nowhere, but least I tried.

So with that in mind walking around the Show looking but not really looking, being a bit fed up, I happened upon a dinghy. With nothing more to do than sit on the side of this thing, drinking my cup of coffee and wondering why someone would build a new dinghy - probably like so many of these new fads it comes and it goes and then the next thing, they have sawn through the moulds and it is no more.

Turning around and looking over the dinghy I saw a very young man sitting in what I could only describe as a deck chair, obviously nodding his head to some rhythmic tune. If I were to stereotype him I would doubt very much if it was Vivaldi and the Four Seasons, or Tchaikovsky, or one of those more rewarding pieces from Wagner, who knows but he seem to be engrossed.

One could only imagine what it must have been like for him, there was this gentleman of some renown and obviously with a presence of distinction, trying to talk to him but all he could see was someone waving their hands and their mouth opening and closing. This must have been the case because I could hear the continuous din coming from his headphones. I persevered with my vocal tones and hand gestures to eventually get a shrug of the shoulders and a lowering of the headphones, and looking forward to the eagerly anticipated intelligent set of answers, but not knowing the local dialect, I was a bit taken aback with "All right mate, I don't know, do I?" After that most enlightened answer,

obviously using his vocabulary to the best of his ability, and once again back in his chair, he repositioned the headset and slumped back into his own little world of bliss.

Now with this in mind, having been defeated once by the Boat Show that day, I wasn't going to let this person, with his overwhelming enthusiasm and dedication, motivation, enlightenment and perseverance to make this particular class a success, stop me from making my own assessment and observations of this particular class of dinghy. So I set about trying to work out what was going on in the designer's mind when putting this boat together. All of a sudden something in my little world started to look into his world and concluded "I think there's something here which I like, can't make any rash decisions, best thing is to go and drink some Guinness and return and try again." (Now I don't mean to try and communicate with the English language with the person in the deck chair - there are some things that we just can't or won't master).

After inwardly refreshing oneself I returned to said boat. Now I was going to put it through its paces by pulling on all the string and seeing what happened, releasing rig tension, re-applying rig tension (purely for my crew's benefit given the problems with the boat breaker on the 59er) applying kicker, applying the mainsheet, moving the jib from side to side because it's self-tacking. I had to put it through its paces, pulling out the spinnaker pole and wing-wanging either way, moving the centreboard and trying out the rudder.

Whilst this was all going on, obviously with the occasional look over to what one could only consider to be a local rock ape, knuckle dragger (most possibly a very nice individual with well-meaning intent) with very poor communication skills apart from a few grunts and local dialect, eventually he said "Can I help

you? What are you up to?" Obviously this necessitated him removing his headphones once again releasing that internal din which presumably, for most people with a modicum of intelligence, would have ended up giving them a headache.

"No thank you, I'm doing it myself, oh and by the way how far can you go down wind with the wing wanging?" Now this brought on much lip pouting, green eyes akimbo around the sockets and small incoherent grunts which climaxed stating "I don't know, I'm just looking after the stall, mate." With that, sliding gently back into the chair and replacing the headphones once again, he was off into a world which most probably you wouldn't want to go to or ever dreamed existed.

This intense investigation and examination of all parts of the dinghy concluded in another visit to the Guinness tent. Whilst taking in the late afternoon sun I made a unilateral decision obviously being the helm and with the powers which are invested in the captain of said ship/yacht (don't forget as helm/captain of our vessel we have powers granted to us above that of the lowly crew, as in we can marry people and also have them keel-hauled or made to walk the plank) and decided to try this boat and see whether or not in my disorganised mind that this would be rather special.

So with no more ado, one made the phone call (to crew) saying I have found our next steed, to which the reply was "No, I'm happy with the 59er, I don't want anything else. " Obviously meeting the challenge of mutiny one has to persevere and dig in, not surrender and not forgetting being obstinate eventually get them to see a chink of light in the ever dark tunnel of stubbornness.

Now I'm not saying this was a five-minute endeavour, more like a few months of chipping away at the rather negative

response. Eventually arriving at the following year's Dinghy Show with all the persuasive materials that the helm could lay upon, the crew was dragged over to the said dinghy under duress. Once shown the benefits and possibilities, the design thoughts and overall good feel of the boat one was met with "It may be something we could try but I'm still happy with the 59er." But now there was a chink in the armour and I negotiated with Mike a suitable time to have a demonstration and a run out in the boat.

This took a few months to organise, because one doesn't sail in the winter (is not too difficult to understand due to the fact that it's bloody cold), once into the warmer season and a convenient time for Mike to drop the boat down to the club, eventually the day arrived. Down the track came what I considered to be an exciting moment, with a new design based on one person's obsession for a boat to be rewarding in so many areas.

At this juncture, what is the Alto? The designer Mike, as far as I believe and understand in my telling of the story, did very well in his younger days in the dinghy world, almost to the point of knocking on the Olympic team door only through politics didn't succeed and represent us in that particular year, but as time moves on for us all, ended up sailing at his local club where the only option was a Wayfarer. After being very competitive in 505s, resigned to the fact that this was what he had to do to participate with the other people, he went out and brought a new Wayfarer, in itself a brilliant dinghy, well-loved, a good all-rounder, forgiving and with well-supported open meetings and nationals. Yet whilst trundling along Mike was forever looking over his shoulders at higher performance boats with the finesse, speed and sophistication which he obviously loved. However being past the age when he could retire maybe should stick to the Wayfarer class. And I

guess that's where the story would have ended, but it didn't.

Mike knew the 505 hull had a lot of good points; he wanted a boat which was easy-to-use, basic to rig and uncomplicated, this would keep down the buying costs, running costs and the sophistication needed in actually using the boat. So often these days having a regular crew is very difficult to maintain and with that in mind he wanted something that a crew with a little knowledge could go out in and the seasoned helm with high aspirations of fulfilment, enjoyment and participation would not be let down by the crew's skills.

He started off by fitting an asymmetric system onto his old 505 hull. That showed promise so he went and bought a brand new boat, took the boat home, cut the foredeck off with a jigsaw, made alterations he thought of and tried. This only whetted his appetite for another design which sent him back to the boat builder to buy another brand new boat and again he cut the top off. With lots of tweaking, modifications and bits and pieces over a series of seasons he ended up going back to the boat builder for yet another boat at which point the boat builder said "This can't go on, what do you have in mind?"

So the discussion started and the plan as I understand it was to adapt a wooden 505 plug which he had in his boat yard by fixing two pieces of wood to the side of the boat to give it a single chine effect, straightening up the nose cone to give it a modern look and reducing it to just under 4.95m. This meant the boat would not be affected by the higher taxation in Europe for boats over 5m. Once the hull was made they set about designing the interior with comfort, room, ease-of-use and simplicity being at the forefront of the design, which I think they achieved.

Nothing was really of a new design - all parts of the boat were improved on from other designs - why reinvent the wheel

when there are so many wheels out there to tweak and reuse. So from the day that that boat was launched really it was a success because everything had been tried and tested on other designs. The mast is the same as the Osprey section that had been used in that class for many a year with no problems, the self-tacking jib was the same design as the 49er, the foils were designed by Phil Morrison and the boat was made by Rondar, so if you knew about your dinghy classes by saying this you would know that the boat is on to a winner because it has been taken from many winning classes and improved.

So what you ended up with was a fast, stable, forgiving, predictable, easy-to-use, rewarding and satisfying dinghy with a sense of speed, powerful yet tameable, cost-effective, economical, easy to maintain, nice and easy to manoeuvre around the dinghy park and not wanting to invert within seconds as some dinghies are known to do and above all those who have sailed the Alto have had their aspirations and expectations met to a very high standard and are pleased with the class overall.



Watching Mike rig the boat, Box 1 was ticked - easy to rig with very few control lines to install. Box 2 was the lightness to manoeuvre around the dinghy park - easy to manoeuvre so I didn't have to add to my Shredded Wheat to achieve this. Box 3 was under launching conditions did you have to stand to the side and physically

hold the boat upright as with the 59er. The 59er, once launched, if not physically held up right would tip over within seconds. No, the Alto sat to heel perfectly even though we had quite a stiff breeze to participate in the Medway afternoon race that Saturday. Once the crew was seated aboard, the helm stepped in expecting to perform the Fandango, jumping around just to keep it upright, before settling down at speed to make it stable. But no, the Alto was more like a double-decker bus than a unicycle and we proceeded to the Medway YC start line. Racing down past Wilsonian's seemed to be an endless spray of white water, maybe not as fast as the 59er but you certainly knew you were doing the speed.

I do remember saying to my crew it's just ticked another box and got my vote and in response received a considered look, one's crew not being inclined to make hasty judgements. We rounded 30 and at this point hoisted the spinnaker and proceeded down the Medway almost white water rafting with me grinning from ear to ear saying "I want this dinghy!" My crew was definitely thinking more about keeping upright and settling back into the white water ride than informing me we'd gone a long way past 26, with the tide on its way out so there was not going to be much water. Having the luxury of a lifting centreboard none of these things were brought to mind until eventually we came almost to a standstill under full load. Once assessing the fact that we had gone aground a long way out of the channel, we dropped the sails, the helm needing to walk at least half a mile back before we got into the deep channel with enough water in the onshore breeze to cast off yet again and continue with the enjoyment.

I remember getting back to the club with Mike wondering where his pride and joy had gone to, to be greeted by me saying "You're not taking this boat home, we are buying it!" I do believe I saw him do a

little dance on the beach not so much as in selling the boat as having someone who could see the potential. After getting ashore and as I remember it, both of us were jumping around the boat saying how much we enjoyed it and we were only brought back to our senses once we settled down upstairs having a conversation over God's own water and a lager thingy. We had even more of a beam on our faces when Mike told us he had to go to America for a few weeks and asked if he could leave the boat at the club in the meantime. From that day on we never used the 59er again.

Story to be continued if anyone's interested.

I could always stop now if requested....

Tim Kift

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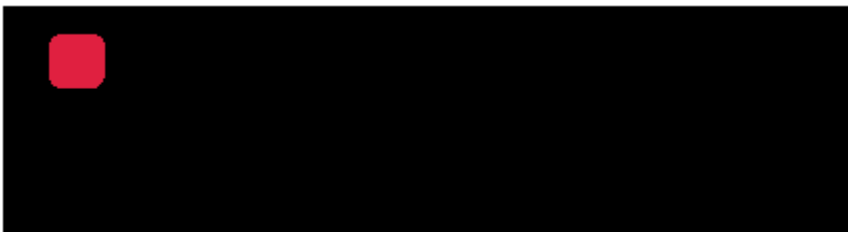
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The WSC Automatic Starting Lights

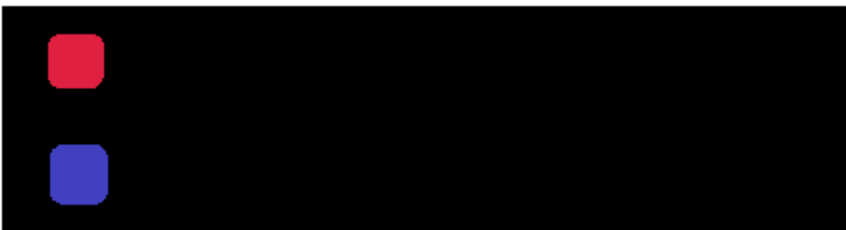
For this season you will see that we have improved the visibility of the starting lights by mounting them on a black background. You'll find you can hear them better too, as they are now connected to the old air horn. The accuracy has also been improved such that when tested it was out by less than 2 seconds over a 24 hour period. As an additional aid the red light will flash for the final 10 seconds of each start - so no need to look down at your watch. In fact no need for a watch at all.

The Race Officer has only to select the number of races and all the lights and horn will operate automatically. I'll take you through the sequence for 2 starts and hopefully you will have got the hang of it. Six starts would be just a continuation of the sequence. There are six green lights in a row along the bottom, as each start is complete its green light will be illuminated. Basically "green for go" so if you are starting in the second fleet and the second green light goes on then you should start. However to help you get your timing right for that start the red light mimics the class flag (or board) and the blue light mimics the "Blue Peter" which is a blue flag (or board) with a white square in it.

So 5 minutes to the 1st start the red light will come on, this is similar to the class flag being shown.



4 minutes to the start the blue light will come on, this is similar to the Blue Peter being shown.



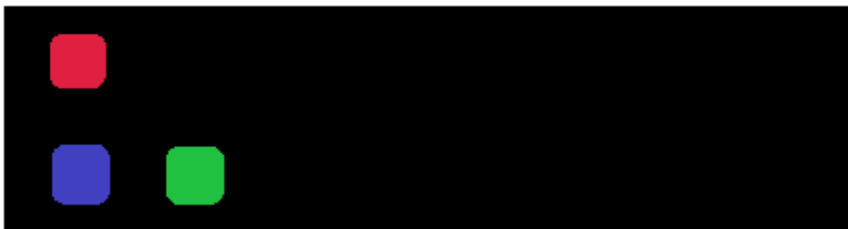
1 minute to the start the blue light goes out, just as if the Blue Peter had been hidden



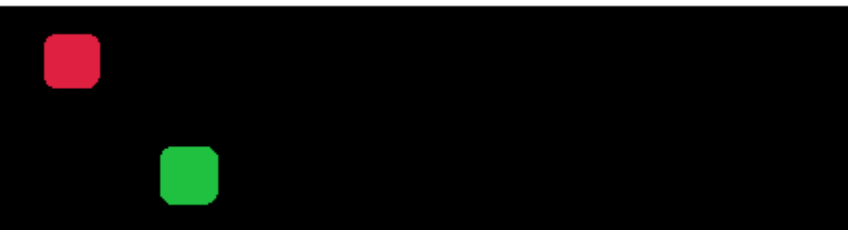
Now just before the start (10 seconds) that red light will flash and at the start the green light will go on. This is also 5 minutes before the 2nd start - so the red light will be on again, but of course this time there will also be the green light for the first start.



So now the sequence is going to repeat. 4 minutes before the second start the blue light comes on as well.



Then at 1 minute the blue goes out again.



Now 10 seconds before the start the red flashes and then the green for the 2nd start comes on.



And so the sequence continues. If there have been 6 starts at the end of it all you'll see:-



Six fleets have started. Each has had the sequence, red, red and blue, red, then red flashing and green. Of course, as with flags there will be a sound signal with each change, although the extra little clue in the last 10 seconds of the red flashing, that's not really in the RYA guidelines and so there is no sound signal during that.

Individual Recall

If by any chance you see a green flashing, it means an individual recall. Somebody was spotted on the wrong side of the line at the start and the Race Officer can throw a switch which flashes the green light for that start, he'll also sound the horn. If the boat returns the RO can turn the flashing off. This will not interrupt the sequence. Even a General Recall (too many boats over the line) will not interrupt the sequence. If you look at the club rules you'll see the RO has to organise a new start for that fleet after all the others have started. He might switch to using the boards for that additional start, or he may just add another start to the sequence, that's up to him. There will certainly be much dashing out onto the balcony and plenty of sound signals. It's a rarity so don't bother to think about it.

Dredger

What can interrupt the sequence is a major event like the dredger coming up through the start line. The RO can delay the next start with a switch (called pause), those green lights which are on will stay on but the red and blue will go off. When the RO decides to continue he'll switch back to "start" and the sequence will continue where it left off but with a full 5 minute count down with lights and horn as before.

I do hope you'll find this system to your liking. It's reliable, accurate and leaves the RO free to observe the starts without getting confused with timing, boards or flags. In addition it automatically starts a stopwatch at the beginning of the first race from which the RO can note the elapsed time of each finisher, so no excuses. It's so Race Officer proof and simple to operate you could use it at any other time (maybe a Saturday or a Friday evening) you only have to set the box off and you can jump into your boat and join in the racing.

WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB - RACING ON THE MEDWAY

SAFETY BOAT NOTES and HELPFUL HINTS

1. - PREPARATION

Arrive at the Club in time for the CDO's briefing at 0915 to receive special instructions/details for the day (type of courses/mark-laying/weather/tide/ issues, etc).

Prepare RIBs – check all equipment is on board (flags/hot drink/ 1st Aid) and fill up petrol tanks (outside).

Change for going on the water – overdress rather than underdress . Both Helm and Crew should be prepared to enter the water.

Agree which boat will cover front/back of fleets – two Safety Boats never together except at start and finish of racing.

Get a list of the courses (from RO or assistant).

Launch RIBs – remember to collect buoy on way. Return the launching trolleys back to the shed/cage, out of the way.

2. - ON THE WATER

Check radio by calling the Blockhouse. Lay the upstream buoy as directed by the RO.

Watch all boats as they prepare for their starts – make a note of anyone you think may have problems. Keep out of everyone's way!

3. - START OF RACES

One RIB to follow the fast Fleet – do not lead, but stay in the middle so you can see everyone. Wait around Buoy 25 so you can see 23 and 30 – move to 23 only if the fleet starts to go beyond the power station. Do not go beyond 23, otherwise you will not be able to cover the area between the forts.

Second RIB to stay with the other fleets, but not to go beyond 29/30, so that you can see 25 and still have the club in sight.

Tell the RO where the fleets are when boats are starting to return to the club. Inform him/her of any other issues (retirements, etc.)

While helping racers, remember to keep watching the rest of the fleet. Approach boats carefully - keep clear unless your help is actually required.

As the fleets move closer to the club, first RIB follow with the last boat, second RIB may be able to land early while the other RIB watches the stragglers.

When landing for lunch, make sure the RIBs do not go aground - especially on a falling tide! – lay a stern anchor off the beach and put the bow anchor on a long line up the beach.

4. - END OF THE DAY

RIBs should not normally be winched out of the water until everyone is back on the beach and all boats are accounted for. Avoid getting in the way of boats when launching or landing. Make sure you rinse the engines and wash the boats and launching trolleys.

Put the boats away and return flasks to the kitchen and keys/kill cords to the Committee Room. Report any problems or faults to the CDO.

Once all is put away, get showered and changed. Have a cup of tea upstairs until the changing rooms are empty before hosing down. Report to the CDO before leaving the club.

The primary function of a safety team is to ensure as much as possible the personal safety of those on the water. That includes the team itself, the fleet and any other users in range.

The safety boats' primary task is to save lives, not salvage boats or equipment.

So, Crew first, boat last.

WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ON 25 February 2017 AT 19.00 HRS.

Martin Vinton (Commodore) chaired the meeting. 26 members were present.

1. Commodore's Opening Remarks:

The Commodore welcomed all those present and thanked them for coming before moving on to provide an update on the years activities as follows –

The past year has been successful, with good weather on most weekends.

Junior Skimmers has been very popular, leading to a big attendance at Junior week. Well done to all the volunteers that help each week to enable juniors to go sailing.

Saturday afternoon (adult) Skimmers have also been increasing in numbers during the year. Thanks to volunteers helping with these afternoons.

Racing has also been successful, including the annual Medway Regatta.

During the year we have seen an increase in Blazes, Streakers and the 2000 fleet continues to be popular.

I would like to thank everyone who has helped make the club a success during the year including –

Geoff for keeping the club boats working

Ray Craddock and Stan Sprott for keeping the club maintained, cess pits empty, fuel for generator and gas supplies

Bernard Smith for arranging and running the work parties

Christine and Lesley for sorting out all the membership renewals and new members

the "Thursday cleaning team"

Paul Rodgers for running the accounts

plus all the members for their support with duties, work parties and help to make the club a great success.

2. Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Ken Crudwell, Martin Fish, Ann Heather, Paul Heather, Roy Winnett, John Eden-Green, Trish & Len Ayris, Ian Foxwell, Nina Wallis, Richard Seabrook, Paul Thorpe, Tom Lambert, Jo Wicken, Ian Paris, Roy McLeod, Jean Whittaker, Jeremy Drummond, Jane Drummond and (a very formal) Robert Dutton.

3. Christine Godber proposed, seconded by Rachel Sheridan that the 2016 AGM minutes be accepted as a true record. The meeting agreed without dissent.

4. Matters arising.

Christine Godber enquired as to whether progress had been made with a new flag but, as Tom Lambert had sent his apologies this matter would have to be addressed at the General Committee meeting.

5. Treasurers report presented by Paul Rodgers.

The Treasurer reported that a surplus of around £16000 of income over expenditure had been achieved although £5700 had been spent on club boats - 3 replacement Toppers and a new Wayfarer. The reserves for engines and boats have been increased.

In response to questions the Treasurer stated that fuel costs were included in site running costs. It was noted that insurance costs had been reduced. Some surprise was expressed at the level of key deposits but the Treasurer confirmed these had been received.

Wilsonian Sailing Club

Report for 12 Months Ending 31 Dec 2016	Dec-16	Dec-15
<u>Income</u>		
Kitchen/Bar + Func	£12,555.03	£16,660.92
Clothing etc. Sales	£50.00	£27.50
Advertisements		£450.00
Subs/Joining/Dinghy Fees	£38,062.16	£38,905.01
Sale Club Hire Boats	£0.00	£0.00
Club Boat Hire	£190.00	£290.00
HNYC Fee		£316.00
Donations/Sponsorship	£1,000.00	£164.00
Excise Duty Refund		£658.50
Medway Regatta Entries		£1,590.00
Race Entries	£299.00	£70.00
Training and Junior Week	£10,681.65	£5,903.00
Key Deposits	£90.00	£180.00
Chicken Shed	£2,122.00	£1,545.00
Chicken shed overheads		£198.50
Sundry Income	£183.10	£155.99
Bank Interest	£281.91	£155.05

Sport England Grant	£39,800.65	£3,347.00
RYA Grants	0	£0.00
Total Receipts	£105,315.50	£70,616.47

Expenditure

Food & Drink + Func	£9,783.02	£11,026.09
External Functions		£45.00
Training and Junior Week	£4,272.69	£2,346.51
Telephone	£362.95	£343.23
Subs/Donations/Licenses		£905.00
Rent & Rates	£16,624.25	£4,740.60
Boat Maintenance	£462.49	£1,706.90
Site Maintenance	£10,011.34	£6,931.07
Insurances	£5,299.91	£5,407.44
Cups & Prizes	£1,362.80	£1,704.98
Printing/Postage/Stationary	£156.28	£738.87
Membership/Sty/Labels		£787.20
Water/Sewage/Waste/Elec		£2,480.45
Fuel	£3,254.92	£4,661.29
Radios Maint. New	£355.80	£0.00
Chicken Shed	£441.60	£1,070.00
Chicken Shed Refund		£0.00
Key & Subs Refunds	£40.00	£1,227.50
Sundry Payments	£366.20	£124.22
Club Cleaning	£84.68	£133.22
Boats/Engines - New	£5,700.00	£250.00
Slipway	£28,894.53	£14,260.52
Locks & Keys - New		£92.00

Solicitor Fees	£1,384.00	£644.00
Total Payments	£88,857.46	£61,626.09
Surplus Income/Expenditure	£16,458.04	

The accounts had not yet been audited and a General meeting will be required to accept the accounts.

6. Sailing Report

The Sailing Secretary briefly noted that it had been a good year for sailing but some feedback had been given requesting shorter courses. Blaze numbers appeared to be stable and he was pleased to report some movement from Saturday to Sunday by sailors together and welcomed the new club boats.

7. Committee Reports:

Bosun's Report & Club Boats - Geoff Lambert

The Bosun reported that quite a lot has happened this year most of it at the end of the season. All the safety boats have behaved themselves until October when our Commodore was running a power boat course. He reported to me at lunch time that Kittiwake was becoming more difficult to get into reverse; there was nothing I could do at that time so he continued with his afternoon session. About an hour later I saw him being towed back to the club. We had a look at the engine and on advice removed the gearbox as this was the most likely area to give this type of problem; how wrong can we be? The gear box was all ok. Later on stripping the engine we discovered that the drive from the bottom of the engine had been ripped out making the crankshaft scrap. The cost of the repair would come to more than the engine was worth so the committee have decided to purchase a new engine as it was 10 years old. All I can say is I am glad it wasn't me who was driving when it broke!

All the seats on the RIBs have been repaired and re-covered for this coming season; thanks to Martin Vinton for doing this. I have replaced most of the wheel bearings during last season but noticed that there is still a noisy one on Bluebirds trailer which I will attend to in the coming weeks. All the working safety boats and the committee boat have now been serviced ready for this coming season. There is still a new radio that need fitting on Dunlin but I ran out of time during the work parties.

Club boats-

The club has upgraded some of our club boats. We have purchased 2 replacement Lasers with Full and Radial rigs and one 4.7 rig to replace the 2 rather battered old boats. We have also purchased 2 more Laser 2000 so we now have 3 of these boats. During last season I wrote off 2 of our oldest Toppers as they were not repairable but we did managed to get 3 replacements from the Arethusa centre. During the work party a space was cleared to so we can rack all the Toppers the same as we have done for the Oppies and he racking is nearly finished, just waiting for another couple of lengths of scaffolding.

The list of club boats now is - 9 Toppers, 2 Wayfarers, 3 Laser 2000, 3 Fevas, 2 Lasers, 1 Comet, 1 Pacer, 2 Teras and 6 Oppies.

I would like to thank Richard Seabrook for donating his Wayfarer to the club and Jeremy Drummond for driving to Buckinghamshire and Devon to purchase and tow back the two club Lasers.

Pleased to say that new engine for Kittiwake has arrived at Power products (local Strood Yamaha dealer) and Derek Zobel is arranging a fitting date.

Training Report – Paul Thorpe

WSC had a good year for training with some good outcomes.

Firstly we increased our instructor volunteers by running a DI course giving the club an extra 6 DI's.

We had a new SI and a PBI as well to help broaden our training base.

A Sailing level one and two course was run successfully and this led to more people coming to Saturday Skimmers afternoon sessions and the first tasters into racing.

We also started a modular Level 2 course in 2016 and this also successfully saw good results.

Junior week was the most popular in the running of this annual event with 50 participants!

Powerboat level 2 courses were run and we had a good response with 12 candidates pass in the last part of 2016.

2017 training programme is well under way and we propose to run level 1 and 2 courses again both modular and over the usual weekends. This will be followed by level 3 courses.

Power boat courses will start with safety boat courses to complement the level 2 courses run in 2016.

The RYA inspected the club in October 2016; this was very successful with only a minor action to tape the shrouds of the club boats.

House Secretary's Report – Nina Wallis

The House Committee Members for 2017 include -

Nina Wallis, Derek Zobel, Phil & Michelle Cope, Georgios & Georgina Rafeletos, Anna Crane and Charles West. Matt and Amanda Causer have left the Committee.

Each member or member couple have been designated a month in which they were responsible for co-ordinating the AHO duties and ensuring that the AHO brought the provisions to the club. Booker Card Holders were informed if stores needed replenishing.

There were difficulties with covering the galley duties during the summer months. This was as a result of non filled Duty Man slots. Some Sundays were without any galley services. A big Thank you to those members who volunteered at the 11th hour to run the galley!

The pre payment and ordering of food prior to sailing in the morning has eased the work load for the AHOs and works well.

The food prices for 2016 remained the same as the year before.

The winter galley work party (which runs alongside the winter work party) worked well. It involved the steam cleaning of the walls, floors, cupboards and surfaces plus a deep cleansing of the appliances. A second spring clean was performed prior to the Regatta. A volunteer list was commenced in the November and member volunteers were then contacted prior to their duty.

The House Committee members helped out at the events. The Regatta volunteer list was quite tricky to organise. Time slots were given to ease the work load.

The Laying Up Supper was a success.

The Xmas Dinner was cooked by Phil and Michelle Cope and was very well received.

Nina bought a second hand fridge freezer £50 which is now in the chicken shed. The two scout fridge freezers will not be available for the Regatta week 2017.

Bernard has donated a steamer for the club which is kept in the cupboard under the stairs.

There have been no complaints about the sausages!!

Duties

The Dutyman administrator had reported that the controlled release of duties appeared to be working well. The Commodore noted that we still had not filled the Duty Secretary post and volunteers would be welcome. He thanked all of those who had stepped in to the gaps in the Duty rota in 2016. Jackie Hudson reported that she had been unable to volunteer for Dutyman and Secretary agreed to take the matter up with the administrator.

Publicity and Web site

Not much has gone on during the past year but the web site is being re engineered to enable those who require to update and maintain the data more easily.

Site Maintenance – Ray Craddock

Ray expressed his thanks to Dave Vettergreen for organising the replacement blind and to the cleaning team lead by Bernard Smith for keeping the club in such good order. He reported that it has been fairly quiet this year except for problems with the telephone line which had 3 faults which took some time to locate. As an update he was aware that the line again had a fault.

The other main problem was with the generator having fuel feed blockages. The fuel pipes have been in place for some 20 years and have deteriorated. Tim and Stan have spent a considerable amount of time in maintaining and overseeing this problem and he wished to thank them for their work in keeping the generators running.

Stan has installed a new downstream dinghy park gate and is in the process of installing the upstream gate and I would also thank him for covering for me for me when I was not available.

Winter Work Parties Report –Bernard Smith

Bernard reported that almost all of the following tasks had been completed and wished to thank all those who attended work parties and Duncan Griffiths, Martin Vinton and Roy Winnett in particular.

Club House

Chipboard Line floor in roof space and take stock of what we are storing in roof area.
Replace valves in men's showers
Replace urinal valve.
Replace mirrors in Ladies and men's changing rooms.
Replace bottom floors of men's clothes racks with ply.
Ladies Changing rooms to fit grills over drainage holes in toilets and changing areas.
Remove all clothing left behind in both changing rooms.

Dinghy Park

Clean roof of old generator and disabled toilet
Trim low foliage and overhanging boughs.
Clear brambles and all rubbish.
Fill in depressions along sea wall on the front of dinghy park.
Rewire as and where necessary top straining wire along perimeter of fencing for dinghy park.
Check all Padlocks.
Make concrete hold downs for dinghies.

Repair Club Boats

Build Topper Racking

Dinghy Sail and Spar Store

Take out all sails and spars, sweep out and replace - listing stock.

Outside clothes shed

Empty out clean and repack with removal of badly worn or damaged clothing

Blockhouse/Race Box

Newel post to replace on stairs/check and treat any woodworm areas found.
Replace Floor area outside of race box and re-felt.

Slipway

Pressure wash.

Track and Wooded Area

Sweep track of leaves
Clear and dig out drainage ditches

Car Park

Clear all brambles and low branches from car park/trailer compound.
Dig out and remove obstructions from surrounding ditches.
Remove old trailers from rear of compound.
Clear trailer compound of trailers, clear brambles and restack trailers. Repair fence as and where necessary.

8. There being only one, or none in the case of Duty Secretary, candidates for the posts of Flag Officers, Secretary, Treasurer, Sailing Secretary, Club Bosun, House Secretary, Members of the General and House Committee the meeting accepted the proposal en bloc without dissent. A query was raised regarding the present audit. It was explained that Trish Ayris will be auditing the 2016 accounts and Jo Wicken will audit 2017 accounts.

Colin Treadwell proposed, seconded by Ray Craddock that Jo Wicken be appointed as auditor for 2017 and the meeting agreed.

The full list of Officers and Assistant Officers for 2017 is listed below –

Officers and Assistant Officers nominees – 2017

<u>Office</u>	
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Commodore	Martin Vinton
Vice Commodore	Christine Godber
Rear Commodore	Bernard Smith
Honorary Secretary	Martin Smith
Honorary Treasurer	Paul Rodgers
Sailing Secretary	Andy Hockey
Bosun	Geoff Lambert
House Secretary	Nina Wallis
GCM (6 members) 1	Brian Lamb
2	Brian White
3	Jo Wicken
4	Kevin Downard
5	VACANCY
6	VACANCY
House Committee 1	Derek Zobel
2	Phillip Cope
3	Michelle Cope
4	Anna Crane
5	Georgina Rafeletos
6	Charles West
<u>Fleet Captains</u>	<u>Captain</u>
Handicap Fast	Results awaited
Handicap Medium	Stewart Robertson
Handicap Slow	Georgios Rafeletos
Laser 2000	Rachel Sheridan
Junior	Results awaited
<u>Appointees</u>	
Assistant Sailing Sec	Tony Hunt

Dinghy Park Sec	Dave Vettergreen
Duty List Sec	VACANCY
Memb Renewals Sec	Christine Godber
Membership Sec	Lesley O'Rourke
Training Principal	Paul Thorpe
Chief Sailing Instructor	Tom Lambert
Website Manager	Jason Ramsden
Editor 31.5	David Wraight
Publicity Officer	Jason Ramsden
Trophy Secretary	Ian Parris
DBA	Ian Parris
Youth Co-ordinator	Jayne Thorpe
Parent Liaison Officer	Georgios Rafeletos
Chief PB Instructor	John Evans
Site Services Manager	Ray Craddock
Dep site Serv Manager	Stan Sprot
Site Dev Officer	Duncan Griffiths
Maint Co-ordinator	Bernard Smith
Cruising Secretaries	D Wraight/D Zobel

Trustees: Martin Fish, Colin Treadwell, Bernard Smith, Dave Vettergreen

Auditor: Jo Wicken

9. A.O.B.

a) Jo Wicken asked that the meeting be informed that a club clothing catalogue would shortly be on display in the club house.

b) Rachel Sheridan asked that the dates of the following be recorded –

Push the Boat Out (Club Open Day) 13 May

Medway Regatta 8 & 9 July

Junior Week 22 to 26 August.

c) Christine Godber reported that membership forms confirmed retention of CASC status.

d) Secretary read out Stewart Robertsons and John Hewitts comments on safety cover as follows -

Much of the safety boat training is very good, boat handling etc. but more awareness of the dinghies is required. Helm and crew should be looking in different directions, they should position themselves so that as large an area as possible is covered and they must check various parts of the course and this will entail moving to get a view.

For myself I did on one occasion notice a safety boat hiding out of the wind behind a large moored cruiser - that restricts view and it was a windy day - just when they should be extra vigilant. I would also appeal for some risk assessment. We want the least able to have the most cover so by and large there should be a safety boat close by to the any new racers. Fast Fleet boats are mostly crewed by very able and experienced people. Sure their boats are expensive if they break but they are unlikely to suffer physically. New racers may have less sorted boats, less experience of the dangers and possibly less suitable clothing and so need greater attention.

So in summary, yes training on operating the boat is required, but on top of that, diligence, attention and judgement is required to be taught." and invited discussion which was well supported with the main points made (not always agreeing) being –

RO should look at fleets and co-ordinate with CDO's briefing identifying new members and encouraging "buddies" to identify those in need of cover

CDO brief should take account of conditions and ensure cover for all fleets

Lack of skills, considering likely only 2 duties a year was not the issue

The slow fleet, plus those who chose to sail with it, was larger and both ends of the fleet should have visible cover with Gillingham reach covered around the dockyard giving visibility of Cockham reach as well.

With 2 safety boats cover will always be sketchy and onus was on individual helms to be responsible for their own safety. (*Secretary Clarification 22.1 in Club SI's Rule 4 of RRS states "The responsibility for a boats decision to participate in a race or continue racing is hers alone."*)

Safety boats should assist sailors and moor disabled dinghies till after the race. This was remarked on as being a change to "normal" practice.

Brian Lamb suspected that those present were probably all aware but was producing a single sheet of guidance for safety crews for discussion and hoped to ensure new drivers were initially sent out with experienced drivers. Adding that 3 s for cover would need more members!

Medway in Flames

Brian White raised the issue of the 350th anniversary of the Dutch attack on the river and suggested the club could be opened for the week. Clive Grindley had been present at the 300th anniversary and commented that the Dutch took this very seriously and appreciated the all tide slipway at the club.

It was noted that the club was working with the MSBA on this and some 350 Dutch boats were expected.

Closing Remarks by the Commodore.

The Commodore thanked all those who attended and voted for officers and committee positions. He looked forward to another season on the water and hoped for good weather giving a challenge to members – go sailing more often! He then closed the meeting at 20.10.