



Shropshire Sailing Club Newsletter Spring 2007

Editor's Comment (Mike Royden m.royden@virgin.net)

Welcome to the Spring (almost summer) Newsletter!

Most members now seem to be back in the routine at Whitemere. The early season races are completed, the berths are bursting at the seams, and training and junior days have taken place already - all before the end of April! This early summer weather has been most welcome too - just the right breeze for the last couple of Saturdays. It seems the light nights are only just back with us yet it feels like we should be getting into our Saturday BBQ's at the club already - the last three Saturday's have felt just like those balmy June evenings we love so much at Whitemere.

Many thanks to all those members who have supported the club through what some may feel was the quiet winter period. Yet, members have still been involved - a number of social functions have taken place - and



many thanks to **Mary Clifford** who has reported on all the events. Working parties in February, racing, coaching, a junior day and a new RYA Level 3 Racing course have all taken place since January. And some don't think the 'season' starts until May!

Special thanks to those who have given extra time to various repairs to the clubhouse and surrounding buildings, plus those who answered John James' call to help construct the new jetty.

Here's to an enjoyable summer!

Club News

The Clubhouse – a note of concern

Concern has been expressed for some time over the condition, and therefore life expectancy, of the clubhouse, and other associated buildings. As part of a larger exercise to prepare a financial plan for the club covering several years, two members were asked to undertake a detailed examination of the clubhouse and Gents' changing room, and report. That report was delivered to the General Committee at its last meeting in March. In summary, the clubhouse is likely, with limited repairs required to the roof covering, a floor joist, provision of guttering, and renewal of fascia boards, to last around a further 10 years or so, but this is on the assumption that no further deterioration (or accident-such as storm/falling tree befalls it), occurs. The same, unfortunately, cannot be said for the changing room, which requires some urgent work on it, during the next 12/18 months.

Simultaneously, the General Committee has been appraising several different possible schemes for replacing the clubhouse, including funding. Again in summary, we are unlikely to attract funding from other sources, as we hold a licence (rather than a lease), on both the land and water, which gives us no long term security of tenure. To replace just the clubhouse to its current size, will cost around £70,000, incl. VAT. With a part pre-fabricated timber building, with some work inside completed by members. Alternatively, with around £50,000 expenditure, we could acquire several "demountable" units - of the type most commonly in use as classrooms - though these would be at least 10-15 years old, and would not necessarily be uniform in appearance. Although the club has a small cash surplus, we must, as part of a long term plan, start increasing that reserve in order to finance the building replacement, whilst simultaneously maintaining the current buildings in a reasonable state of repair.

To accrue the substantial sums required, we need members to commit to the long term financial plan which will be issued later in the year, in time for the AGM in November, and annually, thereafter.

The General Committee is aware that members may have specific concerns over the long term nature of the clubhouse renewal plan, and would therefore welcome any comments, questions and suggestions in advance of the plan being published. Any such concerns/questions, should be addressed in the first instance, to the Commodore, Mark Davies.

Mike Davy

Rebuild of Main Jetty - 21 & 28 April



As you are probably aware the main jetty was quite dangerous and has now been demolished. Work has been carried out on manufacturing a new jetty over two consecutive Saturdays - 21/28 April. It is around two-thirds complete and further help would be appreciated. Many thanks to those who have given their time and turned out so far, especially **John James** who has co-ordinated the project. (Please contact John for details of future work days).



Mark gives a display of the true role of a SSC Commodore - don the shades, drink tea, stay dry and keep saying 'you've missed a screw there'. And let's hope John feels better now after having his head drilled. Excellent work gentlemen! (And the geese are just queuing up).

Racing Coaching

At the Race Rules and Tactics evening held in February there was interest in the Club running adult race coaching during the summer on Wednesday evenings. I will be very happy to organise this and have secured the help of a few volunteers. I propose that we run sessions on the following dates (all the first Wednesday of the month), **2nd May, 6th June, 4th July, 1st August and 5th September**. Sessions will start at 6.30 and last about an hour and will typically focus on one or two key skills. We will look to follow RYA coaching practice, with some theory and briefing in the Clubhouse followed by practice on the water and then a debrief. We may use Club boats or people's own boats depending on the subject of the day and preference.

Please make a note of these dates, later in April I will put up a notice in the Clubhouse for you to add your name if you are interested in the first or any other session, or

simply drop me an email (tim_allan@uk.ibm.com). Also please indicate if there is a particular skill you would like to work on. Ideas so far include sail shape and control, working the windshifts, spinnaker work and crewing skills.

I look forward to some enjoyable evenings on the water with you.

Tim Allan
Club Race Coach

Nostalgic Visit

Saturday 28 April was a busy day with several members completing RYA Level 3 Start Racing, the working party building the jetty and junior coaching on the mere. During the afternoon we received a visit from Lorna Fenn-Wiggin. Lorna's father was Godfrey Fenn-Wiggin, a founder member of the club and Lorna was on a nostalgic visit to the club she remembers coming to as a young girl. She remembered the clubhouse once had a verandah on the lower side of the room (where the tables and chairs are now) and her father constructed the first wooden rescue boat and the starting gun. Lorna was also pleased that she was able to see her father's name recorded on the Commodores board for 1958-60.



Club Social Reports

Halloween Sat 28th October

Seems so long ago now, but as it took place after the Autumn Newsletter it has been included here. Another great night with a brilliant pumpkin competition. Fun and games, tasty food and topped off by an entertaining display of bright flashy things that just

happened to go off in the vicinity while we were sitting outside the clubhouse. Thanks again to everyone who made it a fab night. I think the juniors enjoyed it too.



**Annual Sailing Club Dinner / Prize giving Sat 20 Jan 2007
The Walls Restaurant, Oswestry,**

The Walls Eating House was a new venue for the Sailing Club Annual Dinner and Prize giving. About 48 hungry diners turned up on a chilly January evening to be greeted by a blazing log fire and a glass of something to warm the insides. We had a separate room from the other diners with a stage area from which the prize giving was conducted after a great meal (the spinach and mushroom strudel glazed with gruyere cheese was delicious, so much so that I went for seconds a few weeks later with some friends!).

The notable prizes presented were.....

Annual Awards

- **Mere Trophy** for the overall winner of the SSC Championship presented to **Jim Shipp**
- **Captains Cup** for the highest placed newcomer, awarded to **Karl Anderson**
- **Endeavour Trophy** presented to **Brian Johnson** for his outstanding contribution to Club sailing activities, far too extensive to list here but significant amongst them are organisation of RYA Training courses and securing grant funding for new Club dinghies and a new RIB.
- **Mere Whisper Award** presented to **Tiffer Morris, Rob Shelley and Chris Adlington** for their success in becoming Senior Instructors and for their support of delivery of RYA Training at the Club.

The raffle as usual went down well followed by much reminiscing over the previous season and preparation for the coming season.

The Dinner is always an enjoyable event, we work hard at finding a venue that is good value for money with a pleasant atmosphere. It is not just for racing types, all members would enjoy it. Please make an effort to attend next year (a Saturday evening towards the end of January, venue to be announced) it is well worth it.

Mary Clifford

Shropshire Sailing Club Skittles Evening, Friday 16 Feb 2007 Comrades Club Ellesmere

Oswald Road Fine Furniture of Oswestry sponsored this evening of sporting calamity (modesty prevents me from saying too much about this marvellous emporium of eclectic furnishings barr the fact that it is open seven days a week and please ring 01691 670690 to find out more!).

Several teams of 8 people attempted to knock over a number of skittles (were there 10 or is that a different game!) with a heavy rubber ball that was returned to the start point down a dodgy bit of drainpipe. I am not sure how accurate the scoring was as embarrassingly the sponsor's team won consisting of **Mary, John, Tom and Sam Clifford, Tom Horne, Tom Harris** (a member of Colemere SC!), **Sue Walters and Treenal**

It was a very pleasant evening with cheap beer and a chippy open over the road. We hope to run another evening like it so look out for details at the Sailing Club or via email and try and come along.

Mary Clifford

(I've never attended a SSC 'chippy open'. Is that were anyone can turn up and eat themselves into oblivion until the bell goes? I fancy that - put me down for the next one - Ed.)

Commodores Evening (Ceilidh), Saturday 10 March 2007 Welshampton Village Hall

An evening of 'stripping the Willow', 'promenading your partner' and clapping hands like school kids caused much merriment among the sailors and guests. Admittedly the dancing was of a similar standard to the sailing of many of those present but at least the Commodore remained upright unlike much of his efforts on the water! (Sorry Mark!)

The four piece band with a caller, the Melomaniacs were very entertaining especially with their large selection of outfits and hats which they changed regularly.

A tasty meal of meat or veggie casserole was provided by the landlady of the nearby Sun Inn.

This was a most enjoyable way of testing ones fitness levels after a couple of months not sailing. Thanks to those who organised it and to Martin and Roger who ran the bar supplied by The Hub (formerly Bookers) in Shrewsbury.

Sailing Reports

Sailing Secretary's column (Tim Allan)

Officer of the Day and Rescue Duties

Please check this year's Programme to see if/when you have been scheduled to perform either an OOD, AOD or Rescue Duty. It is vitally important (not to mention a condition of membership) that people do perform their duties, as failure to do so has a real impact on our ability to run scheduled events, or leads to members having to forego their days sailing in order to stand in. If you are unable to perform your duty on the date specified, please make arrangements to swap with someone else, and then update the Roster Wall Chart displayed in the Clubhouse. As a last resort please contact the relevant Monthly Duty Officer (listed in the Programme) with as much notice as possible.

Recently training was provided at the Club for OODs/AODs and for Rescue Officers, if you didn't manage to attend this and feel you need some advice, then please contact any member of the Sailing Committee and we will do our best to help. Also, now on the Club website under 'Racing' is a copy of the OOD instructions and a presentation used for the OOD Training, I urge you to have a look at these before doing your next duty.

Forthcoming Events for your diary

- **Experience Racing Day on Sunday 29 April** - if you have not yet had the courage or conviction to have a go at some racing why not come along and try it.

Not got a boat? then you can reserve yourself a Club dinghy. Just like to crew? then very welcome, regular racers will be on hand to give you all the support you need to have a go.

- **Working Party on Saturday 26 May** - many hands make light work!!
- **Spring Open Meeting on Sunday 27 May** - open to ALL classes, with prizes for Classes with 4 or more boats and for fast and slow handicap fleets. This is open to non members too so you can invite friends from other Clubs.
- **Fun Day on Saturday 9 June** - Bryn will be laying on his traditional extravaganza of on the water fun and games.
- **Club Regatta on Sunday 10 June** - again open to ALL classes, with prizes for Classes with 4 or more boats and for fast and slow handicap fleets

Adult Race Coaching

Wednesday 2 May will see the first of five evening coaching sessions for adults, to be run on the first Wednesday of each month through to September. If you would like to discover the secrets of faster sailing at Whitemere, then add your name to the list displayed in the Clubhouse or send an email to 'tim.allan@uk.ibm.com'. Numbers will be limited so please book in advance.

Crews Wanted

Crewing is an excellent way to learn and develop your sailing ability and for juniors in particular can be a good way of getting out on the water regularly. You may not yet have your own boat and would like to gain experience without hiring a Club boat. There are always members who are looking for a crew, either for Saturday cruising or Sunday Racing. If you would like to do some regular crewing, (or are a helm looking for a crew) then please drop me an email (tim.allan@uk.ibm.com), with some details of availability, and I will start a list that we will publish in the Clubhouse, and perhaps on the Club website, as a means of introducing potential crews and helms to each other.

Use of Rescue Boats

We have received a formal complaint from the fishermen about an incident when in their view a Rescue Boat was being driven at excessive speed, for a period of time, when there was no apparent emergency. Please be reminded that the rescue boats should only be driven at planing speed when attending to a rescue situation. Misuse of boats and inappropriate use of speed are a danger and nuisance to other users of the mere, and may jeopardise our relations with our fishing friends and our landlords (the Estate).



Brian demonstrates to Chris how to disentangle a buoy from an outboard. There is no suggestion that Chris is standing by to rescue Brian. (Rob and Tiffer told me to take the picture. Honest).

Race Series Results

Already the first of the Sunday Series has been completed. The Shropshire Shiverer this year experienced some unusually strong winds and mild temperatures (the air not the water that is !!). It was particularly good to see a number of Juniors turning out in some very challenging conditions at times. Also well done to the OODs who have been getting to grips with the new format for the races.

Overall Series results were,

- 1st Martin Cushing (Laser)**
- 2nd John James (Flying Fifteen)**
- 3rd Lottie Rapson (Pico),**

Congratulations to them.

By the time you read this we will have almost completed the Spring Series. Sunday 22 April saw a fleet of 17 boats for the start of the Early Afternoon races, and many newcomers to the racing scene.

Tim Allan

Tim also wrote the following three short notices at the end of last season. Its seems appropriate at the beginning of a new season to be reminded of what he said. (Ed.)

Sunday Sailing

Whilst Sunday has traditionally been a racing day for the Club I would like to remind members that this in no way prohibits anyone who wishes to go cruising. The numbers

out racing this year have in the main been quite low, meaning there is plenty of room for non racers on the water, and probably more so than most Saturday afternoons!

Club Recognised Classes



For some years now we have exercised a policy of restricting new boats into the Club to a preferred list of Classes. Recently the Sailing Committee decided to relax the restriction to permit any monohull dinghy with a Portsmouth Yardstick of up to 982 (equating to a Fireball), and under 16ft (4.9m) waterline length. The Club still promotes the following preferred Classes, Flying 15, GP14, Solo, Laser 1, Laser 2000, Lark, Topper, Pico, RS Feva, Mirror and Wayfarer, and would strongly recommend any member

prospecting for a boat to consider these in the first instance. The advantages of sailing a preferred class are many, for example, experience says they are well suited to the mere, there are other owners to whom you can refer for advice about tuning and maintenance and if you want to go racing then competing against other boats of the same Class is always a more rewarding experience.

Club Bosuns

In the past year or so we have seen a significant increase in use of the Club owned boats, which is of course good news!! It does however mean increased wear and tear, and a need to address problems more quickly in order to keep the fleet fully functioning and able to support the growing number of training and other organised events. Consequently the Club Bosun duties have been reallocated to a number of volunteers as follows:- power boats to **Bryn Morton**, Toppers to **Brian Johnson**, Wayfarer and GP's to **John James**, and Feva's/Laser to **Chris Adlington**. (pictured) Please contact the relevant person in the first instance with any problems you experience when using these boats. I would encourage you please to report any concern you have as soon as you can.



Working Party/Saturday Sailing/BBQ - Saturday 26 May

A reminder to members that we have a working party on 26 May. Your help would be appreciated to help spruce up the club, not just in time for Open Day, but for our own general use too. Work starts at 10am, followed by usual Saturday sailing, plus, weather permitting, we will be holding a BBQ in the late afternoon/evening. Do try to come along and support your club - the more the merrier. Please bring your own food and drink. We will supply the coals and the regulation bloke with hamburger slice who has never seen a kitchen but perks up when a few chops are tossed onto a griddle.

Midsummer Madness (also Advanced Junior Race Coaching Day) - 23 June

On the weekend of 23/24 June we are holding an advanced junior racing coaching weekend (by invitation only) and we will have a guest racing coach to lead the sessions in the guise of Nic Wymer who is Head of Sailing at Plas Menai. To coincide with this, on 23 June we are inviting club members to come along to watch, or partake in usual Saturday sailing (don't let the coaching sessions put you off if you are not involved in any way). This will be followed by a BBQ and a quiz night for all. Bring your own food and drink, with a summer emphasis on Pimms and Strawberries!



Family Fun Days

This years' summer family fun camp will again be split over two sessions:
9/10 & 11 August and 30/31 August culminating in the Junior Open on 1 September.

Mark it on your calendar before you book those summer hols!

Rear Commodore & Training Principle's Column (Brian Johnson)

Well so much for a quieter time this year. Our training courses in May and June are full and we have just completed the first ever RYA Start Racing course. If you are interested in training in 2007 from a basic course right through to becoming an instructor yourself, please get in touch. Phone me or drop an email to training@shropshiresailingclub.co.uk. There is always quite an impact on our power boat fleet when we hold training courses and junior days and so with great munificence, the General Committee has supported the purchase of a smallish inflatable to be used by instructors when all other power boats are in use.



Instructors Brian Johnson and Mary Clifford with the successful participants on SSC's first ever RYA Level 3 Start Racing course

With equal enthusiasm, the General Committee have also supported the conversion of our club Toppers to centre-main sheeting and so all future courses will be taught using centre-main sheeting techniques. This brings the Topper bang up to date and means that people will be able to move on to other classes, which are all centre sheeted these days, without having to learn a new technique. If you own or sail a Topper and want to consider or chat about this conversion then please let me know.

A few other points

- The new water supply has been connected. Whilst it hasn't made a huge difference to the power of our showers (shame), it should ensure that we do not suffer a lack of water *flow* when we are using all the services - showers, taps, lavatories, boilers and so on. Grateful thanks to **Chris Endacott** who is not only a wiz with alkathene pipe but also found two long term leaks in the existing pipework.
- Whilst we have had a very good turn out on Saturdays, this has left a legacy of unwashed or at least not put away cups in the galley. Watch out for a new notice along the lines "*You use it, you wash it and put it away!*"

Brian Johnson

S.S.C. Junior Members Report (Rob Shelley)

Our first Junior Sailing afternoon was on Saturday 14 April. It was an excellent day, beautiful weather with just enough breeze and a great way to start our programme. It was very well attended and our juniors enjoyed a variety of events designed to improve confidence and boat handling while having a great deal of fun at the same time. If you take a look at the illustrated edition of the newsletter I am sure you will agree. Many thanks to all those who helped out on the day.

Dates for your Diary

Junior Training Afternoons are on **12 May, 14 July and 8 September**. We aim to start sailing each day at 2.30pm - please arrive at least 45 minutes before hand to help prepare boats.

The Fun Day, run by Bryn is on **Saturday, 9 June** with a **regatta** on the **Sunday**. This is a fantastic, fun, day and starts at 1.00pm.

The Junior Open is on **1 September**. We had a tremendous turnout last year for what was



a really enjoyable day so please plan to attend again this year.

We are keen to encourage all Juniors to come and race on Sundays. We have a new racing programme with several short races a day - these are proving a great success so please come and give them a go.

Rob Shelley (Junior Fleet Captain)



Gallery: Junior Day 14 April



Can you see the club house? You haven't got us lost again have you?















The man in charge - Admiral Shelley sends the fleet into battle

Newsletter distribution

This newsletter has been distributed to members with a registered email address on the club database. Paper copies have been sent to members for whom we don't have such an address. Please let us know if you change your address - home or email.

We are now putting a PDF version of this edition with colour photographs on the club website as well as the usual word version to aid your viewing experience!

If you would like to contribute anything to the newsletter please email Mike Royden on m.royden@virgin.net Digital photos welcome.

All photos by Mike Royden & Lewis Royden (junior member)

April Gallery





A pleasant afternoon in April on the GP14

And finally.... A bit of posing on the Vago.....









