



Shropshire Sailing Club Newsletter October 2006

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

Welcome to the Autumn Newsletter!

So how was your summer? Did you have time for much sailing? We now have many family members at the club and more and more are making use of club facilities and events especially during the school holiday period. But what about your holidays away? Several members are well known for their sailing exploits away from Whitemere, but were you able to spend time sailing while on holiday?



Now that my two sons have their own dingy, we decided to try a couple of places elsewhere to broaden our experience and to have some summer fun. We had little prior knowledge of where to go, ease of access, fees and so on, so we set off with a little trepidation. Hopefully, what follows may be helpful to members new to sailing or venturing further afield from the club water. Firstly, we went to the Lake District - also to try out our new tent. Intending to find a quiet site and one that had lake access, we headed for Low Wray, a National Trust run site with good facilities at the north west end of Windermere (that is, on the opposite side to Waterhead and the madness surrounding the Bowness-Ambleside road). We were allocated a pitch about 20 yards

from the waterside and it was so secluded and private that we could leave the dingy rigged on the shore all week. We had several idyllic days sailing across Windermere. All very *Swallows and Amazons*, exploring coves and tying up at Waterhead to buy and ice-cream or a coke. Another day was spent sailing down the lake to Brockhole, the Lake District visitor centre. So relaxing in such beautiful scenery, especially when viewing it from a dingy on the middle of the lake. Now that the speed limit has been reduced the only serious traffic we had to look out for were the pleasure cruisers which ran from Bowness to Waterhead.

The following week we went to Abersoch to enjoy two weeks sailing in the bay. An excellent sailing centre, we met up with the **Morris'** and the **Shelleys**, already well known veterans of Abersoch, who were fully committed to Mirror week while we were there. Late night Barbeques on the beach added to the fun. Crashing through waves on a stormy day was an exhilarating new experience, as was dodging the jet-skis and powerboats. Both places highly recommended



to members who are thinking of trailing off somewhere for the first time next year. **Chris Addlington** has spent a couple of very enjoyable holidays at Minorca Sailing. I am still waiting for a few photos, but he says 'they have a photo gallery on the website'. He adds, 'This is a superb place to sail where boats are rigged on demand, launched, and when you come back in they wait in the water to collect and de-rig the boats. I would recommend it to anyone'. (At the time of writing there are no plans to offer this service at Whitemere, although you can always aim for Chris when he is paddling near the jetty as it takes him months to get back to normal after a trip to Minorca.).

Do you have a holiday sailing experience where other members may want to visit? Let me know!



Relevant weblinks:

Minorca Sailing www.minorcasailing.com/

Abersoch Tourist Info www.abersochtouristinfo.co.uk/index.html

Low Wray www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-qlobal/w-localtoyou/w-northwest/w-northwest-lakedistrict_camping/w-northwest-lakedistrict_camping-low_wray.htm



What's On - Dates for your diary



Halloween Sat 28th October (Clubhouse 7pm after Saturday sailing)



Fun and games, pumpkin carving competition, tasty food, Brian covered in flour, kiddy cocktails, Chris rigging musical chairs so he can win, and those noisy things that light up dark nights around this time of the year. Come along and enjoy another fun night! If you have not been before - it is a fun evening, with games organised by **Chris Adlington**. An evening to be missed at your peril!

Entry is free but there will be a small charge for food - Chilli for adults and Hot Dogs for youngsters. We do not have a licence for the evening so please bring your own drinks. Torches may be useful for the youngsters.

We are also holding a **Pumpkin Competition - With Prizes** - to help decorate the Club House. Please do enter.



Chris, just before we called the fire brigade. Wanting to be the best again. He has already been disqualified for trying to use his head in the competition, so its still safe to enter kids!

Annual General Meeting Fri 24th November (Clubhouse 7.30pm)

To find out how well this year has gone and what we have to look forward to next year, please come along to the AGM on **Friday 24th November**. It's your opportunity to have your say and get the low down on the club's performance during the last year. Importantly, it's your opportunity to vote in a new club management team. Please do remember to get any submissions to our Hon. Sec (**Brian Rapson**) by **27th October at the latest**. Submissions can be to put someone forward for a particular post or to suggest that a key issue be discussed. We are particularly looking for the following posts to be filled:

1. A new Menagerie Fleet Captain
2. We would like to include a new post in the Sailing Committee - that of "Cruising Fleet Captain". We would like a regular Saturday attender who could represent those that cruise rather than race

There will also be a free buffet!

Laying up - Sunday 10th December

A call for club volunteers to help lay the club up for winter! Hot drinks and snack will be provided. Don't forget - member's boats must be removed from the premises by the **31st December 2006** in accordance with the club licence.

Annual Dinner / Prizegiving Sat 20th Jan 2007

Walls Restaurant in Oswestry is the venue with a most appetising menu! Commencing 7.30pm for 8pm. We will e mail further information but if you are not an e mail user, please contact someone on the House Committee.

Commodores Evening 10th March 2007

Come along to the **Ceilidh** at Welshampton Village Hall
Starting at 7.30pm.

Skittles Night - Comrades Club, Ellesmere Friday 16 February.

We are hoping to run a fun competition night. The regulars can fit in 8 teams of 5 playing two games each in about 3 hours.

How many teams of 5 could we muster?

How about class teams:

Solos do it slowly but with a large handicap.

15's do it noisily with military precision but no colour sense.

Lasers do it any way up

Laser 2000's do it standing up

GP14's are just grateful to be there

(can I just say that Mark Davies is responsible for this and not the editor?)

Or kids' teams? Or could the house committee challenge all comers? Anybody?

More to follow once this is finalised. There will be a small charge to cover costs on the night.



mmm... could be something in this Mark...

Frank Hodge

I am sure you are all aware now of the sad passing of our Sailing Secretary **Frank Hodge** earlier this year. **Mark Davies** our Commodore, received the following letter from **Liz Hodge**;

Dear Mark,

Thank you for your letter of the 24th July on behalf of the Club, and the kind comments you expressed about Frank and his sailing. Sailing and racing obviously played a large part in his life and one that he thoroughly enjoyed to the full.

Would you please, also, either through e mail or the newsletter express my grateful thanks to all club members who have sent me letters and cards, to those who attended the Thanksgiving Service and to those who have contributed to the fund that will be split between the local church and Bowel Cancer UK. The total raised at the Service stands at £933 and Mark has raised, so far, a further £1,000 for Bowel Cancer UK through his forthcoming cycle ride in the Outer Hebrides. If anyone still wishes to contribute to his sponsorship details can be found at <http://www.justgiving.com/hopscotch23>

You mention that the Club wishes to remember Frank through an event(s) at the Club. The family do support something to do with race training for the junior members - he was gutted to have to miss the day run by Jane at the Club recently. He had really been looking forward to it and had put a lot of time in organising it for her. I am not sure whether I can best be the judge on what form an event would take but when you decide on something suitable do please let us know and if you require a trophy/cup for it, I will be pleased to contribute towards it.

Many thanks once again for your kind words.

Liz Hodge



Mark Davies also received the following note of thanks from **Mark Hodge** in September:

I wanted to drop you all a quick email to say thank you very much for all your support and your very generous sponsorship. Including the gift aid we have raised over £2000 for Bowel Cancer UK (plus there was the half share of £900 generously donated at the church service).

The level of support certainly helped me focus during some very tough times out on the road. Suffering from severe knee pain on Day 3 was a big low. Highlights of the ride were undoubtedly the beaches, coastline, bird life (particularly the Snowy Owl and Red Throated Divers), and the bleakness. It took quite a while to stop smiling after coasting fully loaded at over 48mph down the hill that caused the start of my knee pain.

My blog and photos are updated and online at <http://blogmers.blogspot.com>.

I am pleased to say that my knee is better and I am back on the bike with thoughts on another ride. I'm thinking of celebrating my 40th in 2008 with another charity ride. Have several rides in mind but struggling to focus past a couple of sections from the Great Divide (Rockies) route in USA.

Thanks again

Mark Hodge

Frank Pembridge

It is with deep regret that we also report the death of Frank Pembridge some weeks ago. Not very well known to many but Frank has been associated with the club for many years via the Diving Club who have retrieved many lost items from the bottom of the mere. More recently, Frank has been our "In House" First Aid coach and as a power boat coach, supported our power and safety boat courses.

Recollections include the girl cadets who Frank brought along to First Aid courses and he kitted out with many gruesome "injuries" that had to be dressed. The enduring image is no nonsense, ever reliable, encouraging and supportive links with the Sailing Clubs. He will be sadly missed.

Reports

Sailing Secretary's column (Tim Allan)

I will first say a few words about Frank, to add to those written above. Having picked up Frank's files I can appreciate the enormous contribution he made to our Club, as much behind the scenes as in front. His wisdom on all sailing matters and his leadership of the Sailing Committee were a tremendous asset. My thanks to the Sailing Committee for their support as I ease slowly into the Sailing Secretary role.

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.

Rescue Boats

Following the successful application for a grant from the Local Network Fund (with enormous thanks to **Brian Johnson** for his hard work and skill in achieving this) the Club has ordered a brand new 4.0m RI B fitted with a 30hp 4 stroke outboard engine, to replace our ageing RI B. Delivery is expected before end of October. Please be aware that with the current low water level of the mere, there is a higher than usual risk of grounding the rescue boat props, particularly inside the ends of the jetties. It is also particularly shallow on the left hand side as you approach the boathouse, and there is an obstruction just a few feet outside the door. Posts and a rope have been erected to mark the danger area and guide you to approach in deeper water. Please take particular care when reversing a boat out from the left hand side, until the obstruction can be removed hopefully fairly soon.

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**. 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.

Menagerie/GP14/Solo Regatta - 15 October 2006



At this year's open meeting we had six Solos, two GPs and eleven Menagerie. The Solo class was won by **Jim Shipp**, and Menagerie by a visitor in a Graduate, with second place taken by **Stuart and Charlotte Norris** in the Lark. First Junior was **Lotty Rapson** in a Pico. Menagerie fleet saw entries from two Laser 2000s, two Larks, Scorpion, four juniors in a Feva, two Toppers, and a Pico. Racing was very closely competed over three races. Next year we hope to extend the invitation to all preferred Club Classes.

(left: Lottie in action)

Is your boat secure ?

Autumn approaches and the season of gales. Yes believe it or not we can suffer from some very strong winds at Whitemere, and boats can be particularly vulnerable to south westerlies. Please check your boat is securely tied down to the permanent anchor points and I would advise that you add a further tie down at the stern using a temporary screw in type of anchor point. The Club does have a number of dog tethers available for your use, first come first served.

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 !

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

This time I thought I'd add some training facts and figures. As far as I can see, 2006 has been our busiest ever.

Internal Members courses :-Adult Level 1 (19), Adult Level 2 (8), Junior Stage 1 (32!), Junior Stage 2 (7)
Internal Training Team courses :- Power Boat Level 2 (10), Safety Boat (5), Assistant Dinghy Instructor (7),
First Aid and First Aid Updates (18),
Externally run Courses :- Senior Instructor (3), Club Racing Coach (4)

I think that makes 113 SSC course places in 2006 and that does not include quite a number of "Taster Sessions" that we have laid on for people within the community.



Perhaps we might have a quieter time next year – or perhaps not! 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 e mail to training@shropshiresailingclub.co.uk

SSC certainly benefits from putting members through Instructor courses; Here are a few junior members working towards their Level 2 certificate, receiving a briefing from two of our Assistant Dingy Instructors, Tom Hearn and Lucy Morris.



Level 2 Juniors with their instructors following presentation of their certificates by Commodore Mark Davies



Junior Report (Rob Shelley)

Club members not involved in Junior activities will be astonished at what a busy and successful year 2006 has been – despite several events taking place in adverse weather conditions.

- 37 juniors have passed various stages of the RYA training programme – all 2 days courses
- An average of 18 youngsters attended each of the 4 Junior Days. These afternoons consist of structured events followed by capsizing chaos and informal fun. Events have included a seamanship skills competition and a treasure hunt around the Mere. Training sessions covered racing starts, mark rounding, rights of way rules and an opportunity for the less experienced to practice basic skills.
- The Family Fun Day, organised by Bryn, was the usual great success with large numbers having a fantastic time. The only complaint – it only happens once a year!
- Despite a Force 6 and torrential rain 22 boats and 37 competitors entered our Junior Open. In severely adverse conditions we managed to finish 3 races but abandoned the 4th when the entire fleet was flattened by a huge gust.
- Juniors have represented the Club at a number of external events including Abersoch Mirror Week, The Pico Challenge in Colwyn Bay and the North West Single Handed Challenge in Salford Quays.

The level of enthusiasm and rapidly improving skill levels make these events a pleasure to organise. They only happen, however, with the support of both the youngsters themselves and their parents – support that is greatly appreciated.

A special thanks must also go to the large team, both on the water and behind the scenes, whose commitment allows us to plan and manage each day. They are too many to mention individually but know who they are! The days would not happen without them.

We are already planning events for 2007 and look forward to seeing you all then!

Fun Day and Regatta





Fun Day and Regatta







Above: Early on the Sunday morning before the Regatta, an impromptu raft building session gathered pace after the youngsters found a few drums. Parents were tormented until they joined in the search for rope, wood and a little spray paint—all this just a few minutes after a full breakfast. I needed to sit down.

Right: There's trouble at Number 8!

Following page: Fun on the Fifteens





Family Fun Days - John James

This years' family fun camp was split into two sessions covering 10th to 12th August and 31st August to 2nd September culminating in the Junior Open on 2nd September.

The first day did not get off to a good start with heavy rain the previous day, some of which lingered into the morning of the first day. After having had such lovely weather in July, John & Helen James organised the days which, as last year, were aimed at providing some summer holiday fun for children and adults with the opportunity of improving sailing.

Additional helpers included **Brian Johnson, Karen Ashton, Sue Walters** and **Mike Davy**, with others popping in on odd days. Many thanks to you all, without your assistance the events would not have been the undoubted success that they were.

All sorts of weather was thrown at us over the days, including brilliant warm sunshine and fairly strong winds, which perhaps helped those who sailed in the Junior Open on 2nd September, where the record number of capsizes was 13 (unless you know otherwise that is). People's enthusiasm was not dampened and many families attended each day. One family saying on the first day, "sorry we can't come tomorrow we have something else on", and on arriving the following day they confessed that they had enjoyed their first day so much, that they changed their arrangements.

Sailing improvement coaching included racing around a triangular course, but obviously to start we have to get some practice in on the start line. Everyone got there in the end but initially many were seen sailing off into the distance and eventually had to be rounded up by the rescue boat. Once started, each of the races were keenly contested and I am sure everyone learned a great deal. It certainly helped those who took part in the Junior Open on the final Saturday.

Evening entertainment included a couple of BBQ's and a bingo night. The bingo prize money was not a lot but keep your eyes *open*, as the winners I am sure will be investing in new Laser 2000 or something similar.

For those of you who were unable to attend, please do try to come along next year. The dates will be published in the club programme, make a note, come along and have some great fun.

Many thanks again to John and Helen for organising the events and to all those dedicated members who have helped out and contributed time and effort throughout the year on the various events, training sessions and social evenings. We wouldn't be such a popular club without you!



*Left:
Toasting a new
arrival!*

*Right:
October winds
making for some
exciting sailing!*



Autumn Sailing

Although there are only a few scheduled Saturday sailing days left we continue racing on Sundays until almost Christmas. You can of course continue to sail on a Saturday, providing you organize some rescue cover but why not come and sail on Sundays either to race or just to cruise about?

We do tend to enjoy some good Autumn and then Winter sails in December when the winds can also be a little stronger than some of those lazy summer days which left a few people stranded on the Whitemere millpond!

Here are a few photos taken this October to get you going!







Autumn sailing at Whitemere

(Photos: Lewis Royden (junior member))

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

