



# mainsail

MAGAZINE WINTER ISSUE 2007

[www.gp14.org](http://www.gp14.org)

THE GP FOURTEEN CLASS INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

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**Front Cover:** Ian Sinclair fighting it out at the UK Grandmasters & Masters Championship 2007. Photo Mark Nichols

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Disclaimer: The views expressed in this magazine are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Committee.

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Tel: (01270) 212290 Fax: (01270) 583334 E-mail: admin@gp14class.org.uk

# Editor's Letter

Hello everyone,

The first thing you might notice about this edition of Mainsail is that there is no Boatmart. There is a very vigorous second-hand market for the GPI 4 and it was becoming increasingly difficult to run Boatmart simultaneously in the magazine and on the website. Boats advertised on the website were snaffled up sometimes long before Mainsail arrived through the letter-box, leading to a lot of frustrated people making needless phone calls.

There is now no fee to place an advert on the website to sell your boat or spares. Sellers without internet access will be able to ask the Office to place their advert for them, and buyers may request an up-to-date printout of what is for sale. We hope this will work more efficiently for everyone. The only downside, in my opinion, is that the Mainsail Boatmart was a handy record of prices that people were asking, but if you need advice about valuation, please phone the Office or contact your Area Rep.

The full-colour version of Mainsail is here to stay and we hope you enjoy it. This issue spans the generations, with contributions from a nonagenarian as well as a teenager, and covers a wide range of interests, reflecting the great appeal of the boat to all types of sailor. Please start thinking already about your contributions to the Spring issue and be ready with your camera at winter events.

The extra cost of full colour is not excessive and largely re-couped by using Mailsort, which saves both on postage charges and staff time. The Committee has decided, however, that the cost of producing and mailing the Handbook is no longer an appropriate way to spend members' money. We have looked carefully at the content of the Handbook and will ensure that information contained in it is readily available from the website or the Office, with some regular items, such as the Accounts, going into Mainsail.

Please keep us informed about how easily you find you are able to access information, and whether there are further changes we could make to facilitate this.

Seasons' greetings,

**Liz**



# Money Matters

## 2008 Subscription Payment

As approved at the Annual General Meeting on 13th August 2007 in Marazion, the following increased subscription rates will be applied from 2008:

- i Full member subscription £27**
- ii Associate member subscription £21**
- iii Youth member subscription £13**

A £2 discount will be applied to subscriptions paid by Direct Debit.

Consequently, the Direct Debit payments for 2008 will be £25 for Full membership, £19 for Associate membership and £11 for Youth membership.

The Direct Debit payment will be collected on or immediately after the 1st January 2008.

**Maurice Cooper**  
Hon. Treasurer

## President's Piece

**Winter is beckoning! Time to curl up in front of the fire with a hot one and reflect on the season past and laugh, smile or think 'if only....!' So much happens at so many clubs over the course of a sailing season, some of which you will read about in the following pages, some of which you have already read about on our website.**

On the racing front, the highlight was surely the UK Nationals at Mounts Bay SC, where we enjoyed great hospitality and wonderful sailing in challenging conditions. A superb week's sport was had by all. If you did not compete then you missed a great event. It was well worth the journey. Congratulations to Richard Estaugh & Simon Potts on winning another UK Nationals. Congratulations to young Drew Nickless on a great performance on the windy day. Someone to watch in the future. Thank you to Ian Sinclair and others for putting not only this event together, but the many others that make up our open schedule.

We also had a well attended AGM at Marazion. In order to face the challenges of keeping our Association vibrant, modern and viable, changes are afoot and it was interesting to hear the views of members on some of these changes. To those members who stepped forward and volunteered their help with the Association events, thank you. We all look forward to even more fun at our championships.

Our website is becoming an ever more important communication tool and continues to evolve with the help from Luke Shaw and his team. With Liz Hall at the helm, Mainsail continues to be the envy of many other class associations. But remember that both the

website and Mainsail depend on the good and interesting contributions which you the members are prepared to make.

Congratulations to Adam McGovern and Chris Robinson for their amazing achievement at the 24 Hour race at West Lancashire Yacht Club. What a performance!

I would also like to congratulate Richard Estaugh on his recent win at the Fireball World Championship. Further evidence of the high standard we can expect - and try to live up to - whenever Richard appears on our racecourses. Congratulations also to the clear winners of this year's UK Youth Championship at Midland Sailing Club, Adam Parry and Sam Collingwood.

I'd like to remind you about our Grand Prize draw for GPI4000. A book of tickets is a great Christmas present or stocking filler! Sow the seeds of a dream - and open the door to a new pastime in life. These tickets can be sold to anyone, especially non-sailors. Contact the office or your area rep to purchase tickets if you haven't done so already.

On a personal note I will forever remember my fiftieth birthday among friends and rivals, held over the weekend of the Championship of Ireland. The racing was good, so was the craic and Sharon, our singer was wonderful. I think I'll stay with sailing and forget about a singing career.

Finally I wish you and your families a very happy and healthy Christmas.

**Hugh Gill**  
President





## Profile of Andy Bury

<b>Name:</b>	Andy Bury
<b>Boat Number:</b>	13406
<b>Helm or Crew:</b>	Crew
<b>Club:</b>	Bolton Sailing Club
<b>Fleet:</b>	Bronze
<b>Started sailing:</b>	2003
<b>Best GPI4 result:</b>	Bronze Fleet winner, Bolton SC Open 2007
<b>No. of capsizes this year:</b>	Too many (none my fault of course!)

Andy Bury is a member of Bolton Sailing Club, where he can be found at the sharp end of GPI4 13406, crewing for Graham Hutchinson.

When he is not sailing, or busy at his day job, Andy puts in a huge amount of effort helping to promote the GPI4 class. Whilst not on any Committees, he has nevertheless committed many man hours to developing the new class image and working on marketing ideas.

Andy lives just north of Bolton, North West England, with his wife and two young daughters.

### Q: What do you enjoy most about GPI4 sailing?

**A:** Very few boats can compete with the GPI4 for close racing, where tactics can be as important as boat speed. It is still by far one of the best boats around for affordable, enjoyable sailing.

### Q: What has been your sailing highlight this year?

**A:** One Wednesday night at Bolton SC – why you may ask? We were at the front of the fleet for over an hour before Gary Deighan just managed to squeeze past at the last mark. It wasn't the result that stands out that night, but our performance. We sailed superbly and it was one of those moments when you feel you have made it to the next rung on the ladder.

### Q: In terms of your personal sailing, what are you hoping to achieve next?

**A:** Graham and I are hoping to compete at the Worlds in Abersoch and will at least strive to win the bronze fleet! However, just taking part will be the main achievement as I have only been sailing for a few years.

### Q: What event are you most looking forward to next year?

**A:** The GPI4 Worlds. I was on holiday in Abersoch during the 2003 Worlds and that inspired me to start sailing. I was hooked from day one and it will be fantastic this time round to be part of such a big fleet. Abersoch is one of the best venues around. I haven't raced there before, but I have spent many hours on the beach with the kids!

### Q: How did you get involved in helping to promote the GPI4 and are you enjoying it?

**A:** The Association's General Committee provides a great steer, but they are volunteers and can't accomplish everything alone. They need the support of the Members and that's why I offered to help.

I have always been passionate about supporting what I believe in. This is an awesome sport with some wonderful people.

I think the GPI4 is a fantastic boat, which has a place in 21st century sailing. It's a challenge to promote a modern image for a class with so much history, but that is part of what makes the GPI4 special. We need to acknowledge the past, whilst embracing the future.

Most importantly, wherever possible every member needs to play their part. Club members need to support fleet captains, fleet captains need to support their Area Reps. The Association is all about its Members and the boat we sail – it's that simple.

## GP14 Website - International sailing news at a click!

**We are now several months on from the launch of our new look website at [www.gp14.org](http://www.gp14.org) and we hope you have been enjoying the new site.**

Over the coming winter months we hope to introduce more features, including a boat register, clubs section, links page and more items under the technical section.

However, one thing remains constant between this new site and our old one. It is only as good as it is up-to-date. Without recent news and the latest information the site will quickly become uninspiring to visit.

A small group of people have worked very hard over the summer to keep the website fresh with new material and reports have generally been published at least once a week and often more frequently. As ever though, whilst we want this to continue, we need more...

This new website is the home of our worldwide Association. We would gladly welcome news from all over the World, including activities in Ireland, Australia and South Africa. What's more it couldn't be easier...

All you have to do is put a few words down in an email about your latest GP14 experiences – racing, cruising, coaching days, whatever - attach a few digital photographs wherever possible and send them to [news@gp14.org](mailto:news@gp14.org). We can do the rest, including making the finishing touches and sending your article to the dinghy press, where it can help to promote GP14 sailing to its fullest.

Ideally, race reports should be 200-300 words in length and include the top three results for each of the gold, silver and bronze fleets and they should reach us by the Tuesday after the event. Please also include any special prizes awarded, for example, first lady or first youth. It doesn't matter whether you are gold, silver or bronze fleet sailor, you can still write a report and it is often refreshing to have an alternative perspective on an event.

There are now many examples on our website of the type of information that goes into a good report. If it is a weekend event (or longer), please don't forget to tell us what happened in the evening – this is sometimes more interesting than the sailing!

Finally, the discussion forum now represents an easy, accessible medium for you to air your views – please use it to express your ideas on how you think the Association should move forward, or merely to keep everyone informed of the latest GP14 gossip!

If you encounter technical problems accessing the site, firstly please read one of the very first postings on the discussion forum which offers some guidance and may help and, failing that, email [website@gp14.org](mailto:website@gp14.org).

Hope to hear from you soon.

**Website Editor**



## Welcome to...

# JON CLOSE



Welcome to new Committee member Jon Close, whose special interest will be serving on the Technical and Rules sub-committee. He crews for Mandy Mitchell – here they are in action at Hollingworth Lake earlier this year.

*Photo courtesy of Bruce Mager.*

## Grant Aid for Youths to attend Worlds 2008

The Jack Austin Fund was set up to assist young helmsmen and women to participate in the GPI4 World Championship. The fund is directed towards those who would not otherwise be able to enter the event. Youth helms and young crews of youth helms resident outside England, Scotland and Wales are eligible to apply. Application Forms and Guidelines are available from the GPI4 Association Office and completed applications must be returned there by 28th February 2008.

**Hon. Secretary**

## In Memoriam

### JAMES MORAN

11.11.1990 to 29.09.2007

Hollingworth Lake Sailing Club regrets to report the untimely death of young James. He joined the Club in 2005 as one keen to get sailing, following experience with the local Sea Cadets. In time, he wanted to join the Royal Navy. He gained 2 years' experience crewing in a GPI4, attending National Championships in 2006 and 2007 and the World Championship in Sligo last year. He also attended the Association's Plas Menai Training week last year.

On the morning of 29th September, he was delivering newspapers on his bicycle when he was hit by a car. His injuries were such that he did not survive for many hours. A small crumb of comfort for his parents, Paul and Anna, was that he carried an Organ Donor Card and has thereby helped others to live. This was typical of his caring personality. A large crowd of friends of all ages attended his funeral.

He will be missed by all who had met him and our sympathy goes out to his parents in their loss.

# Winter Championship Report

**Another championship season over! 2007 has been a memorable season for many reasons, but a poor summer weather-wise; in the main we have seen extreme highs and lows throughout the season - repeated low pressure systems battering our shores and creating too much wind or, conversely, when the high pressures eventually arrived in the Autumn (better late than never I suppose) producing numerous weekends with virtually no wind to speak of...that's life as they say.**

**The 2007 Championship Season** proved to have similar characteristics to the weather, a season of two extremes. The 'highs' were firstly that we were fortunate to have quality championships in terms of event management and organisation, and a huge thankyou must go to all the clubs which accepted the request from our association to host one of our major championships - each and every one pulled the stops out to produce a top quality event. Also, the quality of the competition proved to be up there with the best, whether at Gold, Silver or Bronze fleet level; congratulations to all those competitors who entered the championships organised on your behalf, to those who made the effort to travel and to race on unfamiliar waters at levels sometimes above their comfort zone; well done for having a go and succeeding - it's your commitment to our class that makes the GPI 4 class the envy of many other National and International classes.

The relatively low entry level at most of our championships, however, is the down side to the UK 2007 championship season, our equivalent to a meteorological low. What is it that prevents our members from hitching up their GP and committing to at least one championship event during the course of a season? Is it the word 'championship' that puts competitors off from entering? Or is it two-day events?

Our association has over 1300 UK members; if only half are racers, this still means that a substantial 650



*Ian and Alan competing at the Winsford Flash Open.  
Photo Derek Johnson*

boats could enter one of our championship events; if we divide that figure into our championship program we could expect to see over 100 boats at each event, and that's with each member competing in only one event. I am aware that championship racing is not for everyone, but the fact that so few of our members take advantage of championships organised on their behalf makes me ask the question - is there some underlying reason that we as a committee are not aware of stopping our members competing in championship events? Your views on this would be most appreciated; the competitors who travel regularly would love the pleasure of your company, enhancing the enjoyment of the championship weekend.

I have competed at every championship this year, and with back up from my regular crew Alan Jones and my wife Sue we have visited some beautiful parts of the country, met some very welcoming and friendly competitors, whom I would not normally have had the opportunity to meet, and we have been shown superb hospitality; none of this would we have experienced had we not taken the trouble to travel. I would say it has been probably one of the best seasons in my 30 years of racing GPI 4s.



**The 2007 Grand Prix** was won by Matt Mee and Andy Tunnicliffe. This event went down to the wire: Richard Instone led for most of the season but Matt Mee again proved a tenacious competitor and, with an inspired performance in difficult light shifty conditions at Burton SC, Matt went on to win the Inland Championship and take the title of 2007 Grand Prix winner. Michelle Williams, crewed by Richard Estaugh, won the Silver fleet at the Inland Championship and went on to take the Silver fleet title in the Grand Prix, snatched from under my nose! Michelle kindly re-presented her Grand Prix prize of a day's one-to-one coaching with Richard to second placed boat myself and Alan Jones. Michelle has been having several years of one-to-one practice with Richard and it has most definitely paid

dividends - practice makes perfect: well sailed Michelle! Last but not least, the winner of the Grand Prix Bronze fleet was Ann Penny crewed by Andrea Thomson. These two competitors have excelled this season, and it is their consistent results that have given them their Bronze fleet victory. They showed great courage at the National Championship at Mounts Bay SC, competing in the first points race on Wednesday when only nineteen boats completed the course - they certainly showed a few of the Gold and Silver fleet competitors a thing or two that day! Their success in the Bronze fleet has earned them the converted prize, a days one to one coaching with Richard Estaugh, which should be great preparation for life in the fast lane of the Grand Prix Silver fleet.

## GRAND PRIX RESULTS:

<b>1st Gold</b>	<b>Matt Mee &amp; Andy Tunnicliffe</b>	Hollingworth Lake SC	<b>5 pts</b>
<b>2nd Gold</b>	<b>Adam McGovern &amp; crews (T McGovern/C Robinson/C Birrell)</b>	Hollingworth Lake SC	<b>6 pts</b>
<b>3rd Gold</b>	<b>Richard Instone &amp; L Estaugh/J Goodfellow</b>	Chase SC	<b>12 pts</b>
<b>1st Silver</b>	<b>Michelle Williams &amp; Richard Estaugh</b>	Chase SC	<b>21 pts</b>
<b>1st Bronze</b>	<b>Ann Penny &amp; crews (H Smithson/R Brayshaw/A Thompson)</b>	Derwent Reservoir SC	<b>60 pts</b>

**2007 Sponsorship** backing for the Grand Prix came from Speed Sails; further sponsorship in the form of a magnificent new Grand Prix Trophy came from our Class insurance agent, K. Drewe Insurance; this was presented at Burton S.C. to the Grand Prix winners Matt Mee and Andy Tunnicliffe by Diane Simmons of K Drewe. I must take this opportunity to thank both of our sponsors for supporting our 2007 Grand Prix series; their support has enhanced the Grand Prix competition immeasurably. I look forward to working with them in future years and hope that they have benefited from sponsoring our association as much as we have from their support.

**2008 Sponsorship** We are currently seeking sponsors for our World Championship, either for individual race sponsorship or a for title sponsorship. A sponsor can gain much valuable publicity from sponsoring our World Championship: our 2003 Worlds web site had in the region of 35000 hits. With sufficient sponsorship, world-wide television

coverage of our 2008 Worlds can be organised with Watersport World as part of the sponsorship package. If any member has contacts with a business that may be seeking to place a sponsorship package, we have a dedicated sponsorship team as part of the championship committee, ready to co-ordinate all matters relating to sponsorship of our World Championship and any other of our numerous championship events. To make the initial contact, ring or email our office at Crewe [admin@gpl4class.org.uk](mailto:admin@gpl4class.org.uk) or phone during office hours 01270 212 290

**The World Championship 2008** Plans are well under way. South Caernarvonshire YC is looking forward to our return, expectations are running high, our office at Crewe is receiving at least a couple of enquires every week and has been doing so for the last four or five months; can we match the World Championship of 2003? With your help, we certainly will. This World Championship is not just for the Gold

fleet competitors, it's also for the club sailors, the Bronze and Silver fleets competitors - every one of your entries is important to us. If you want a great week's racing, combined with a brilliant social calendar for both you and your family, be there; if you're still not sure about entering, think about your boat - take her to Abersoch and give her a holiday of a life time with lots of other attractive GPs; you never know, you will all enjoy it so much you'll all want to come back again in 2010 for our 60th anniversary Nationals. Information on Abersoch including accommodation etc can be found on [www.abersoch.co.uk](http://www.abersoch.co.uk)

**Our new web site** will carry up to the minute information on all aspects of the Worlds; the dedicated Worlds pages will be live early in January 2008. Make a point of logging on regularly to get the latest updates and entry list.

**Discounted Entry Fees** Early entries will again attract a significant early entry discount; make sure you are one of the competitors to qualify. New for 2008 is the substantial discount being offered to Youth helms and their youth crews, a 25% discount is being offered to any youth helm entering the World Championship with a further 25% discount if the youth helm has a youth crew - how good is that? - a youth helm and crew in the same boat will qualify for



*Diane Simmons of Drewe Insurance presenting the Grand Prix trophy to Matt Mee and Andy Tunnicliffe*

a massive 50% reduction on the normal entry fee. The qualification for a youth competitor is any competitor who has not reached his/her 21st birthday by the 31st December in the year of the event.

If you are planning to enter the World Championship, don't forget to book your accommodation early; you can never book early enough at Abersoch - do it today!

**Ian Sinclair**  
Championship Chairman

## CHAMPIONSHIP DATES FOR 2008

The following dates and fixtures have been confirmed for the 2008 season.

<b>Scottish Championship</b>	May 3 - 4	<b>Annandale SC</b>
<b>Southern Championship</b>	June 7- 8	<b>Poole YC</b>
<b>Welsh Championship</b>	July 12-13	<b>Neyland YC</b>
<b>World Championship</b>	August 2 - 8	<b>South Caernarvonshire YC</b>
<b>Masters Championship</b>	August 30 - 31	<b>Budworth SC</b>
<b>Northern Championship</b>	September 20 - 21	<b>Royal Windermere YC</b>
<b>Inland Championship</b>	October 4 - 5	<b>Bala SC</b>
<b>Youth Championship</b>	October 25 - 26	<b>Winsford Flash SC</b>

The No.1 Dinghy event of the Year!

# GP14 Worlds

## S.C.Y.C. Abersoch

2nd - 8th  
August  
2008

- Big fleet racing
- Great socials
- Superb location



See [www.gp14.org](http://www.gp14.org) for all the up to date information.

This space is reserved for sponsors logos. If you would like to advertise here please contact the office.

## GP14 Class Association of Ireland

**The GP14 2007 Season in Ireland finished up over the weekend of the 13th-14th October on Lough Erne. Summer arrived late in Ireland this year with a warm, calm, shifty October weekend on Lough Erne. The winners of the Spring Open, Timmy Corcoran and Brendan Brogan finished the Season as they began, by winning all five races in the Hot Toddy Series, an impressive feat in the notorious Enniskillen conditions. The turnout for the event at LEYC, sponsored by Waterways Ireland, continued an upward trend of attendance which was seen throughout the 2007 Season on the Irish GP14 circuit.**

As well as taking the honours at the Spring Open and the Ulster Championships in July at Newtownards

SC, Timmy and Brendan broke new records this year by being the highest placed Irish sailors in the Championship of Ireland for the third year in succession (fourth overall).

The winners of the O'Tiarnagh Challenge this Season were Paddy O'Connor and Tania McHale of SYC with Niall Henry and Ossian Geraghty, also of SYC taking honours in the Purcell, the Leinster Championship and the Autumn Open.

The Youth Championship, which has been run in conjunction with the Autumn Open for a number of years, was hugely successful this year with almost 20 youth sailors competing. This initiative of running the Youths in conjunction with an Open event has worked well and a number of young sailors have recently entered the fleet through this route. A very special thank you to all those boat owners who lent

*The Bronze Fleet Speed Sails League wasn't decided until the final race of the Season: David Lappin and Paul Ruigok, Skerries Sailing Club, under pressure right to the season's end.*





*Timmy Corcoran and Brendan Brogan Cruising to victory in the Hot Toddy 2007. Photo courtesy of Peter Scott, LEYC*



*Paddy O'Connor and Tania McHale Winners of the O'Tiarnagh Challenge 2007*

their boats and crews to the youth sailors. The winners of the GPI4 Youth Championships 2007, (sailed in extreme weather conditions), were John Downey and Sam Hunt of Currabinny Yacht Squadron - well sailed, lads!

The GPI4 Class Association of Ireland Committee re-launched the GPI4 League, which had been in operation for many years, but had fallen by the wayside. The League was generously sponsored by Richard Estaugh of Speed Sails. The Speed Sails League 2007 was scored in Fleets - Gold, Silver and Bronze - over the six main Open events this Season. As the season progressed, there were numerous potential winners in each of the fleets, encouraging sailors to travel to extra events in order to secure a top placing and a related league win. The Speed Sails League 2007 proved very popular, with over ninety boats taking part throughout the Season, and is a system which the committee plans to retain and improve for the 2008 Season.

Other activities that took place over 2007 were a range of Club Support days which took place at Mullingar Sailing Club and Swords Sailing and Boat Club. These support days consisted of gold fleet sailors travelling to MSC and SSBC and providing advice on boat setup, sail trim, sailing skills, boat handling etc, etc. These days were highly successful and the GPI4 Class Committee are keen to run some similar training days in 2008, ultimately aimed at promoting GPI4 sailing and racing at club level.

Over Winter and Spring the GPI4 Class is running two coaching weekends. The first of these is taking place on 17th and 18th November at Swords Sailing and Boat Club on Malahide Estuary, under the capable instruction of Michael McNamara of X-Sails. For further information about coaching weekends, please contact me: Ossian Geraghty, E-mail: [geraghty.ossian@itsligo.ie](mailto:geraghty.ossian@itsligo.ie) Mobile: 00353 (0) 87 7970499

The GPI4 Class Association of Ireland website contains all the detailed results and event reports for 2007, along with the Speed Sails League 2007 results. The 2008 Calendar/Fixtures will be published on the website over the Winter along with photos from the Summer's racing and interesting articles and snippets, so make sure and keep a watch on our website during the long Winter evenings. The GPI4 Irish Association website can be found at; [www.gpi4ireland.com/](http://www.gpi4ireland.com/)

For any of you who are suffering from cabin fever over the Winter months there is some fantastic video footage of GPI4 sailing from the Autumn Open/Youth Championships on Sligo bay in September, posted on the U-tube website. This was filmed by Steve Preston a GPI4 sailor from Newtownards Sailing Club. Log onto [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and search 'GPI4 Autumn'.

### **Ossian Geraghty**

Hon Secretary GPI4 Class Association of Ireland

## Battle of the Charity Buckets

This year's West Lincs 24 hour Race was remarkable not just because the first three winning boats were GPs, but also because the teams which came first and second both raised considerable amounts for charity. The first placed boat was Bolton SC's 'Jeans for Genes' team who collected a large amount of money, as well as raising the profile of this organisation, which raises funds for research into serious and often life-threatening genetic disorders that affect thousands of children. Speed Sails also generously sponsored the Bolton boat and their new Speed main was easily recognised by the large yellow badge of 'Jeans for Genes'

Bolton's team was closely followed by a GP14 from Hollingworth Lake SC (B) sailed by Adam McGovern and Chris Robinson, who were rooting for the official charity of the 24-hour race, Sail for Cancer. Their remarkable achievement was to sail the full 24 hours continuously, without crew changes, creating a milestone in the event, and they were in the lead for a large part of the race; they also secured the trophy for the fastest laps at 8pm indicating that they weren't only just the most consistent boat but were actually the fastest on the water at times!

The weather was perfect right up until the last couple of hours, when the wind suddenly increased with gusts racing across the lake, causing a wild flurry of capsizes and dismasting an Enterprise. Great entertainment for the spectators, but a blow to



Adam and Chris who had hoped to pull off a fairy-tale ending. They had to be content with 83 laps, against Bolton's 84 – and a huge sense of achievement!

There were 70 entries, 26 of them GP14s.

### Overall Results

Position	No	Sail No	Club	Laps
1	2	GP 2	Bolton SC (A)	84
2	56	GP 13956	Hollingworth Lake SC (B)	83
3	15	GP 13924	Burwain SC (B)	83
4	3	Lark 2499	South Staffs SC	83
5	26	Ent 23170	Hallamshire SC	82

# GP14 National Championship at Mounts Bay, August 12-17

**This summer was the fourth time that the GP Nationals have been held at Mounts Bay SC and on each previous occasion the championship had been won by Richard Estaugh. He and his crew Simon Potts were going to have to work hard.**

They started well, winning the first race against current GP14 world champion, Ian Dobson, and his crew Andy Tunnicliffe. But after two races the following day, in lighter conditions, they had fallen three points behind Ian and Andy and were tied on equal points with Tim Jones and Dale Knowles.

Then the weather struck. This was the week when so many boats had to abandon the Fastnet race and limp to the shelter of south west ports. After a severe weather warning, Tuesday's races were both postponed, but conditions were still very challenging on Wednesday morning with a four-metre swell and visibility down to a few yards. Many competitors stayed ashore, others turned round and made the lonely journey back to the beach.

Richard and Simon put on an impressive display of heavy weather sailing, winning both races in superb style. Ian and Andy's efforts were thwarted by an early capsizing in the first race and by snapping their rudder in the second, after a violent broach when hoisting the spinnaker. Amazingly, they completed the race without a rudder, but not with the result they needed.

Conditions were still lively the following day and Estaugh/Potts stamped their authority on the first race from the very first mark, leaving Dobson/Tunnicliffe to settle for second place. The next race, the penultimate of the series, was the crucial one. Richard Instone, crewed by Steve Parker, got out of the blocks early, tacked onto port to clear the fleet and was first at the windward mark, closely followed by Justin Jones and Lucy Evans. At the end of the race, these two boats were in first and second places. The real battle, however, was going on behind them, as Estaugh/Potts made sure

at all cost that they stayed ahead of Dobson/Tunnicliffe. A tense and close battle eventually ended with advantage to Richard Estaugh and Simon Potts – which meant that they had won the Championship with a race to spare.

Only one race was scheduled for the final day and Ian and Andy ensured they made the best of it, by capitalising on a significant shift to the left in the second beat and storming into the lead, to finish second overall. Tim Jones and Dale Knowles had taken a bath at the gybe mark, but they also spotted the shift and recovered sufficiently to finish fourth, ensuring third place overall.

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Further down the fleet there were exciting battles for Silver and Bronze prizes. Kim Pickering and Richard Cornes were the winners of a closely-fought battle with Ian Sinclair and Alan Jones in the Silver Fleet. In the Bronze Fleet, because of the system of scoring the Silver and Bronze Fleets as separate entities, the winners were Tony Jukes with Adrian Smith, although they were beaten in the overall fleet by sixteen-year old Drew Nickless, whose crew was his uncle Bob. No doubt a subject for future debate.

GPI4s came from all over England for this championship and there were also visitors from Ireland and from Sri Lanka. Mounts Bay Sailing Club worked hard to put on a very professional and successful championship, with a friendly welcome, good food, copious liquid refreshment, expertly organised races – and excellent safety cover!

**Prizewinners were as follows:**

<b>1</b>	<b>Gold</b>	13971	Richard Estaugh	Simon Potts	Chase SC
<b>2</b>	<b>Gold</b>	13924	Ian Dobson	Andy Tunnicliffe	Burwain SC/RWYC
<b>3</b>	<b>Gold</b>	13907	Tim Jones	Dale Knowles	Holyhead/Bolton SC
<b>1</b>	<b>Silver</b>	13417	Kim Pickering	Richard Cornes	Windsford Flash SC
<b>1</b>	<b>Bronze</b>	13950	Tony Jukes	Adrian Smith	Chelmarsh SC



*Spray breaking over the clubhouse balcony, MBYC*



## 'Like sailing in a Washing Machine...'

**The conditions that greeted us in Mounts Bay on the Wednesday of the National Championship came as a bit of a shock to all of us. From the shore it looked as if launching might be a bit difficult, but once that had been accomplished then it would be a lively sail, but not too bad.**

After clearing St Michael's Mount, it very quickly became obvious that this was not the case, as we were all being confronted by waves from all directions and with some nasty gusts on the top of the swell. At many places the racing would have been called off for the day, but this was Mounts Bay Sailing Club, where I have competed in some of my windiest races.

This was not going to be a day for heroics, however. I firmly believe that the people who decided to return to shore did the right thing. Below I have outlined a number of things that can be done in such conditions to make help make things a bit safer and more comfortable. Next time you might be able to complete the course, and then the next time be more competitive. It really is a matter of slowly building up confidence. If, however, you only experience these conditions once in a blue moon, I know that can be difficult.

On the way out to the start area the most direct course put you onto a broad reach, and the waves coming from all directions made the boat roll all over the place. To combat this, you need to steer very positively: as the wave goes under you, luff sharply and then bear away smoothly. As the wave approaches, bear away slightly but be ready to luff once you are on top of the wave.

To make things easier, the best course would have been to sail out on a beam reach. This would have made the boat much more stable. It would have meant sailing well above the obvious course to the start area, followed by a tack and another beam reach. Remember as you luff and bear away you will be changing course quite dramatically and will therefore need to trim the mainsail quite quickly.

If at any time the boat starts to get out of control or you or your crew feel uncomfortable then luff up and stop. Talk to each other about what is happening, and try to correct things.

Another tip is to have the centreboard slightly less than half up, as this helps change direction easily. Also make sure that the genoa is trimmed with the main. The crew will need to be moving around to keep the boat level. This is where communication and an understanding of what you are both trying to achieve is important. This is because as the helm bears away or luffs, it affects how far the crew should move. For instance if the boat heels on a wave and the crew moves to windward to balance the boat just as the helm bears away sharply, the result will be a capsized to windward.

Once in the start area, try to relax a little and find the sailing angle or hove-to position that is most comfortable. Sound signals are difficult to hear in these conditions, so keep a look out for the flags. Make sure that you stop well to windward of the committee boat as it is all too easy suddenly to find yourself well to leeward.



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The first target is to try to get round the course; as the race goes on and you feel you are getting more confident you can revise this. Make the targets very achievable, i.e. to catch one boat at a time.

Sailing upwind quickly in the conditions at Mounts Bay was very difficult. I would therefore suggest that in similar conditions you adopt the following:

Genoa eased slightly (two to three inches). The helm should then sail to this and the crew should not get tempted to sheet in even when you feel underpowered, or off the wind. The reason for this is because as soon as you do you will be on top of a wave and in a big gust! By sailing slightly eased and off the wind, you will not suffer too much from the genoa emptying completely as a wave passes you, with the result that the boat comes right to windward. The waves are going to have a big effect, so accept that the boat will not be flat and is going to heel both to leeward AND TO WINDWARD. This is very important as allowing the boat to be heeled to

windward, and being comfortable with this, prepares you for the next wave, which is going to force the boat to come upright and heel to leeward

As on the reaches, you will need to steer to the waves. Luffing as you go up the wave, and bearing away at the top of the wave. The luff of the genoa tells you to do this. But the real secret to a smoother flatter boat is anticipation - starting to make the alteration just a split second before it is required. As on the reaches, sometimes the tiller movement needs to be quite violent

I realize how hard it is to get enough practice for circumstances like these, as we all tend to do most of our sailing on inland waters. I hope this article will give you some tips for the next time we face strong winds and a huge swell, as there is something very satisfying about completing races in such conditions.

**Richard Estaugh**



*Solitary GP returning to the shelter of the beach – viewed from the top of the Mount.*

## SWAFs in St Ives by Chloe Brennan

**Four of the founding SWAFs (Jan Jones and Louise Brennan couldn't be here) plus several new arrivals including Sue Konczyk, Vicky Leavers, Michelle Williams, Sue Jeffs, Rhiann Parry, Bev Hateley and Oliver Hateley met up at MBSC at 10am on the second sailing day of the 2007 national championships.**

The SWAFs, or, sailors wives and families, were founded by Jan Jones, Sue Sinclair, Nikki Thornley, and Janice, Louise and Chloe Brennan during the 2006 world championships in Sligo. There wasn't really much to do in Sligo so a cultural pub crawl took place (the pubs were in the cultural guide to the city thing that you got in that bag you were given on entry).

We all stood outside the Bus Stop outside the Godolphin Arms until someone pointed out if we got on the bus it would take us as far as Penzance or Lands End if we were lucky; yes, we were on the wrong side of the road so we got on the bus outside the Cutty Sark pub at 10.30am, expecting an hour long bus ride. On the way there (which took far longer because of going around various holiday resorts, long cuts and going through villages twice), we passed a pub called "the Bucket of Blood Inn". This sparked various conversations such as "what do you say? 'I'm goin' down the blood, love'". By 12 noon we had pulled into the bus stop at St. Ives to see a spectacular view of the beaches and town. We walked down a narrow road filled with cars with frustrated drivers trying to get through, around a corner, and were then faced with a really steep hill – downhill, fortunately. On the way down, baby Oliver's parasol had to be adjusted to get through the narrowness. At the bottom of the hill, we walked around the outside of the town and down the seafront and split into two groups : the cream tea ladies and the pub goers.

The pub goers, Nikki, Sue Konczyk, Michelle, Vicky, Bev and baby Oliver were sat outside the pub with drinks from the pub (Oliver with the obligatory milk) and pasties from a local shop, but the pub took offence as they 'sold food' so they each took a turn in



SWAFs 2007 (Chloe is in green).

looking after Oliver while the others wandered around eating a pasty that was about 400 degrees in temperature, dodging the seagulls.

Caroline and Stacey met the cream tea ladies along with baby Jake, and then the two groups joined up again. We started walking "towards the shops" down a quaint alley way, but for some strange reason ended up at another beach! All these women and we couldn't sniff out the shops. Eventually, we found a Fat Willy's surf shack, Fat Face and Seasalt shop, where everybody bought something, and baby Oliver ended up with a new wardrobe!

Walking through the streets of St Ives it was getting busier and busier or were the streets getting narrower and narrower? Who knows. It was decided that it was time to catch the bus back to Marazion so we started making our way back to the bus stop. Poor Bev had to push the pram up the really steep hill and she was almost parallel to the pavement. Baby Oliver was in his element: I am sure the SWAFs when he gets older and they are going on the Nationals/Worlds day trip accompanied by zimmer frames and wheelchairs, will remind him of his first SWAF day out to St Ives, bless him. Our official SWAF picture was taken and we boarded the bus. Great, another hour and a half of being thrown around the bus by dodgy driving!

Back to the Yacht Club for the cheap, but very nice alcohol, oh and to meet up with the men.

## UK Youth Championship

**The GPI4 UK Youth Championship is supported not only by young GPI4 racers but also by those more used to sailing in other classes. Parents and friends actively encourage the young competitors and several GPI4s are on loan from friends who may have nurtured the youth as a crew.**

Midland SC in the heart of Birmingham extended a friendly welcome to the 32 young competitors. Even the weather co-operated with a pleasant force 3 on Saturday and a gusty force 4 decreasing to force 2 on Sunday. An account of the racing complete with photos and the full results is published on the GPI4 website [www.gpi4.org](http://www.gpi4.org).

Anyone who has not yet seen the superb photos taken by Nigel Spurr is in for a real treat.

*Photos courtesy of Nigel Spurr*

*Close quarters*

All the competitors showed competence at boat-handling and spinnaker-flying and even after a few capsizes, crews recovered themselves to continue racing. Racing was often very close and passions were overflowing as much among the observers as much as among the competitors. Congratulations go to Adam Parry and Sam Collingwood, worthy winners of the UK Youth Championship 2007 with a race to spare. Runners-up, Greg Marshall and Stuart McKenzie showed experience over Alastair and Pippa Mitchell, whose determination to persevere brought them back up to third place.



*Adam and Sam battle it out with Alastair and Pippa.*





It was pleasing to see so many female helms and crews: Nicky Robinson and Pippa won the trophies for female helm and female crew respectively, while Seonaid Flemming and Heather Jones were the first all female team. A name to look out for in the future is Charlie McNamara, who won the 16 yrs and under trophy. The club showing the most promising youth development is Llandudno Sailing Club encouraged by Fleet Captain Andy McNamara.

The Youth Championship is renowned for the camaraderie off the water and Midland SC provided an excellent chicken supper on Saturday night, followed by lively "indoor boat races". The Youth Championship is just one occasion for young racers to meet and socialize. Click on to the GPI4 website for a full programme of events in 2008 and take advantage of the attractive discounts aimed at youth racers.



Llandudno Team receiving the Team Trophy from Commodore Christine Homer (second on left).

From left to right: Andrea Thompson (Derwent), Charlie McNamara, Tom Moore, Vicki Leavers (Midland SC), Connor McNamara (in front) and Ross Moreton

## A Great Deal for Youths

The GPI4 is an ideal boat for youth racers and our major Championships have been dominated by young winners in recent years. Mike Senior won the 2004 Nationals, Matt Mee won the 2006 Nationals, Ian Dobson and Andy Tunncliffe won the 2006 Worlds.

**The GPI4 Association have agreed to make the 2008 Worlds even more attractive to our young racers by offering a 25% discount on the entry fee to a youth helm or a 50% discount to a youth helm sailing with a youth crew.**

The definition of being a "youth" is not to have reached your 21st birthday before 31st December 2008. GPI4 youth membership for the helm is only £13, which is less than half of the full membership fee. In addition to this generous discount, youths from outside England, Wales or Scotland are also eligible to apply for a Jack Austin grant towards travel cost to the 2008 Worlds (see page 7).

**Spread the word; it's never been better value for youth racers.**

## News from the North West

**The outcome of the keenly contested Northern Bell Series was in doubt until the very last event of the season at Winsford Flash SC. Martin Brennan and Alistair Knott (HLSC) started the day as Series leaders, but were facing fierce competition from Neil Platt and Wendy Carlin (Bolton/WKSC), challenged by Adam McGovern and Chris Robinson, also HLSC. Despite having had an operation on his knee only a couple of weeks beforehand, Martin secured victory by maintaining his points lead, although Neil won on the day. Well done Martin and Alistair, who win an Omega spinnaker.**

Ian Sinclair with crew Alan Jones (Bolton/Nantwich & Borders SC) are worthy recipients of an Omega genoa as winners of the Silver Fleet. They also had to battle to maintain their position at the front of the fleet at WFSC and, despite mixed results on the day, improved their overall performance to come out on top. Julie and Chris Waddington (Bolton SC) were second, Mandy Mitchell and Jon Close (WFSC) third.

Bolton SC were winners again in the Bronze fleet: Gary Hutchinson and Andy Bury won an Omega spinnaker in their first season, ahead of promising youth sailors David Reaser and Mark Chisholm (WLYC). Stan van den Berg and Sheena Davies,



Gary Hutchinson and Andy Bury, Bolton SC, at Winsford Flash Open. Photo Derek Johnson



Mary Cunningham & Alan Thompson, leading the fleet at Winsford Flash Open. Photo Derek Johnson



Ted and Lizzie Garner: photo Derek Johnson

WKSC, who were third, have always competed with great spirit and obviously enjoyed being part of the circuit. I'm sure that this is in no small part due to the enthusiasm and determination of their FC, Mary Cunningham, who through her encouragement and determination, has ensured that the maximum number of boats from her fleet have travelled and competed.

Mary was the lucky winner of the draw for an Omega spinnaker – however she had just bought one! I believe that Mary and Neil have worked out a suitable alternative and Mary will collect her prize at the Prize Giving at Budworth on 4 November.

There were 17 qualifiers this year, a great improvement over 9 last year with an average of 11 visitors per event. A visitor with a big smile on his face was Ted Garner (Budworth SC) who won the Open at Dovestone SC. After taking in the beauty of the surrounding national park, and noting with relief that the usual effect the valleys have of funnelling the wind in different directions had been eliminated - there was no wind - he began the serious work of competing. Placed equal first after

two races, it was all down to the final race, and whether the kind officer of the day would retrieve his boat as nerves had set in and somehow it had drifted off with no one in it! Then, attempting to copy his great start in the second race, he mistimed and mis-steered the roll tack and ended up feeling foolish, splashing around with flapping sails at the back of the fleet. However, he and his crew, daughter Lizzy, eventually triumphed and went home happily clutching their wine glasses.

Spectators thought that Adam McGovern and Chris Robinson would also need assistance at Winsford Flash as they had gone aground on the far bank of the lake. No panic though, they were just taking advantage of a temporary convenience sited near to the start line between the back-to-back races! Oh, and by the way Adam, please could Jon Close have his sleeping bag back so that you can borrow it again when you forget it for the next event? (Adam managed to forget to take one to the Inlands as well as the Northern Championship...)

**Mandy Mitchell**

## Midland & East Coast Area

**I am writing this after the end of the Midland Bell for 2007 and suffering badly from "Man Flu".**

We had eleven Qualifiers this year as against eight in 2006. I managed to get round all the meetings and Derek Fleming only missed one.

The overall winner for the second year in a row was John Salomonson, mainly with Seonaid Fleming as a crew, but also with several others.

Derek Fleming from South Staffs, crewed by Derek Tiller, was second overall and winner of the Bronze Fleet, Roy Nettleship, crewed by Sabine Schamberg from Nottingham, was third overall and winner of the Silver Fleet .

The full overall results have been published on the Area website; there were 105 individual entries throughout the year, as against 109 for 2006 and this did not include Chelmarsh which had to be cancelled due to the lack of wind.

By the time this has been published, we will have had the annual area meeting and agreed the dates and venues for 2008, so keep looking at the website for full details.

South Staffs have had a good year with Paul Owen (Dodge) crewed by Andy Hateley winning the Masters and Adam Parry crewed by Sam Collingwood winning the Youths.

I wish you all good wind and enjoyable sailing throughout the winter.

John Salomonson: Midland and East Coast Area Rep

*For the definition of Man Flu (if you need one) see [www.urbandictionary.com](http://www.urbandictionary.com) -Ed*

## Scottish GP14 Team Racing

**The Isle of Arran provided a breathtaking venue for the 2007 Scottish team racing over the weekend of September 22/23. The competitors were glad of the shelter of Lamlash Bay and Holy Island as the wind blowing straight up the Clyde estuary was stiff, peaking at 20 knots on the race course; this, combined with glorious sunshine, provided great conditions.**

Seven teams participated, with each team racing every other in the initial stage. The top four teams moved onto the semi finals and finals, while play-offs were raced for the lower places. With just two boats per team, it was a simple case of last boat lost, encouraging tactical manoeuvres in most races.

The 'S' shaped course, with an initial beat followed by a short reach, then a run, followed by a second short reach and a beat to finish, provided plenty of tactical upwind and downwind legs as well as numerous buoy roundings. Whilst not sailing, the competitors enjoyed the spectacle from an impressive ketch with plenty of nourishment aboard.



*Covering tactics in the shadow of Holy Isle*



The top four teams included two home club teams and an Annandale team, as well as a visiting team from Derwent Reservoir. The first semi-final between Annandale and Derwent was one of the few races not to feature much team racing when Annandale's Mark Greenhalgh and Ross Carmichael neatly sailed Derwent's David Holmes and Ian Penny away from the start line, allowing the Annandale boats an easy finish first and second finish.

The second semi-final was a tense affair between the two Arran teams. Arran 1 had won their earlier battle, but Arran 2 were determined to settle that score and plenty of tactical encounters ensued, with the result only resolved in the final two boat lengths of the race, in favour of Arran 2.

The final was sailed over two races with the teams swapping boats between the races. The experience of the Annandale team Mark Greenhalgh and Ross Carmichael and Andrew Greenhalgh and Adam

Firby showed, as they dominated the proceedings and managed to score first and second places in both races.

Thanks were expressed to Arran Yacht Club for their wonderful hospitality and plans are afoot to repeat the event next year, with enthusiasm high from all the participating clubs and hopefully a few more as well.

#### Results:

<b>1st</b>	Annandale 1
<b>2nd</b>	Arran 2
<b>3rd</b>	Arran 1
<b>4th</b>	Derwent Reservoir
<b>5th</b>	Annandale 2
<b>6th</b>	Castle Semple
<b>7th</b>	Annandale 3



*Close sailing in Lamlash Bay, heading for the first mark*

## GP Sailing in the South

**Ian Campbell's work often takes him to far-flung corners of the world, where he has to give up his favourite sport for up to three months at a time. At moment, he is in China, so I'm writing his area report for him.**

The Southern Travellers' Series went well in that we had eight really good venues, where the clubs put on excellent open meetings – Papercourt, the Welsh Harp (Venetian and Victor trophies), Leigh on Sea, Lee on the Solent, Poole, Hampton, Frensham Ponds and – new to the Travellers this year – Tollesbury. The Area Championship was combined with the Midlands at Chase Water.

The downside was that the number of people who are prepared to travel is still not great, with only a few boats from around the region who regularly take to the road. Why this is remains something of a mystery, but probably it is simply because the clubs in the area don't have huge numbers of GP sailors, although some hard work is going into building up fleets, for example at Tollesbury.

The exception remains BTYC, one of the Welsh Harp Clubs, where a thorough and structured training programme, beginning with learning to sail (in GPs of course!), followed by careful initiation into the racing programme over the course of a couple of seasons has encouraged a dedicated group of enthusiastic sailors, who very much enjoy going off together to visit other places, to broaden their experience and have a good day out.

We hope that next year we will be able to organise a similar programme and that we will have even more qualifiers. The Area Championship will be at Poole YC in June, with the result that the usual Open and Round the Island races weekend in August won't be happening next year. It should be a great venue for the Areas and we expect lots of visitors from the Midlands to swell the large local fleet.



Leigh on Sea Open – photo Graeme Swenney

## SERIES RESULTS

POS	POINTS	HELM	CREW	CLUB	BEST 4 RESULTS
<b>1</b>	6	Mark Wolf	Ian Campbell	BTYC Sailsports	1 1 1 3
<b>2</b>	7	James Ward	Richard Whitehill	Papercourt	1 2 2 2
<b>3</b>	15	Za Jelliffe	Libby Jelliffe	BTYC Sailsports	2 4 4 5
<b>4</b>	18	Mike Abbott	Gabrielle Abbott	BTYC Sailsports	4 4 4 6
<b>5</b>	22	Richard Lord	Evie Carver/Poly Kaparas	Seahorse	1 4 5 12
<b>6</b>	22	David Innes	Matthew & Wendy Innes/ Jon Denyer	Frensham Ponds	3 4 7 8
<b>7</b>	25	Ruslan Scutelnic	Serena Counsell	BTYC Sailsports	2 7 8 8
<b>8</b>	33	Michael Gearing	Mark Harvey	North Herts East Beds	6 6 10 11
<b>9</b>	35	Roger Walton	Suzanne Williams	BTYC Sailsports	3 8 10 14

## South Wales Area News

**Since retiring as your President, I've been fairly quiet on the GPI4 scene although still travelling to the major events when date clashes allow. This year I travelled to the Southern Area Championships in Chase, the Welsh Area Championship in Llandudno, the National Championship in Mounts Bay and the Inland Championship in Burton SC; that means that I only missed three events, the Grand Master and Master event in South Staffs, the Northerns in Derwent and the Scottish in Annandale. I suppose I can be forgiven for not going to two of these as it would have meant round trips of over 650 miles to get to the Scottish and Northerns over a two-day weekend, to sail four races each; and my excuse for the Masters is that I was at a coaching course in Loughborough that weekend.**

Why am I telling you this, you may ask? Well, to illustrate a point. As a GPI4 sailor in South Wales, I only have these area championships in which to compete against other GPI4 sailors and this limits my chances of doing well at the National Championship, the main event of the year. I'm in a Catch 22 situation: to do well at the National Championship I need to compete against other GPI4 sailors; so either I travel to the Midlands to do the Midland Bell circuit - quite expensive as a round trip to Birmingham is over 200 miles - or I travel to all of the championships, which is also very expensive and they are now only seven in number; so either way I need money and time, or I save both and just give up!

My position is not unique. I'm sure there are GPI4 sailors all over the UK echoing my thoughts, but what can we do? Well, I believe that we need to revitalise our events by having more, shorter, races. My experience throughout the year is that not many positions change after the first beat, (unless of course

you sail in South Staffs or Burton), as the speed difference between the boats is marginal these days, so why not have four thirty-minute races on the Saturday and another four on the Sunday? This would give a competitor eight races with two discards, and a lot more fun for less actual sailing time. (At the Inlands we had two seventy-five minute races each day).

It also gives more bang for your buck. Championship events are not cheap to enter and to travel to, so let's get more things to talk about in the clubhouse after racing: more races will lead to more things to talk about. This will hopefully lead to more competitors travelling and more staying at the host club for socials - something that we definitely need to work on! If this works, then perhaps we can get back to more area championships. Sailors from the main club in my area, Neyland YC, 100 miles west of me, have it harder than me as they have to add another 200 mile round trip to my mileage figures!

Thanks for listening to my rant/thoughts, but I believe that we do need to evolve to survive, not only cosmetically, but also on the water. You all know me, so please feel free to contact me with your thoughts whether in agreement or not - healthy debate is good for the soul!

My contact details are as follows; Home 01443 205130; Mobile: 0797 123 9772 and Email: paul@tsimes.fsnet.co.uk

Finally it seems too early to be doing this but may I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**Paul Simes**  
GPI4 13884

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**to follow**

# Letters to the Editor

Searson J Thompson  
Aberdovey Mem No 15498

## Dear Ms Hilary

On reading the Spring Mainsail, I feel I must write to say how impressed I am at the rejuvenated format and the new LOGO, which I feel is in keeping with the modern methods of the present day, and all concerned must be congratulated.

I also must agree with all that is said about the girls in the office, especially Irene Thompson (sorry to say, no relation); she and the other girls are doing a magnificent job, and I should know as I remember George Mannering helping Howard Davies to set it up, HAA!!! Yes, you say, but how do you know?...well I was there in the background while all this was happening, and, yes, I was at the first inaugural meeting in Shropshire and served on the committee for many years, initially as technical adviser - after all, I did help produce the first dinghy which turned out to be the original GP14 that came to Aberdovey, from my firm of Bell Woodworking Company of Leicester, to Howard Davies as Number One.

Having never heard of Aberdovey until then, my family and I liked it and have lived here ever since; well, I have - my son Paul, his wife a local girl and my granddaughter still live here. We have all been connected with the YWG P14 (Yachting World GP14) the whole of our lives. Yes, very much a back room boy, but pushing the GP here and other places in the World, such as America, Canada, the Middle East and South Africa; helped set up clubs there, and made sure they had a fleet of GPs, yes, for personal reasons and of course for business reasons too, as we sent kits and finished boats all over the World. I was there in South Africa earlier this year and saw many clubs still sailing GPs.

So at the ripe old age of 95 years (NINETY FIVE) I'm wondering how many old codgers like myself are still interested in the GP14. I'm still connected with the Dovey Yacht Club, being a Trustee of the club, and I attend most of our GP meetings. My Granddaughter sails a GP but does not own one - she owns and sails one of the opposition, a Laser, but learned to sail in a GP and also in the Mirror Dinghy, which of course I produced with many others.

I retired in 1975, after having been part owner and Managing Director of Bell Woodworking Co; at the time I couldn't see how we could go on producing wooden boats by the hundred in the face of fibre glass, so I retired and the firm closed five years later, but as you see I'm still a member of the GP14 Class Association and still have a great interest in it; I have helped many members find the history of early boats which they are interested in - well, it's more likely to be sons finding the whereabouts of their fathers' boats.

Whether or not you will print this waffle, I don't know, but I would like to know if there is anyone else out there still, with a lifelong memory of such an outstanding organisation as the GP 14 Association. I wish it well for the future.

I liked the caption in MAINSAIL: *The best GP 14 week in the World* and the picture of Aberdovey too.

I will close yours sincerely,

**Searson J Thompson**

**Dear Liz**

For some time I have been concerned about rule infringement within our Class. There are remarkably few protests at our major events, and at our Open Meetings. While I recognise that sailors generally want to finish the day and get on to other things, I am sure that we all know that some get away with bullying their way round and flout the rules.

A couple of incidents at the Masters Championship drew this to a head for me. In one incident, which I had seen from a distance, a protest form was made out, and I was asked to chair the hearing. In the next race, a very similar incident took place and I duly protested the offending party. Now, when the Racing Rules of Sailing were last revised, we had no longer to fly a 'red' flag and hail the other boat, all we had to do was shout 'Protest'. It has become apparent to me that either this shout is not given or is not heard by the other party.

It seems to me that there are strong grounds for the Association revising its Standard Sailing Instructions to include a requirement to fly a 'red' flag to indicate an intention to protest (which is more likely to result in the offending party taking a penalty at the time). It also becomes less confrontational.

The RYA is pioneering a new approach with Racing Rules Advisors to provide a possible 'Arbitration' before proceeding to a full Protest hearing (if needed). I would encourage the Association Committee to adopt these practices to get better rule observance in the Class.

Yours aye,

**Graham Knox**

(GP 13746)

Specialist  
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## Cruising Corner

**Some of you will already know that, after six years at the helm, Ivan asked to be allowed to retire as Cruising Representative as from the recent AGM and suggested I should stand for election as his successor, which I agreed to do. My election was duly approved by the AGM.**

It is appropriate to offer a very warm vote of thanks to Ivan for all his hard work and in particular for the excellence of the three more or less annual events that he has run over that time: the National Cruising Week, the Toddbrook SC/Class Association weekend and the Weir Quay weekend. These have been hugely enjoyable thanks in no small measure to Ivan's hard work

It is also appropriate to record my personal appreciation for his support and encouragement over the last couple of years since I started to get involved with Association cruising activities. We have worked very well as a team over that period and although the helm has now changed I am sure that I will continue to have the benefit of his advice and experience.

### EVENTS

**The Abersoch long weekend** was hosted by Toddbrook SC (Ivan's home club) for their own members plus GPI4 Association members. Miraculously, the week's torrential rain cleared up just in time and we had a superb weekend of invigorating sea sailing in good sunshine amidst spectacular scenery. Saturday saw some scorching planing on the sail back - true force 4/5 (my estimate) with wind against tide, but others reckoned it was force 5/6 so maybe I am losing my judgement! Some of you may already have spotted on the website the excellent report Cruising Virgins, by Rob and Gill Paul, which we reproduce on page 34 for anyone who may have missed it..

**The UK Cruising Week at Neyland** was an excellent week as usual, and once again we enjoyed

superb sailing in spectacular scenery, including one 8-mile plane home from Dale - which started with a seriously wild plane across Dale Bay. There is a report on the week starting on pg 38.

Our hosts enjoyed the week so much that we came away with an unsolicited invitation to return there. And my crew who was sailing in the event for the second time, this time with his adult daughter joining us, tells me that they both enjoyed it so much that they are already putting it in next year's diary. He is now looking to buy a GPI4 and will of course be joining the Association!

**The Anglesey Cruising Week** (Red Wharf Bay SWC with an open invitation to the GPI4 Association) was a new departure and suffered from a lack of outside publicity by the host club. From our end it clashed with the Nationals. Thus it was no great surprise that it attracted only one boat (my one) for the full week plus one other boat from the host club on just a single occasion. Nonetheless it was a superb week and one which will probably be repeated, but with better publicity and, we hope, without the clash of dates. A log of the week is currently in the pipeline to appear on the website.

Continued car trouble prevented my getting to the Weir Quay weekend so I regret that I have no information there.



Ynys Dulas, Anglesey





*Traeth Dulas, Anglesey. An interesting and challenging entrance to get into this delightful and secluded estuary.*

## WEBSITE

We have substantially expanded the material of cruising interest on the website and will continue to do so. The cruising section includes both a photo album and a selection of cruising logs. Please continue to send in your photos (to [photos@gp14.org](mailto:photos@gp14.org)) and logs (to [cruising@gp14.org](mailto:cruising@gp14.org)) so that we can rotate this material. I have kicked it off, but I certainly don't want to hog it and it would be better to have more material from members other than myself! The website has got off to an excellent start, but it now relies upon all of us the members to keep it fresh and up-to-date.

We intend to archive all logs received immediately upon receipt and, once we start rotating them, we will also post a list of the archived titles; these will be then available on request from the office.

## CRUISING LOG COMPETITION

We are now inviting entries for this new competition. Details are on the website, but if you are not into computers then please request the details from the office; **please give it your support.**

We want to encourage entries from as full a spectrum as possible and in particular logs pertaining to all forms of GPI4 cruising. Thus, a log of a week's day-sailing with young children will compete on equal terms with one of an organised cruising event or with one of a

coast-hopping cruise or a single ambitious passage - or a weekend day-cruising and bird watching on the Broads, or whatever it is that you have done.

All entries will be carefully scrutinized by a judging panel - and we intend to present the trophy at the Dinghy Show. In future years we also intend to invite the previous year's winner onto the judging panel.

## CONSULTATION

As the incoming Cruising Representative I have started a process of consultation with the cruising fraternity as to how you would like our activity to be developed over the next few years. To get this started, I have already emailed all my own GPI4 cruising contacts for whom I have email addresses plus those known to the Association; if you haven't had those emails then it means either that I don't have your email address or that it is not accepting my emails. If you wish to be included in this consultation and if you have not already received my first emails, please email me on [cruising@gp14.org](mailto:cruising@gp14.org).

As a side issue, while briefly researching one point for consultation I was surprised to discover from the websites of other dinghy class associations how few make any reference to cruising activities; most were concerned solely with racing. **It seems that the fact that our Class Association promotes cruising as well as world-class racing puts us well ahead of the pack!**

## Cruising Virgins

**“Are we really going to go?” It had all seemed such a good idea when we saw Ivan’s email back in April. The world was just warming up, spring was in the air and the flowers were beginning to appear. Two days sailing on the sea at Abersoch under a hot July sun with knowledgeable cruisers seemed such a good way to extend our experience into new areas. Now, with the rain pouring down and the wind so strong we had to bring the boat into the garage just to remove the cover and fit the anchor we were not so sure.**

“Oh come on, we said we’d go and it would be rude not to show up just because the weather is a bit poor”. (A bit poor?) So off we went. All the way down the M6 the rain fell and the wind howled; we could scarcely see the other cars. What were we doing?

“I wonder what it will be like camping in this?” It was nearly a quarter of a century since we last stayed under canvas. We were much younger and there wasn’t much choice – we had no money! Since then we had moved on, but here we were with a brand new tent that we had never pitched before, going to meet people we had never met, to sail off shore for the first time.

### WE MUST BE MAD!

But maybe not. As we stopped at the Chester services, the sky cleared and the sun came out. Our spirits began to lift. Let the adventure begin. By the time we reached Abersoch it was a beautiful July day, the run down the coast had been perfect and we were really looking forward to the sailing.





We met the early arrivals, Sue and Rob, Liz and Josh, who assured us we would enjoy the sailing, and pitched our tent, which was far easier and far more comfortable than we remembered (tents have also moved on!) before heading into Abersoch for an excellent meal at the Sandpiper (we can recommend this restaurant to anyone visiting the area!)

Next morning we took our GP 'Suzy' down to the beach near the sailing club, as directed, to rig and met up with Oliver and Eddie fitting brand new cruising sails to Oliver's cruising GP. Suzy had been here long before we bought her, to race in the Worlds in 2003, but this would be a different experience, this was very different company. Oliver re-assured us we would be fine and gave us some really useful tips – and promised to keep an eye on us out on the sea!

By late morning the tide was with us and we were all on the sea – 3 GPs, 2 Enterprises and 1 Graduate – reaching up and down. The wind was picking up a bit - even without the kite we were planing easily. Soon we were following Alison and Kev in their Enterprise downwind to our lunch venue – the beach at Llanbedrog. This was marvellous. No more tacking/gybing every few feet – clear skies, blue seas and SPACE! This was magic!

After anchoring for lunch (another experience and another story – we see there are whole books on

this subject!), we decided to head out to St Tudwal's islands. What seemed like a good idea in the shelter of the bay looked a lot more difficult as we cleared the headland and met the full force of the wind and sea. The wind (we later learned) had picked up to a 5/6 and there were now 1 - 1.5m waves! Inevitably we began to separate as we each handled the conditions in our own way, though the RIB kept a wary eye on us all! After 30 minutes of beating into the wind and getting nearly three-quarters of the way out to our destination, we decided the time had come to tack and head for the safety of the shore. Others soon followed, with the RIB ensuring that we all made it safely home. Hard work, admittedly, but we could scarcely wait for the next day!

On the second day we were joined by Josh's Mirror (now repaired after a mishap on the way down) and Jane had taken the helm of the Graduate and with a different crew. This left Richard to join those walking round to Llanbedrog with the cricket bat for a game of French cricket on the beach at lunch. Philip and John swapped duties on the RIB too. This time the wind was kinder – Force 2/3 - letting us start by rounding St Tudwal's (East), taking the close passage inside the half tide rock, which was just disappearing as we rounded the island (exactly as Ivan had indicated during the pre-sail briefing) before once again heading for Llanbedrog.

We had a more leisurely lunch, even an ice cream, waiting for the tides to turn and ease our return.

As it was still early, we decided to try the outer passage round the islands, via the red bell buoy. Once again the winds rose and the sea got up and it was clear by the time we reached the buoy that the direction also meant we would have to go much further out to make an easy return between the islands while still being confident of clearing half tide rock. Alison and Kev skilfully heaved to just beyond the buoy to mark our point of return to Abersoch from the far easterly side of the island, back through the moored yachts (no problem!) and the fast moving jet skis (hard to predict!).

All too soon we were de-rigging and packing boats, taking down tents and heading for home. This had indeed been an adventure and as we returned to the rain we had left in Cheshire we said a huge

thank you to members of Toddbrook SC and their friends who had invited us to join them, made us so welcome and helped us enjoy an unforgettable two days on the open sea.

**Rob & Gill Paul**  
GP 13747, Suzy  
Bolton Sailing Club





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# UK National Cruising Week - Neyland



**Serious car trouble resulted in my finally arriving a day late, in a hire car, sans boat but with an arrangement to borrow one. Once again my crew was Richard Moore, veteran of numerous yacht cruises together in the seventies and eighties and also in the 2005 GPI4 Cruising Week at Poole, and for the first time his adult daughter Naomi also joined us. Peter James and local member Mick Murray were each kind enough to lend us their boats, between them covering the full week.**

We three arrived on the Sunday evening, after driving much of the way in gorgeous sunshine before meeting a torrential downpour in West Wales as a front went through, only to learn that the cruising fleet had had a very gusty day upriver and that Ivan (crewed by Peter James) had capsized. After a second capsize a few days later during a wild plane across Dale Bay, this time crewing for Charlie Lomas, Peter James came to be jokingly regarded as something of a Jonah: whatever boat he was in was thought to be prone to capsize. So immediately after a birthday presentation to Tina Kucaba on the Thursday evening, Peter Archer found a suitable large trophy in the clubhouse and formally presented it to him - on its side - as the Capsize Memorial Trophy!

Throughout the week we were entertained right royally by Neyland Yacht Club, and in particular by Malcolm and Julie York - who had given up a week of their hard-earned holiday to look after us - and also Mick Murray and youth member Luke Howell, who did much of the safety boat duty. Malcolm led all the various cruises, either under sail or from the escort RIB, and Julie provided much of the shoreside backup, including manning the galley and bar as required. Overall we were made most welcome, and we had a thoroughly convivial week as well as enjoying some fine sailing in attractive surroundings.



*Coming out from Gellyswick Bay passing Milford oil jetty*

Monday saw Richard and me take over Peter's boat for the next three days, and we also admired and commented on Ted and Helen Kurbaca's immaculate and beautiful Series 1 boat, *Loch Fyne*, newly refinished by Paintcraft. We then sailed downriver, but as this was a beat and against the tide we contented ourselves with only a modest distance: into the start of the Pembroke River and then on to Gellyswick Bay for a picnic lunch.



*Coming up the Haven, Pembroke River in the distance to starboard.*

Having greatly admired Ted's boat, and established my credentials with him as a dyed-in-the-wool wooden boat enthusiast, as we sailed straight past him at one point on the way back I couldn't resist hailing him to say "There's no substitute for plastic when it comes to performance!"

Tuesday saw a memorable sail to Dale, and an even more memorable sail home. With the wind round to the north, we had a fine reach all the way to Stack Fort, with the wind strong enough to plane at times, and then finally a beat into Dale itself. Ivan and Edward, both then and indeed for most of the week, upheld their reputation as being normally by far the last to launch but nearly always the first to arrive. We are not of course racing, and Richard and I thought we were generally holding our end up very well, and on this sail were leading the fleet (and not for the first time) when Edward steamed straight past us as though we were standing still!

Coming home I suspect that the wind had strengthened, and we had an absolutely scorching plane on a very broad reach, right across Dale Bay. Probably about force 5 to 6, and quite gusty as well. I confess that I slightly chickened out and reefed the genoa, but even so we seemed to be going faster than I have ever previously sailed when cruising, and comparable with some hairy planing reaches in my

racing days. It would have been marvellous to have had some photos, but we were too preoccupied by staying upright for us to risk taking out cameras!

Once past Stack Fort we had less broad a reach, and a bit of lee from the land, so could afford to shake out the reef from the genoa, but we were still planing most of the way home - and with land close to windward we were having to field gusts even more than when we were crossing Dale Bay.

Wednesday saw us sailing upriver to Llangwm, in very variable winds: at times becalmed and at other times sailing very briskly indeed, with wind (when it came) coming from all points of the compass. Not exactly unusual when going upriver there.

For old times' sake Richard and I diverted to have a look in at Rhoose Ferry, where we used to lay up my first yacht *Quest*; there were a few interesting boats on the hard plus a couple of neglected ones, but no surprise that after this number of years there were no longer any boats that I knew. We also diverted to take a close look at a moored Morecambe Bay Prawner-type yacht, sans mast, with very similar lines to *Quest* but probably a little larger. Malcolm told us that she had lost her mast in a regatta about 4 years ago and it had not yet been replaced.

Then upriver to a picnic site at Llangwm, with picnic tables and seats provided, and an attractive view of the river.



*Prawner-type yacht, without a mast, slightly larger (?) sister-ship to Quest*



*Return from Llangwm; Castle Reach*

With the light and flukey winds that we had for quite a lot of the day we found for the first time that overall we were sailing somewhat slower than many of the other boats, which was somewhat of a surprise, and it did go slightly against the grain to be beaten home by a group of three teenagers from the Neyland club! Clearly light and flukey winds are not our strong point.



*Naomi, Escort RIB, Beggars Reach*

On Thursday we sailed downriver to a very convivial lunch at Angle. This time we relinquished Peter's boat so that he could sail her himself (with Naomi), and we were fortunate enough to be offered one of the two beautifully finished wooden boats in the fleet; it belongs to Mick but was on loan for the week to Malcolm, and it was the latter - a lecturer in boatbuilding at a local college - who had done quite a lot of the fitting out and finishing of the boat.

A pleasant sail outward, beating most of the way and trying to work the shallows and eddies to best advantage since we were beating against the tide.





*Charlie & Dorette Lomas*

Then on arrival we found an attractive pub on the waterfront, and were able to use their beer garden with its pleasant view of the anchorage to enjoy our picnic lunch, suitably lubricated by the offerings of the pub.

Coming home was a prolonged spinnaker run, again in very pleasant conditions: a warm sunny day with enough wind to move the boats briskly but without being unduly strenuous or hairy.

Then in the evening we enjoyed the Cruiser Dinner at the Ferry Inn at Hazel Beach: as well as being a thoroughly convivial evening this was also the opportunity to formally thank Neyland Yacht Club and those individuals who had worked so hard for us.

Friday saw several people pack up to leave early, and the remaining three boats decided to have just a short sail upriver and lunch at the Jolly Sailor.

Again Richard and I had the use of Mick's boat, so we enjoyed a good sail, but once again we encountered light and flukey winds, with all three of us being becalmed from time to time. However the other two eventually managed to sail past us and then found wind off Cosheston Pill, and had a brief look in there while we were still struggling to find any wind at all. Again, light flukey winds proved not to be our strong suit!

Then after a good pub lunch at the Jolly Sailor I left the party to go and strike camp and then spend a couple of hours with an old friend living in the area.

Finally an early evening dinner at the Yacht Club brought a superb week to an end, followed by the drive home to Liverpool.



*Malcolm York, Cruise Leader -  
Beggars' Reach*



*Lunch at the pub, Angle.*

*Ted and Tina Kurcaba, eventually managing to fly the spinnaker, after a great deal of trouble, and raising a cheer from the rest of the fleet when they finally got it up and set!*



## Do you want some coaching?

**Yes, then get out of your armchair, get to a computer or phone and ask for it!**

**No, then ok, at least we, as an Association, have asked.**

Seriously, we have put in place a network of coaches who can help you out at any level - beginner, bronze, silver and even gold fleet standards. So if you and a few of your mates want training then contact me through the [coaching@gp14.org](mailto:coaching@gp14.org) email address with contact details, location and possible numbers and I'll get back to you as soon as I can.

The Worlds are in Abersoch in 2008; do you want pre-worlds training at the venue or from Pwllheli (it's the same stretch of water after all)? If so then, again, contact me at the above email address with the heading Worlds Training and I'll try and arrange it for you.

If you prefer, I can also be contacted via the office on 01270 212290.

Thanks,

**Paul Simes**  
Training Co-ordinator

## Coaching at Winsford Flash Sailing Club

**One Saturday back in July this year, the first sunny weekend for about 6 weeks, Winsford Flash Sailing Club held a day's coaching for five of the club's GPI4 sailors. It was a mixed group in terms of both age and experience.**

We arranged through the Association for RYA Club Racing Coach, Luke Shaw, a top 10 finisher and race winner at the Worlds in Sligo in 2006, and a regular competitor on the GP Circuit, to conduct the coaching.

### WHY DID WE CHOOSE A CRC?

We felt that the combination of an RYA Club Racing Coach, qualified to deliver safe, quality race training that's fun, and someone with a background in GP sailing would be the most appropriate to help develop our skills and build enthusiasm for competitive sailing.

### WHAT DID WE ACHIEVE?

Prior to the day, we agreed with Luke that the key skills of tacking and spinnaker work would be the focus for the day. Mastering these basic techniques takes time and Luke emphasised the benefit of achieving significant improvement in such key areas, rather than trying to accomplish a broader "wish list" in one day.

After a short briefing on shore it was straight out on the water to focus on tacking. The wind was gusting 10 to 12 knots, which was a challenge for some. Liz and Keith commented, "We haven't been sailing for very long and were embarrassed to capsized within about ten minutes. Luke was really good. He helped us get started again and persuaded us to carry on".

During individual de-briefings and a group session, everyone had the opportunity to express their opinions on the day so far, to discuss new things suggested by Luke and compare them with current methods. Keith and Sheila Sowley, Bronze fleet sailors, identified some really useful tips straight away and gained the confidence from the day's practise to continue roll tacking in the gusty, fluky winds that prevailed rather than go into "survival mode" when racing in these conditions.

Spinnaker work was the theme of the afternoon session and it soon became apparent that communication is an essential part of good boat handling. The helm and crew working together as a team can achieve a smooth gybe and gain two or three boat lengths. Luke tailored the exercise to suit the ability of the individuals in each boat with different targets for each boat. In order to consolidate on their morning's achievements, Liz and Keith continued to work on tacking, saying later "We did some really hairy ones, but we also did some of our best tacks ever!"

At the end of the day everyone went home, tired but with a sense of achievement, renewed enthusiasm and newly found confidence, but as Keith and Sheila



*Keith and Sarah Sowley in action, Sarah abandoning ship – too much coaching? Photo Derek Johnson*

were quick to recognise, "Now it is practise, practise, practise...."

The final word goes to Ian Foulkes who commented, "Worth every penny, and I will definitely be up for the next coaching session (the lunch wasn't bad either!)."

### **Mandy Mitchell**

Winsford Flash SC - GPI 3880  
(North West Area Rep and the person who made lunch!)



*Ian Foulkes with son Tom,  
photo Derek Johnson*

# 2008 UK Grand Masters & Masters Championship



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# Varnishing by Ed Bremner

**Varnish has UV blockers in it, so it protects the wood, and all the coats of varnish below it, but it can only provide so much protection and eventually the UV will get through and start to damage the layer of varnish below, until it gets to the varnish-to-wood join. Once the UV works on that, it starts to break down and the varnish begins to break away from the wood. Of course this then allows water to get in, which just speeds up the breakdown of the join....and the varnish....and you are shortly forced to remove all the varnish back down to the bare wood to have any chance at all of getting a good result.**

How do we prevent this? Easy...never let the varnish fully lose its UV protection: you need to sand back a coat or two and replace them with new varnish. Every year? If the boat spends lots of time in the sun, I would do it twice - a couple of coats in the spring and an extra one in the autumn, which will help seal any cracks and defects before the weather deteriorates. If you use a polyurethane varnish, the argument is that you can leave it longer between recoating...and maybe you can...but, whatever the varnish, you are going to have to re-coat sometime and traditional varnish is much, much easier to remove and repair between times. It is worth remembering that you can always use a traditional varnish on top of a modern polyurethane, but not the other way around.

## GETTING THE OLD VARNISH OFF

There are various ways of removing paint/varnish. You can sand it off, scrape it off or burn it off...with chemicals or hot air. Sometimes one thing works well and you stick with it, but normally I use a bit of each method in a process that goes something like this:

First I use a long-blade scraper or filler knife and just go around and pull off anything that is already loose and just waiting to fall off. This bit is rather fun. Next I use a hot-air gun and a hook scraper (like a Skarsten or other tungsten bladed scraper) and try to pull off

most of the paint/varnish. This is hard work, you burn your hands, your assistant's hands, your tools (watch out for plastic handled scrapers...they melt) but as long as you don't stop moving the gun about you won't burn the wood.

OK, now you can use the Chemical Stripper. I have tried most, but normally come back to Nitromors: it seems a bit easier on the wood. Stripper takes a while to get through the outer layer, but if you have already used a hot-air gun to take off the bulk of it, then getting the Nitromors to attack what is left should be easy. Do not underestimate how much stripper you will need... search around for the best price for gallon cans.

## SANDING

By now the boat will look as if you have already removed all the paint/varnish, but will still have some marks'n'stuff. You are going to hate me for saying this....but in terms of time, you are now most probably only 60% of the way through the job. Sanding goes on and on, and the bottom line is that the more you do, the easier it will be to varnish your boat and the better it will look when it is finished. It's an old adage, but none the less true, that the better the preparation....the better the finish.

## MATERIALS

Boats have been varnished in one way or another for hundreds of years and yet, despite all that time and practice, it appears that there is still no agreement about the best stuff to use. Basically, varnishes all fall into two kinds, modern hard ones and traditional supple ones. If the boat moves - by which I mean any old clinker or carvel boat - then you really have to use traditional varnishes, but if the wood is stable, as in most glued and moulded boats then you can use either traditional or modern varnishes.

## TRADITIONAL MARINE VARNISHES

These are the traditional one-pack varnishes. As a general rule they fall into two types: the standard varnishes (made mainly of alkyd) like International 'Original', Blakes 'Classic No 1' and some other cheaper varnishes like MBM 'Prima' which I rather like.

Then there are the Premium Traditional Marine Varnishes like International 'Deluxe', Joton 'Ravilak' from Norway and the best varnish in the world, the Dutch 'Epifanes'. These varnishes tend to have a higher tung-oil content, be darker in colour and are certainly more expensive. They are not difficult to use and certainly have good 'body.'

## MONO-URETHANES & SINGLE PACK POLYURETHANES

There are quite a few of these, (International 'Schooner' and Epifanes 'Mono-urethane' are two) however the only one that I have really used much is the Blakes 'Single Pack Polyurethane' and that's just great! Quite a few of them (including the Blakes single pack) are based on cyano-acrylates (like SuperGlue - which is why they are so hard) and use the moisture in the wood to cure them. I am a real fan. It sets like rock (so you can even polish it - which you can't do easily with traditional varnishes), it dries quickly, is not particularly temperature dependent, is not too hard to get off again (although nowhere near as easy as the traditional varnishes) and although harder to apply than them, is quite easy if you follow my 'Idiots guide to Varnishing'

## TWIN-PACK POLYURETHANE.

Mmmmmmm, I do not deny that there are some boats out there that are varnished with twin-pack Polyurethanes....and that they look gorgeous.....and I know that they will last twice as long and all that. But I am afraid I just can't bring myself to recommend them, well at least not for a 'classic' boat. The problem is that they are so strong, you can never get them off again, well not without destroying the wood underneath. It also just does not look right to me.... you can certainly get a wonderful glass-like finish, but it somehow looks like solid Perspex rather than giving that golden depth you see when you look down into your pint of Bass, with the evening light refracting through.... Oh, and did I mention that they are next to impossible to apply well, unless you can work in a confined space with totally controlled temperature and humidity? I normally varnish outside, so twin-packs are not really quite the thing for me.

## EPOXY COATINGS

Really these are just the same as the Two-pack polyurethanes. Everything I said about them is also true of Epoxy varnishes. They are just as hard to work with, maybe worse. They are very prone to going white if you work too late in the day and the dew comes down a bit early. Any rain is guaranteed to totally ruin your finish and if it all goes wrong and you have to sand it off.....then get ready to take a whole day out of your schedule.

## PRIMERS

Any primer, clear or coloured, has the same purpose: to make a decent bond between the wood and the coating system above it.

Traditionally, the easiest way to do this (and of course in those days, there weren't any clear primers) was to use a thinned varnish that was supposed to sink into

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*Neil Platt (GP 13904)*

Omega Sails finished 2nd, 3rd and 7th at the World Championships, 2nd, 3rd, 8th and 10th at the National Championships and 1st and 3rd at the National Masters Championships. At both the Worlds and Nationals the second placed boat used a Duffin hull with a Proctor mast and the third placed boat use a Speed FRP hull with a Superspar mast. These results show that Omega Sails may be able to help you.

## SAIL PRICES

Individual sail prices:-

GP14 Genoa	£195
GP14 Main	£365
GP14 Spinnaker	£205
GP14 Midi	£190

Combinations:-

Genoa, main and spinnaker	£725
Genoa and main	£540
Genoa and spinnaker	£380
Sailbags per pair	£25

Package and postage approximately £20 on the UK mainland and £40 to both Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland.

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the wood and although I would still do this for a real vintage boat (like my old Merlin), for anything else I would use one of the much better and harder 'clear primers'. These will provide you with a much more secure bond between the wood and the coating system and I heartily recommend their use.

I am aware of two clear primers: International Paints Universal Clear Primer (UCP) and Blakes 'Woodseal'. I think they are pretty similar. Both are expensive with UCP a little dearer. Applying them is identical to applying the varnish on top; just remember that the stuff is HARD! Do make sure that if it is going to need sanding, you do it quite soon before it really cures too hard. Also remember that once it goes hard, it can be difficult to get the next coat to adhere properly. So if you let it go beyond the recommended coating times, you will need to really sand it well before putting another coat on. All in all, I would always recommend that you try and put on the next coat just as soon as the previous coat has been through primary hardening (within the over-coating times).

How many coats? This will depend on the flatness and preparation of the wood you are coating. But you certainly need two coats. One to seal the wood, then, once sanded flat again, another to seal all the exposed wood. Personally I think it is best to keep applying primer followed by sanding until you have got the surface nice and flat

Any of the varnishes, either two-pack, single-pack, or conventional will readily go on top of either of these primers. I often happily work with a clear primer to get a good flat base and then finish off with traditional varnish. No probs!

## GETTING IT OUT THE CAN....AND ONTO THE WOOD

OK so you have prepared your wood and now you want to get the varnish out of the can and onto the wood.

## BRUSH

The traditional way of applying varnish is of course with a brush. Now I am not denying that brushes and the vast skill needed to accurately wield them can produce results of the utmost and highest quality.....it's just that I own eight wooden dinghies and I need an easier and faster way of applying the damn stuff. And, to be honest, life is just too short to be spent cleaning brushes.

## SPRAY

Ah yes....spraying.....the professional answer....well again you get a great result, but you need to work indoors, somewhere with no dust, you need a compressor, spray gun.....and again lots and lots of skill. Let's face it: if you have the ability to spray varnish and somewhere to do it, chances are you are not reading this!

## ROLLER'N'PAD OR ROLL'N'TIP (AS THEY SAY IN AMERICAN)

Not so many people know about this method, but believe me, this is the way to do it. It is easy, cheap, fast and gives just brilliant results.....with next to no skill needed. You need some small foam rollers, these are just like the big rollers you use to paint your walls but they are only 100mm long. They are a little expensive so it can be worth finding a paint store and buying a big bag of them, which works out much cheaper. Then you need the pads; these are foam pads in the rough shape and size of a brush, sometimes called Jenny Brushes although they are also made by a few other companies such as West. Of course you are also going to need some abrasive paper, lots of lint-free cloth, tack-cloth, the appropriate thinners....and the Varnish of your choice.



## OK, SO WHAT DO WE DO?

The secret to getting good results with a roller is working fast, applying an even coating of varnish easily and quickly. Because they are fast, they enable you to always keep a wet edge on the varnish. You are not going to lay down a few thick coats, but lots of thinner coats until you have built up a beautiful thick finish, so you will get plenty of practice.

Pour out a little varnish into the tray and add just enough thinners that it becomes loose and free and will easily flow off the roller when you lift it out. This is roughly 'single' cream consistency, rather than 'double' cream. The exact amount of thinners will depend upon the type, age and temperature of the varnish as well as the ambient temperature when you are varnishing. What you are trying to do is add enough thinners to allow the varnish to flow easily when you

apply it. If you add too much then you end up with such a thin coat, that it is just not worth the effort, but if you don't put any thinners in, then it is much harder (and slower) to apply and quality quickly drops off. It might be a good point here to mention, that it is normally easier to varnish indoors than out, but there is no reason you can't work outside as long as it doesn't rain....and there isn't too much dust....or a passing cloud of suicidal gnats.

Once the varnish and thinners are well mixed, fill the roller with varnish and put the tray on a stool alongside the dinghy.....and get ready to work! If you are right handed, then you want to start at the right end of the work and move left (If left handed, swap around).

Work in small areas of about half a square metre, lay down a series of thick lines of varnish about a roller's width distance apart and then roll across the thick

This is an edited and shortened extract. The full version can be found on the GPI4 website.

Ed Bremner was the founder member of the classic and vintage racing dinghy Assoc. which provides fun low - key racing for boats past their racing prime, for more information see [www.cvrda.org](http://www.cvrda.org)



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lines, spreading the varnish as evenly as possible across the area. When you have an even coverage, finish off with a roll in the direction of the woodgrain. This process should only take about 30-40 secs, hopefully less. It depends on the varnish, but the chances are that you are now looking at a sea of little bubbles on a varnish with a slightly orange-peel effect left by the roller.

This is where the pad comes in! Take the foam pad (jenny brush) and drag it as lightly as you can across the varnish. Making long, light, slow and steady drags across the varnish will remove the mottled look and the bubbles and leave a glassy finish behind. The idea is to touch the varnish as lightly as possible, trying to keep the foam pad as dry as you can. If the pad gets wet (which it will), you need to dry it off as much as possible.

The secret is to work fast and not let any edge dry off before you return to recoat it. It's easy and it's quick, a 12ft hull should take 25-30 mins, decks 15-20 mins (faster if you are working with someone). If you miss a bit (and you will) then don't worry, but also don't be tempted to go back - once the wet edge is lost, you will never get the varnish to blend in. Better to leave it and get it in the next coat; same goes for those annoying flies that decide to learn to tap-dance in the middle of your new varnish - leave them, they only have little feet, but if you try and move them you will drag their whole body into the varnish.

The coat you have applied will be quite thin, both because you thinned it and also because a roller tends to apply a thinner coat anyway. So you will need to apply a few more coats than you would if you were applying with a brush.....that is the bad news, but the good news is that it should dry a bit quicker too. You want to get the next coat on as soon as possible after the first, but you are not going to be able to do that until the last one has dried and you have rubbed it down. The best way to rub down the still tender varnish will be with wet'n'dry (about 400grit) used wet with a little washing up liquid in the water.

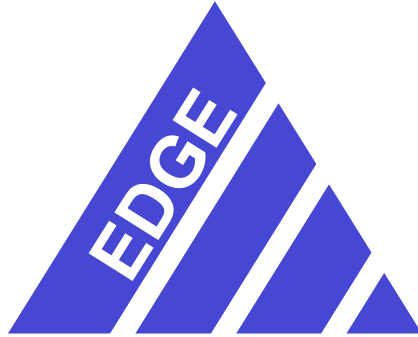
You can 'hot coat' like this, applying varnish over just dried varnish for up to about 4 coats, but once you have got a fair amount of varnish on the boat, it is best to leave it to dry thoroughly and to set, before sanding with a rougher paper like a 240grit, used dry.

If you are starting on bare wood, then the first few coats will need quite a bit of sanding between coats before the grain of the wood is fully covered by the varnish; you will most probably need to use something like the 240grit to get this done, but once you have got the base coats nice and flat it becomes easier to build up lots of layers in quite a short time.

## SO HOW MANY COATS AND HOW LONG WILL THIS TAKE?

It normally takes about 3-5 coats to fully close the grain of the wood; it depends on the wood, how much you sand and how much thinners you added; you then need to add another 3-5 coats to provide a little depth and after about 5 coats it should start to look really professional and, if you have been really sanding down, then it should be totally flat by 7 coats (and not that thick, as you will have sanded most of it off again).

How long it takes to do will really depend upon how well you can organise your life to fit around the drying times of the varnish. I would normally hope to apply 3-4 coats 'hot-coated' over a weekend and then leave it to dry and harden before finishing off the next w/e with another 3-4 coats. If you can find the time, it is even better to just put on one coat a day. This works well because you are still over-coating within the over-coating time, but normally a day is sufficient to let the varnish harden enough to be properly sanded between each coat. Between the first few coats, it is best to dry sand with 120-180 grit, but when you get towards the last coats you should be starting to get a good finish and you can move over to 180-240 grit wet'n'dry; this helps because it also keeps the dust down. If you go beyond the over-coating time, you will be forced to go back to dry sanding with 120grit.



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