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GP14 Class International Association

Autumn 2009

mainsail



2010: 60 years of the GP14 – we celebrate a wonderful boat



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There is a slight increase in subscriptions for next year. They are:

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Maurice Cooper, Hon. Treasurer

cover:
Eleanor Davies & Adam Parry,
South Staffs A team, winners of
the Southport Junior 12-hour race
photograph: Tony Leeson

Editor's letter

I hope you enjoy this edition, re-designed to celebrate our 60th anniversary in 2010. There is a special article from Hugh Brazier, our archivist, demonstrating the fascinating history of the class through a series of 'snapshots'. We would be very interested to hear from any of you who have memories or photographs you could share with us.

Sixty years goes back to an age hardly imaginable to us today, when sailing was a sport only just becoming available to the general public. It's difficult to overstate the role that the GP14 played in the democratisation of dinghy sailing – a robust family boat, reasonably cheap, which could be raced on an equal footing by all.

The GP14 has, of course, been modernised over the years, without ever forsaking the principal of the one-design, which makes racing it so attractive. There are feature articles in this issue which illustrate its continuing appeal, especially for young, top-flight racers, who are pleased to share their experience with other sailors.

Matt Mee, 2009 National Championship winner, talks about his preparation (or lack of it!) for the event this year and his approach to championship racing.

Ian Dobson, who came second, writes about how to improve your sailing. Already well-known to readers from his articles written after becoming World Champion in 2006, he takes a rather different approach this time.

Phil Hodgkins, another young sailor, writes a spirited resumé of the thrills and spills suffered over a 5-year break from sailing a GP14 and his reasons for returning to it.

Phil is a new face on the Association Committee, as are Mike Senior and Simon Relph. You will see from the racing reports that Mike Senior has had a fantastic summer, and he is someone who has always been prepared to share his knowledge with others, both in coaching sessions and Mainsail articles.

Simon Relph, the third new face on the committee, hasn't written an article (yet!), but he is also a crack sailor, with a string of championship wins to his name, both in the UK and Ireland. Since 1993 he has been sailing keelboats – I should think some GP sailors were glad to wave him goodbye! With his great sailing and commercial experience (with Mailspeed Marine), I hope he will be able to help us to steer the path between magazine and website, both so important in promoting our great boat.

Have a good holiday and here's looking forward to the Dinghy Show and the start of the new season in the Spring.

Liz Hall, Mainsail Editor

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

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Budworth's Bill Kenyon & Ben Ditchburn (13900), battling it out with Mandy Mitchell & Jon Close (13880) at the Winsford Flash Open



photo: Trevor Miller

President's piece

I must open my inaugural President's Piece by thanking Hugh Gill, our retired President, for all his efforts during his term of office. A natural gift that Hugh used to great effect was his ability to make extremely good speeches almost off the cuff, a great asset when motivating his team. Throughout Hugh's term of office he had to make numerous difficult decisions – thanks to his wise council I believe the correct ones were reached and our Association is the stronger, preparing our Class for the challenges ahead.

Following my many years as Championship Chairman, I feel honoured to have been voted as your next President. I have seen many Presidents at the helm of our Association since I started sailing GP14s back in 1969, and never at any time did I ever see myself being invited to step into a position held by so many committed and talented individuals. I hope that I can satisfy the wishes of our members by driving our Association forward, while at the same time embracing our valued members and keeping the GP14 to the forefront of the dinghy world.

Before I outline some of my plans and thoughts for the forthcoming year I must take this opportunity to pause for a few moments to reflect on the very sad loss of Richard Estaugh, who passed away on Saturday 11 April 2009. For me, Richard was pure genius, multiple GP14 World, National and Inland Champion, and also winner of countless National and World Championships in numerous other classes. Richard's skills were honed in GPs as a youth sailor at Chase SC, and he became the consummate competitor. My sympathy goes out to his family and his club mates for their sad loss and to all our members who will miss his help and advice. Richard's memory will never be lost in the history of our Class. I feel very privileged to have known and competed against the great man. A full obituary appears on Page 44.

In order to move our Association forward, I have enlisted the support of a team of highly motivated



photo: Andy Bury

and devoted GP14 sailors. I have invited Liz Hall to become one of my two Vice Presidents. Liz has been our Mainsail Editor for four years and has done an outstanding job and, as far as I am aware, she is the first female Vice President of our class association – congratulations Liz. Jon Close has also been promoted from a Directly Elected member of the General Committee to Vice President. Jon works tirelessly with the T & R committee, the Dinghy Exhibition Committee and numerous other committees that require the use of his many talents; Vice President is a position Jon richly deserves.

To augment the existing General Committee, I have requested the help of five Directly Elected General Committee members. Each one of these Directly Elected members has a huge amount of talent, experience and drive to assist our association to accelerate forward. Andy Bury, Luke Shaw, Simon Relph, Mike Senior and Philip Hodgson each have what it takes to be on board, and what's more, they are prepared to share some of their valuable spare time, experience and commitment to make GP14 matters move forward.

The remainder of my committee is made up of our Hon Sec, Peter Guest, Treasurer Maurice Cooper, Chief Measurer Brian Lester and seven Area Representatives: Paul Simes (South Wales), Mandy Mitchell (North West), Stephen Browne (South East), John Salomonson (Midlands), Hugh

Ian presenting outgoing President Hugh Gill with a souvenir of the Nationals

2010 Dinghy Show 6 & 7 March

Brazier (North East), Andy McNamara (North Wales) and last but not least Duncan Greenhalgh (Scotland). On the cruising front we have active support from Oliver Shaw, renowned for his numerous pieces on the forum and for his encouragement of the non-racing side of our Association. Finally, we are fortunate to have two Past Presidents, David Rowlands and Graham Knox, whose skill, wisdom and vast experience will help guide our new committee. David is also Chairman of the T&R Committee, a job that will play a pivotal role in the development of our class in the months ahead.

The aim of the 2009 – 2012 committee is 'To Make The GP14 More Appealing To More People'. This is a tough call in these days of credit crunch and world wide recession. I believe that the team representing your Association has all that it needs to move our Class forward and to be ahead of the game, but we need your support to make it happen – are you with us?

Plans for next season are well underway on training, championships and class development. 2010 is our 60th Anniversary year; please reserve time in your diaries to attend one of the several events being planned to commemorate this amazing milestone, the first of which will be our stand at Alexandra Palace over the weekend of 6 & 7 March. Keep your eyes on our website for all the latest news on the Dinghy Show 2010; it will be bigger and better than ever, so don't miss this most memorable event. I will see you there.

Until then I would like to wish you and yours all the best for Christmas and the New Year.

Keep sailing

Ian Sinclair, President

The 2010 RYA Dinghy Show to be held on the weekend of 6 & 7 March will see the launch of celebrations to mark 60 years of GP14 sailing. Sixty is a landmark anniversary and the GP14 Association intend to highlight the latest developments in the fleet as well as celebrate the history of our great dinghy. We want to promote the competitive nature of our racing at all ability levels and also encourage those who enjoy cruising and recreational sailing.

The GP14 Association stand will be bigger and better than ever in 2010 – we aim to make a big impression! Three current specification boats will be exhibited on the stand and will reflect the forward thinking of the Association. A modern wooden dinghy built by the master craftsman, Alistair Duffin, will be on display alongside two up-to-the-minute epoxy resin boats. Speed Sails, a well known and respected name in the world of GP14s, will be joined by newcomer, Steve Boon of Boon Boats, who having worked closely with the class association on new mould tools will be providing a brand new epoxy GP14 manufactured by Ovington Boats. Development in the Class has always been carefully controlled and it will be exciting to show for the first time the latest developments in design.

To complement our main display, we are delighted that we have been invited by the RYA to organise a subsidiary display in the West Corridor featuring some vintage and cruising boats, to demonstrate how the GP14 has developed over the years.

So make a date in your diaries now to visit the Show to celebrate the success of *your* class and be part of its future.



photo: courtesy RYA

More information about SailRacer at www.sailracer.co.uk

SailRacer

As part of our ongoing commitment to modernisation, the GP14 Class Association is actively considering using SailRacer, a professional internet system developed by Simon Lovesey for the promotion, organisation and management of sailing events. Simon has sailed all his life and is an IT expert by profession. He has been involved for a long time with the UK Mirror Class Association.

SailRacer has been operational for about two years, mainly used by events held in the UK, by UK-based clubs and by the Royal Yachting Association. In a nutshell, SailRacer offers comprehensive and linked solutions, at relatively low cost, for managing sailing information online.

It offers the organisers of an event the facility to create micro websites, which they can customise in order (amongst other things) to

- ▶ advertise and promote their event, their sponsors and their venue
- ▶ generate entry forms and other essential paperwork
- ▶ check membership status and securely accept payment online
- ▶ provide locality information, such as accommodation, transport, restaurants and weather data
- ▶ provide event news, results, photos etc, both during and after the event by a variety of methods, including emails and text messages

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**DUFFIN
MARINE**

Racing

GP racing through 2009

What a performance by South Staffs! First, Mike Senior with Luke Shaw have won three out of the four Area Championships and Mike went on to win the Inlands, this time with crew Lizzie Pugh, giving him the Grand Prix victory. Second, despite the credit crunch and the rapidly falling pound, South Staffs managed to enthuse no fewer than nine competitors plus their friends and family to go to Carnac for the European Regatta. They had their own well-deserved prizegiving at the event, which was won overall by the Warburtons from – you guessed it! – South Staffs. Third, they did brilliantly in both the Junior 12-hour and the West Lancs 24-hour Races. They did particularly well at the 24-hour race, not only coming first overall but winning a further seven trophies in the GP fleet and three in the Larks, including second place. The South Staffs A team in 13778 beat 28 other teams at the 12-hour race. Congratulations to them all.

Many other clubs have been working hard this season, whether on a small local event or on one of those nominated as part of the Grand Prix series. Some of the clubs in the south, for example, can feel proud to have drawn such large numbers to their open meetings – 38 and 31 entries for the Welsh Harp opens and 25 boats at Tollesbury in Essex, a club where until recently there were only a couple of GPs racing. Open meetings throughout the country rely on the same formula to attract visitors – a friendly welcome, well organised racing, good food and chance to relax with like-minded people.

The area and national championships all went well this year, although in some cases their success was due to the flexibility and skill of the race officers involved in coping with awkward weather conditions. Short reports of each Area Championship are to be found in the relevant area reports and, of course, the full reports and results have been posted on the website throughout the season.

If there was a prize for the UK GP14 Club of the Year it would probably be awarded to South Staffs whose name has cropped up again and again this season.

Roger Walton and
Serena Counsell
(BTYC) at the Piplers
of Poole Open



Photo: Mike Willard

Congratulations to all the winners, and to all those clubs and individuals who worked so hard to make the season such a success. We can look forward with pride to our 60th Anniversary year.

National Championship, Llandudno, 3–5 July

The course for this year's Nationals was a beat, run, triangle, beat to finish, in preference to the usual triangle and sausage: an indication of the continuing effort of the GP14 Class to move with the times and adopt a more up-to-date racing format. Many competitors, though not all, seemed to like the 3-day format.

Many of the 53 helms needed to re-acquaint themselves with gate starts, but Friday did not provide ideal conditions for practice! Check out the video on the website (you may need to take a sea-sickness pill). Racing was close and exciting

in the rapidly freshening wind. This made the following day's light unstable conditions even more frustrating – only one race was completed (and not by everyone!) However, an early start on Sunday saw three races completed.

Results

1	13978	Matt Mee & Chris Robinson, Hollingworth Lake
2	14021	Ian Dobson & Andy Tunnicliffe, Burwain/Windermere
3	14018	Ian Southworth & David Hayes Hamble River
Silver	14032	Neil & Hannah Davies, Chase
Bronze	13721	John & Phillip Waind, Budworth

Inlands, Derwent Water, 3 & 4 October

The third of October was one of the windiest days of the year with storm-force gales, and the PRO at Derwent, former GP President Eddie Ramsden, wisely took a quick decision to cancel racing on the first day of the Inlands Championship, and to re-vamp planned racing on Sunday to provide four races.

Results

1	13417	Mike Senior & Lizzie Pugh, South Staffs
2	14037	David & Jackie Gebhard, Derwent
3	14038	Simon Potts & Chris White, Dovey
Silver	13186	Alistair Conn & Andy Weatherspoon, Derwent
Bronze	13721	John Waind & Phil Waind, Budworth

The fleet at the Nationals



Full results at www.gp14.org

Grand Prix

The Grand Prix, sponsored by Drewe Insurance, was won this year in great style by 13417 Mike Senior. He won three area championships with Luke Shaw crewing and then went on to win the Inlands – this time with crew Lizzie Pugh.

The Grand Prix qualification was changed this year to 'the sum of the best four scores, at least one of which must be the Inland or the National Championship, and no more than two scores from designated Opens'. This meant that a sailor competing in any two Open meetings could qualify for the Grand Prix prize by doing one of the national events. The change did not, however, lead to a significantly greater number of qualifiers (an increase to 14 from 2008's 11), so the Championship Committee will be considering ways to tweak this next year. They are also considering offering a prize for the top crew (who might not, of course, be crewing for the winning helm).



photo: Andy Bury

Racing

Mike Senior and Luke Shaw

Results

- 1 13417 Mike Senior & Luke Shaw/Lizzie Pugh, South Staffs
- 2 14025 Carl Jeffs & Jim Toothill, Trimpley
- 3 13900 Bill Kenyon & Ben Ditchburn, Budworth
- Silver 13475 John Salomonson & various crews, South Staffs
- Bronze 10011 Roy Nettleship & various crews, Nottingham

The Masters, Hollingworth Lake, 12 & 13 September

The 23 visitors from 14 clubs who joined four home boats at Hollingworth Lake were expecting the gentle winds forecast for the weekend, but on Sunday competitors found a strong north-easterly wind blowing off the hills to the east, sufficient for some to plane out of the sheltered harbour. As the wind oscillated, place changes could be dramatic and sudden.

Results

Grandmaster & Master

- 1 13924 Neil Platt & Nicola Brook, West Kirby/Hollingworth Lake
- 2 13803 Paul Owen & Andy Hateley, South Staffs
- 3 14043 Nick & Alison Eaves, Bartley (also 60+ trophy)

Ton-up trophy

- 14037 Dave & Jackie Gebhard, Derwent Reservoir

National Youth Championship

The final event of the season was the Youth Championship, sponsored by Speed Sails and hosted by Chase SC over the weekend of 31 October – 1 November. Sunday was disrupted by gale force winds which led to racing being cancelled for a while. The 23 young sailors rose to the challenge with some superb boat handling – many capsized but righted their boats and carried on undeterred, although there was considerable boat damage.

Results

- 1 13672 Adam Parry/Sam Collingwood, South Staffs/Chelmarsh
- 2 14016 James Hopson/Charlie McNamara (1st Girl Crew), Llandudno
- 3 13896 Peter Mitchell/Andrew Hunter, Winsford Flash
- 4 13884 Mark Lees & Josh Irons, Poole

Worlds 2011

These will take place from 20–25 February 2011 at Negombo, a coastal city of Sri Lanka, the venue used for the 2005 Enterprise Championships. Arrival date is scheduled for 17 February. Keep your eye on the GP14 website for updates.

For more information see
www.gp14ireland.com

GP14 Association of Ireland

GP14 sailing in Ireland has continued to go from strength to strength this year with excellent turnouts at all of the major events, including 60 at the Championship of Ireland – making it the largest GP14 event in Britain and Ireland this summer.

The season started a bit earlier this year in order to create a wider spread between events. April brought the O'Tiarnaigh Challenge at Swords Sailing and Boating Club. Tim Corcoran and Brendan Brogan from Sligo Yacht Club continued where they left off last year, winning the bonus-point medal race in order to secure the title.

Lough Erne Yacht Club held a breezy Purcell Trophy with Corcoran and Brogan winning from John Chambers and Conor Clancy from Blessington Sailing Club.

Twenty-eight boats from the UK and Ireland competed for the Leinster Championship at Skerries Sailing Club. It was won by father and son team, Hugh and Dan Gill – the latter, aged 14, becoming the youngest ever winner of the Leinster Championship.

Sligo pair Niall Henry and Ossian Geraghty returned to form with a slender 1.5 point win over club mates Corcoran and Brogan in the Ulster Championship at Newtownards Sailing Club.

The three-day Championship of Ireland was held at Sligo Yacht Club, well known as the venue for the 2006 World Championship. The event attracted a bumper turnout from all over Ireland and attracted visiting competitors from both England and Wales. The weather was challenging, ranging from 30 knots and a huge swell on Saturday through to flat calm on Monday. Local sailors Tim Corcoran and Brendan Brogan beat off 59 other crews to retain their national crown and, in his acceptance speech, Tim spoke of his delight at winning the Championship of Ireland at the yacht club where he began sailing in 1980 in an Optimist dinghy.



photo: Bob Torrens

Tim Corcoran
and Brendan
Brogan

The fleet moved back inland to Mullingar Sailing Club for the Autumn Open and Youth Championship. Corcoran and Brogan continued their rich vein of form, winning all four races to secure the Autumn Open. Cathal Leigh Doyle beat off 17 crews to win the Youth Championship and to become the first recipient of the Peter Hannon Cup.

The final event of the season, the Hot Toddy, was held at Donaghadee Sailing Club, with Corcoran and Brogan victorious once again.

All events (excluding the O'Tiarnaigh Challenge) counted towards the Goacher Sails League and, with bonus points awarded for the Hot Toddy, fleet prizes went down to the wire. The winners of each fleet were awarded a genoa kindly donated by Goacher Sails.

The Gold Fleet was won by Tim Corcoran and Brendan Brogan, Sligo Yacht Club, Silver by Simon Cully and Libby Tierney from Blessington Sailing Club and Bronze by Stuart McCormick and Susie Whyte from Mullingar Sailing Club.

In his closing remarks for the season, GP14 Association of Ireland President, Donal McGuinness, thanked Goacher Sails for their generous sponsorship and went on to congratulate the fleets: 'The total number of entries for the 2009 season was a record 244. Our aim will be as ever, to top that next year. It is not an idle boast that we are the premier dinghy class in Ireland'.

All in all, a great season for GP14 racing in Ireland with excellent turnouts including a bumper Nationals and excellent Youths, showing great potential for the future.

Christopher Scott

The 'F' words – fabulous, fantastic, French, fun and friendship – just a few ways of describing the week of the 2009 European regatta in Carnac, France.

GP14 European Regatta – Carnac 2009

photo: Pippa Mitchell

Thirteen boats and the families and friends associated with them made the journey to this beautiful destination in Southern Brittany. Carnac Yacht Club, our hosts for the event, made us very welcome from the outset and couldn't have been more friendly and helpful.

Francois Pedro was our thorough and extremely efficient PRO, who would jump into a rib himself to help lay marks quickly so that racing started bang on time. Back on shore he fired up the barbecue and smiled, danced and sang whilst cooking. His team were always on hand to help and to translate when necessary. (Although even Celia's translating talents would have been put to the test when our President, celebrating a great day on the water, ordered drinks at the bar in Spanish!!)

We all settled quickly into the leisurely routine of sunbathing and swimming on the lovely little beach adjacent to the dinghy park, exploring the area and racing. The younger members of the GP clan had a great time body-boarding on a day when the wind created bigger waves, and in the best of British traditions attempted to stop the incoming tide by building a wall of sand. They saw all the usual things you would expect to find on the seashore whilst swimming and snorkelling: fish, crabs, shells, a man in a cage with a snorkel and mask on the breakwater as the tide was coming in.... Poor chap was on his stag night before going off to Paris the next day. Thankfully he was rescued before the tide came up too far.

After a week of croissants, moules, frites, vin, sand, sea, sailing and *sunshine*, it was time to bid 'au revoir' to Carnac. Thank you to all who made this wonderful week's sailing possible. There's only one question – when are we going back?

Overall winners of the event were Martin and Eleanor Warburton 13904, followed by Dave and Ann Pugh. Bronze fleet winners were the youngest competitors Connie Hicklin and Emily Cole Evans, whose ages add up to less than 30



Ian and Rachel Wall

and who sailed a cracking regatta, winning the practice race and the last race outright. Here is Connie's account of the week:

My week at GP14 European Championship

Carnac 16–21 August 2009

Sun, sea, sand and sailing. I can't think of a better combination. We had fantastic weather all week, blue skies and a constant wind. Carnac gave an exceptionally warm welcome to everyone. We were all made to feel very at home.

Emily and I were ready for the practice race on Sunday. As we were the lightest boat there, with a combined weight of 18 stone, the wind looked to be in our favour. We did well and managed to win. But Dave Young didn't tell us until afterwards that it was bad luck to win the practice race!

Monday morning was full of sunbathing, swimming and socializing. The wind was stronger than I would have liked. The sailing began at two o'clock; in the first race we finished 6th, but as

Ian and Emma Sinclair were over the line at the start we got a 5th and a 7th. We were happy with the results as the wind was quite strong.

Tuesday morning was more sun and sea plus a lot of waiting for the sea breeze to form. We finally launched at 5pm. The wind was perfect for us both but we only managed two 7ths. And in the fourth race my Mom and Dad beat me!!

On Wednesday it was the 'fraternité' (brotherhood) race. I sailed with Anne who hadn't done much sailing and didn't speak much English and my French is non-existent!! The French were fascinated by our boats as they are mainly catamaran sailors. They were all amazed with our tactical and technical racing. Anne learned to fly the spinnaker very quickly and we led the first lap, but then fell second to Martin Warburton. I managed to finish second, even after having the

photo: Mandy Mitchell



Dinner time in Carnac

photo: Pippa Mitchell



Andrew Welch and Barry Southern

bung stolen out of the back and forgetting to check it was there. I won a really nice poster, a t-shirt and some red wine which my Mom will enjoy for me.

Thursday held more sun, sand and sailing. In a strong wind. In the first race, after a general recall, I was over the line and had to go round the end. After giving everyone half a leg head start we finished in 9th place, and my Dad beat me again!! In the second race we had a 5th place. Things were looking up!!

On Friday we needed to beat Andy Welch and Sue Southam as they were the leading bronze fleet boat and only two points in front of us. We were both feeling the pressure to do well. In the first race the wind was looking in our favour as it was quite light. We were third in the first race and we managed to win the last race with pure downwind speed. So we managed to win the Bronze fleet!!

The prize we received was a box of local assorted tinned fish, non-alcoholic pink champagne and a lollypop. I had a fantastic week and I would recommend it to all sailors young and old! It is an amazing venue and a friendly club. Thank you to every one who helped organize the event, and to Dave Young who lent me his boat!!

Connie Hicklin

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2009 GP14 National Championships Llandudno

Matt Mee

This article is intended to give you an insight into how Chris and I tackled the GP14 Nationals this year. Now I know it may appear easy for me to talk about the event retrospectively and tell you all how everything went to plan, but in this case, for most of the event it did! Please understand, I try to approach and think about all the events and races I do in a similar fashion; sometimes it doesn't go to plan (GP Worlds 2008) but often we're not too far from the chocolates. Hopefully there will be a few points that you the readers can take away and apply to your sailing; if not I promise at least not to ramble on too long!

Ironically our campaign for the Nationals this year was much less well planned and thought out than our attempt to win the Worlds the previous year. I got the call from Chris whilst competing at the 470 Europeans in Austria – it was a quick call once I told Chris that it would be costing him a fortune! Basically he told me he had a super quick boat – kindly donated by Dave Young, Speed sails made by his own fair hands (worrying!), and that he would be crewing. We could only sail a couple of evenings prior to the event and after the experience of the Worlds I was a little apprehensive about doing the event with so little time to prepare. This is not the way to prepare for a national championship! The point I am trying to make is that I think it is important to have your season planned out; even if your aim for the year is only to do well at your home open meeting, a bit of forward planning enables you to use your time effectively around work and other commitments. If you pick an event in the calendar for next year and count up the available sailing days between now and then you'll be surprised how few there are.

The next question, of course, is how to use this time effectively. Chris and I had both done lots of racing in our respective classes in the previous months and so were confident of our starting and tactical skills. We decided that the areas of our sailing that we could improve and that would have the biggest impact on our result at the

photo: Andy Bury



Matt & Chris at the Nationals

Nationals were making sure we could sail the boat fast in a straight line, boat-handle slickly enough for those inevitable tacking battles and communicate effectively around the race course. We had two evenings at South Staffs, the first of which was in a thunderstorm – we managed to find our feet again in a GP and get most of the boat handling sorted. The second didn't go to plan – Chris got a puncture on his way to the club and anyway racing was abandoned owing to lack of wind!

Having spent a day working on the boat, we arrived in Llandudno on the Thursday evening. Despite our lack of sailing prior to the event we arrived confident – we knew that we had sailed together enough in the past and were very capable of winning the event if we could get off to a good start and put a series together.

A key point I would like to highlight, which is important to me when I approach any sailing race or event is to make sure you understand what sort of scores you will need to match your overall expectations. This then enables logical decision making around the racecourse to get the overall result you have set out to achieve. The way I go about this is by getting a feel for how many races and discards, how many serious contenders for the overall title there are and how many other teams could potentially win the odd race in the championship. Obviously, having a

[Knowing] that to win a GP nationals or worlds, you have to win some races but not all, and any result lower than fourth would be our discard ... truly affected the way we sailed.

quick look at the results sheet from past championships gives you a good idea of what is required. So, without naming names, we came to the conclusion that there were four potential championship winners (including ourselves) and approximately another seven who could potentially win a race, with five races to count. We knew that to win a GP nationals or worlds, you have to win some races but not all, and any result lower than fourth would be our discard. You may be thinking, well that's obvious! But in fact, knowing this prior to that first race truly affected the way we sailed.

In the week before the Nationals, the forecast was looking like around 10 knots offshore for the three days. We were really confident of our ability in those conditions – basically a Sunday afternoon at Hollingworth Lake! But, as you know, this wasn't the case on the first day, when it was more like 20 knots, though still offshore. We knew that if we had a weakness it would be our lack of weight to hold onto our lane upwind out of the gate. This proved to be the case! In the practice race, within two minutes we had been rolled by the windward boat, forced to tack away to the starboard lay line and rounded the windward mark about 12th. The saving grace was that we were going fast downwind, and by the gybe mark we were in fourth place, right up with the leaders. With a light forecast for the following two days, our priorities for the Friday races became clear – to get to the windward mark among the top ten boats and then use our downwind speed to catch up to within fourth place. To win a championship you need to know your strengths and weaknesses, when to attack the event and when to settle for something less than a win. It takes away any false expectations and pressure that can be detrimental to a team. As it turned out the day went better than expected. We rounded the top mark third and first respectively and took away two first places from the day. In addition, our other three main rivals made some big mistakes and picked up more



photo: Andy Bury

Matt Mee (right) and Chris Robinson at the Nationals

points than expected, mainly as a result of some great sailing from some of our heavy weather specialists!

The day proved to be the springboard from which we went on to take the championship. The best thing about it was that we sailed the whole day feeling pressure-free and it wasn't a surprise when we came under attack upwind; we knew our limits, we'd spoken about them out loud before both races and we knew where we could, and would, have to make up the deficit.

The rest of the championship was sailed in conditions which we were more suited to and it became more and more difficult for our rivals to take control of the event. The flip side is that it is often nice to be the one chasing the event, waiting for the leader to 'crack' under the pressure of leading the event. I have been in both positions now, the latter in 2006, and managed to make both come good. Both situations highlight the importance of using each decision, each leg, each race to match and manage the expectations of you and your teammate.

I hope this article has given you some insight of how we approached the event and how you could apply some of the points I have highlighted to your sailing, regardless of your aims and expectations.



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So, you want to be a better sailor?

Ian Dobson

Ian, from Burwain SC, with Andy Tunnicliffe, came second in this year's Nationals at Llandudno.

I was challenged to write an article around the broad topic 'how to sail better'. Instead of sticking to the usual spiel of quantifying the correct amount of kicker to pull on in 18 knots, I thought I'd have a go at tackling the real reason why the majority of club sailors aren't sailing faster ...blissful ignorance.

It's only as you learn more about all the ways people sail better that you start to appreciate just how bad you really are at it. The fastest way to improve is go out and get beaten – provided you have faith that exposure to higher quality sailing must surely pay off!

I think this rather masochistic attitude is the reason that I enjoy sailing the 470. Over the past three years or so I have been sailing a 470 with GP (and Enterprise) legend, Neil Marsden. Two GP14 World Champions teamed up to take on the world's best – yet we still get spanked! I have no illusions about how bad I am at sailing, and have chosen to subject myself to the professional side of our sport by racing against 470 sailors who have been sailing for up to 15 years.

What makes these sailors better than us?

Time

Clearly, in the case of the 470 and other Olympic class sailors, being a full-time sports person allows them to get more practice in. However, what you soon realise is not that they want to spend endless hours on the water (after all, who wants to spend longer at work than necessary?) but that they are keen to make the hours count.

I think this is an important principle and one that can be applied to all club sailing. Before going on the water, decide on a goal and aim to learn at least one thing every time you go out. However infrequently you sail, this approach will help you to make each outing productive.



photo: Andy Bury

Ian Dobson (14021)
at the Nationals

Accuracy

How do you understand boat speed and why do some sailors just seem to be fast? 'His boat's faster than mine'... Really?

Most top level sailors do exactly the same as the mid fleet sailors – only better. More clinical, more proactive, more precise, more accurate. A good example is sailing on the woollies. I bet everyone reading this article thinks they know how to sail upwind using tell tales, and I'm sure they can – about 95% of the time. It's the remaining 2, 3 or 5% which allows the top sailors to feature regularly at the front.

This can be even more apparent when sailing in waves on the sea. Sailors tend to wander from the breeze as they encounter varying forces on the boat. This is not the place to dwell on the specifics of wave technique, but I would like to emphasise the importance of consistency when sailing upwind. Clearly, a key time to sail accurately on the woollies is when holding a lane off the start. A common mistake is to assume that the reason you get spat out of the back of the front row is that your boat is not set up right – the real reason is more often that you are not sailing on the breeze accurately enough.

On the start line, it is at least easy to measure your performance against nearby boats. But you have to work just as hard on your accuracy throughout the race, even when you can no longer see the inches sliding away, never to be recovered again. In the words of Al Pacino – 'you've got to fight for those inches'.



Tollesbury Open
2009

Racing around the *whole* course

A competitive race is one where the race is only over when you cross the finish line. I think that decades of racing triangular courses have taken the sting out of competitive racing in many of the national classes. It is very easy to build a lead on a reach as the fleet spreads out; people then sit back as they don't think there's as much to be gained as there was on the first beat – so those accurate upwind sailors are gifted an even more comfortable ride. I was pleased to see that for the 2009 GP Nationals the course was sausage then triangle – a much better aid to keeping racing tight and forcing people to race harder round more of the course.

Sailing better downwind

My experience of 470 sailing drives home the significance of racing at maximum on all legs: you will soon find yourself dead last if you don't. I think we all have a good idea of how to work harder upwind in a productive manner, but there is a distinct lack of knowledge about good downwind technique. In my opinion, the GP14 fleet is on the whole very good upwind, but not so good downwind – sometimes very poor. I go on and on about sailing better downwind – after all it is probably the reason why I won both the GP Worlds – and let's at least start by believing that we can all sail more accurately and faster downwind.

There has been a trend on the international circuits to have an O-flag system which allows aspects of rule 42 (pumping etc) to be discounted. This has opened people's minds to exploring options available when increasing work rate – particularly downwind. Whilst I am not suggesting that the GP Class adopt the O flag approach, I do suggest that we all try to understand and appreciate what it is that is restricted by rule 42 (and what is not restricted)

with the aim of appreciating what specifically makes a boat travel faster through the water. In short, there are things we can be doing downwind; some are illegal but many are just good practice.

If nothing else, improve your downwind sailing by being more *accurate!* As an example, I am a great advocate of helms clamping the tiller extension on the deck behind them, holding it like a pan handle (not dagger grip). This prevents the helm wagging the brake (sometimes called a rudder) with no particular aim, and forces all movements to be proactive, resulting in more accurate sailing.

Team work

An inherent problem with club racing is that helms are substantially more experienced than crews, I accept that this is probably just the way it is, but what sort of basis is this for an effective team? One reason why helms sail inaccurately is because they are trying to do too much and thus doing much of it badly. As a 470 crew, I find myself responsible for all the tactics upwind and my helm is merely the tool I need to execute my tactics. Parallels can be drawn in big boat racing where helms are often referred to as 'drivers' as they do only that. In GP14 racing I don't expect all crews to be the driving force behind all tactical decisions, but I do expect a constant supply of information, perhaps accompanied by an opinion.

Coming back to my earlier discussion on downwind sailing (running), I'd like people to think about how to sail faster by working as a team. How on earth is a crew supposed to help the team go faster if he doesn't know where they are trying to go? I am not talking about where the next mark is or whether they should be going left or right, but about taking advantage of every tiny change of pressure by subtle alterations of



photo: Olga Spillers

For goodness sake tell the person you are sailing with what you are trying to achieve.

course, to maximise velocity made good (vmg). So this means the helm needs to actually say the words 'heading up' or 'bearing away' so that the crew can equally help to achieve this. We are, remember, trying to achieve a turning of the boat (in this example only a matter of a degree or two) without the use of the brake. In short, the crew needs to move his shoulders in, the helm his shoulders out, to generate a couple of degrees of leeward heel and turn the boat.

But the key thing that I want to emphasize is the need for good communication. For goodness sake tell the person you are sailing with what you are trying to achieve. This is a two-way thing! Crews need to feel the air in the kite and when a little zephyr increases the load in the sheets, they should tell the helm and then both can respond

to it by bearing away. Start by talking to each other so that you are both trying to achieve the same thing, even if it's not the right thing!

Coaching

I think that the key to keeping the GP14 competitive against other classes is by good sailing throughout the fleet. There needs to be a top-down filter of information together with bottom-up youth training: if we raise our game at the front end, the whole fleet will benefit. I recommend that top GP sailors join together, go training and learn from each other and then take every opportunity to pass on the information at club and youth level.

Good luck!

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Area news

Southern Area

Travellers news

The Southern Area Travellers series has finished after two back-to-back Opens at Hampton and Frensham Pond and, with the number of qualifiers and number of attendances both up from previous years, the season has been a great success.

The Travellers trophy was won by Richard Lord and Hannah Rose/Sue Burrige with Ben Kaplan crewed by Sue Burrige (neat trick!) and Chris Lomax in the runner up position. Both are from Seahorse Sailing Club at the Welsh Harp in London. Richard's victory has broken BTYC's stranglehold on the trophy that has lasted since 2004, when the trophy last went to a different club (Neil Hardie at Frensham). Third place went to Za and Libby Jelliffe from BTYC, with James Ward and Richard Whitehill from Papercourt fourth.

There were 11 qualifiers in total from six clubs – a number not equalled since 2004 – and there were another 6 teams from the Harp and Leigh just missing out on qualification. There were 161 results posted for the eight Opens, with excellent turnouts for the Victor (38) and Venetian (31) trophies at the Harp and 20 at Poole. Hampton (13) and Frensham (14), perhaps due to the

schedule, were a little disappointing in terms of numbers. Lee on the Solent SC was a great surprise, with 15 boats on the water, including ex-Southeast champion Ian Southworth tuning up for the Nationals (where he and Dave Hayes came third) with three bullets. Although we were unable to secure a date for Leigh on Sea this year, our other Essex club at Tollesbury continues to expand the attraction of their Open, with 25 boats on the water. It is interesting to note that in the 2005 winter issue of *Mainsail*, Liz Hall, reviewing the poorly attended Southernns at Brightlingsea, commented 'it was very good to see boats from Tollesbury, a nearby club, and I hope we may be able to visit the area again, perhaps for an open meeting'. Prophetic words indeed from *Mainsail's* editor – George is working on organising a weekend event. Watch this space...

Tim Hemsley and Richard Harding dusting off a few cobwebs

James Ward & Richard Whitehill



photo: Olga Splitters

Overall results

- 1 14030 Richard Lord & Hannah Rose/ Sue Burrige, Seahorse
- 2 13855 Ben Kaplan & Sue Burrige/Chris Lomax, Seahorse
- 3 13980 Za & Libby Jelliffe, BTYC
- 4 13316 James Ward & Richard Whitehill, Papercourt
- 5 13708 David Innes & Jon Denyer/Wendy & Matthew Innes, Frensham Pond
- 6 13958 George & Jill Rogers/Paul Brookes/J Wilkinson, Tollesbury
- 7 13421 Helen Allen & Andy Wadsworth/Dennis Adams, BTYC
- 8 13662 Lesley Kaye & Chris Larkin/Yvon Kalmeijer, BTYC
- 9 14044 Richard Connett & Andy Wadsworth, BTYC
- 10 13136 Ricardo Chacon & various, BTYC
- 11 13578 Keith Toovey & Chris Higgs, Seahorse



photo: Jeff Dalton



Lesley Kaye
at Tollesbury,
with new sailor
Yvon Kalmeijer

Club news

Welsh Harp

(BTYC, Seahorse, Wembley, North Circular)

Racing at the Welsh Harp had a bit of a set-back as the summer went on because of an infestation of weed, which has gradually choked off more and more of the sailing area. Fleet sizes remain good, however, with regular turnouts of 25–30 boats and there has been increasing enthusiasm for travelling to other venues. This interest is shown in the number of Harp boats qualifying for the Southern Travellers this year – eight out of eleven. Even members coming to sailing for the first time this year have been tempted (and encouraged) to go along to join in the fun.

That novices can be taught to sail well enough in a single season to enjoy open meetings says a lot for the very vigorous training programme operated in GP14s by BTYC and Seahorse (mainly), using voluntary instructors. RYA inspectors who oversee the accreditation of the clubs as RTEs have frequently been impressed that so much can be achieved by voluntary help, to such a high standard. Some of the volunteers who give their time will be taking up the offer of a free race training session in the autumn by coaches from the RYA – who have also recently run a day course on Race Management, attended by more than 20 people.

Hampton

The fleet at Hampton remains as strong as ever with a number of new boats appearing and a new class captain Jaki Pring moving things along.

Frensham Pond

After a few years of relative stagnation, class captain John Traylor is encouraging increasing numbers of sailors to enjoy class racing in the Surrey countryside, with new members Brian Taylor, Stuart Duckworth and Paul Reeves regularly racing, and a number of new boats appearing. A new format has been tried for this

season's Sunday racing, which has increased activity at this year's RYA Club of the year. Only David Innes and Jeremy Hudson are regulars on the circuit, although the odd appearance of Helmsley and Harding adds interest for us all.

Essex (Tollesbury and Leigh on Sea)

Tollesbury offers unique estuary sailing with strong GP14 class racing, including many younger sailors. GP activity at Leigh is limited, but Area Rep Steve Browne and Steve Corbett are both active on the Travellers' circuit and we are all hoping to get back soon to enjoy negotiating the sandcastles on the tiny launching beach.

Poole

Poole put on another fantastic weekend's sailing last August, with the annual Round Brownsea Island Team Race on Saturday, followed by an Open meeting on Sunday, both sponsored by local chandlers, Piplers of Poole.

With beautiful surroundings and well-run racing, this venue always attracts a lot of visitors, especially from the Welsh Harp. However, Poole sailors took the winning places in both events – hopefully next year some of them will come to visit other venues in the area.

Other clubs

No specific information from Papercourt or Lee on Solent, but they remain valued open meeting venues for the Travellers. GP14 racing is also happening at Crawley Mariners, Tonbridge Town and on the Thames, but information is limited. Let us know how things are going for future reports.

Full results at www.gp14.org

Future plans

A lively club representatives meeting was held after the Frensham Open, with representatives from Papercourt, Seahorse, BTYC, Tollesbury and Frensham putting forward ideas for improvements in 2010. These will be outlined in a bit more detail in the Spring edition, but hopefully will include a Beginners Trophy to encourage newcomers to discover the absolute joy of travelling .

Publicity

The email database is now being expanded with regular news of future events. Should you wish to be added to this list, please email davidinnes@campbellreith.com

Regards to all

Steve Browne, Area Representative
07771 551955

David Innes, Area publicity
07711 819990

Mark Lees
and Josh Irons,
winners of
the Piplers of
Poole Open



photo: Jim Knight

Midland and East Coast Area

Another year over (where does the time go?) and we have had the usual mix of winds and weather on the circuit this year. We started off in Nantwich in late March and finished in Nottingham in mid-October.

Midland Championship

There were 22 entries for the Midland Championship at Staunton Harold on 25 & 26 April, which enjoyed good winds. The event was overshadowed by the recent death of Richard Estaugh and a special trophy was donated by Staunton Harold SC for the best placed helm over 50 – Richard having recently achieved this milestone. There was an excellent debriefing and coaching session by Mike Senior with particular emphasis on the start, mark rounding and windy weather sailing. Discussion was stimulated by videos and photographs of the day's racing.

photo: Ken Hemsell



GP 10011, originally built in 1972, and leading the fleet at the Nottingham Open 37 years later.

Results

Gold	13417	Mike Senior & Luke Shaw, South Staffs
Silver	13945	John Salomonson & Nigel Pepperdene*, South Staffs
Bronze	13859	Derek & Seonaid Fleming, South Staffs
		* Enterprise FC at Staunton Harold

Nigel Nurse Commodore of Nottingham Sailing Club presents the Midland Bell Bronze Trophy to Simon Fletcher & John Cookson of Trimpley



photo: Jim Knight

Midland bell

We had 11 qualifiers in the Midland bell this year, which is the most we have had since 2004. The Bell was won yet again by Carl Jeffs from Trimpley. 111 helms took part in one or more events.

By the time you are reading this, we should have planned and agreed the dates for next year's opens. It's hoped that Redditch will once again hold a meeting and I am sure that I speak for everyone who has been there before when I say that we look forward to 'threading the islands' and annoying the fishermen.

To those of you who sail all through the winter, I wish you good weather and fair winds.

John Salomonson, Area Rep

Qualifiers

1	14025	Carl Jeffs & Jim Toothill Trimpley
2	13972	Steve Ward & Leigh Wilson Bartley
3	13945	John Salomonson & various South Staffs
4	13611	Terry Edwards & Darren Heath South Staffs
5	14041	Paul Leavers & Nigel Spurr Midland
6	10011	Roy Nettleship & Sabine Schamberg
7	13896	Peter Toms & Andy Hunter Nantwich (Silver)
8	13859	Derek Fleming & Derek Tiller South Staffs
9	13975	Simon Fletcher & John Cookson Trimpley (Bronze)
10	13816	Steve Ellison & Phil Baker Aldridge
11	11522	Mark Lewis & Bernie Thomas Redditch

Boats for sale at www.gp14.org

North West Region

Turnouts at Northern Bell events have been disappointing in terms of numbers, although encouraging in so far as the number of young entrants is gradually increasing. A big welcome goes to Phil Hodgkins, who is sailing in GPs again after spending time going very fast in straight lines in other fleets. Phil first appeared enthusiastically on the scene at the Dinghy Show this year, about to fit out his new Duffin (well, not exactly his, apparently his dad is the owner, but rarely gets the chance to sail it!). He has joined the committee of the Association and I'm sure will be a great asset.

photo: Trevor Miller



Northern Championship

Phil was drawn back to the GP fleet by the quality of the racing and soon got the chance for action at the Northern Championship at Bassenthwaite. Twenty-eight boats competed in this Championship over the weekend of 20 & 21 June, with well organised racing, and great value with camping and a barbecue included in the entry fee. The PRO took the wise decision to run three races on Saturday in light of the (accurate) forecast of lower winds on Sunday. While the competitors enjoyed the close and competitive nature of the racing, families and friends enjoyed the countryside surrounding this beautiful lake. It is always a pleasure to spot one of the ospreys that can be found in that area – but it is a great shock to see a dead pike in a tree through the binoculars! This rare sighting became the subject of much talk on the Saturday night in the clubhouse. Mike Senior and Luke Shaw stayed focused on the racing though, and are worthy Northern Champions.

Dave Burrows and Kate Billinge, WFSC, leading the group

Results

- 1 13417 Mike Senior & Luke Shaw, South Staffs
- 2 13924 Neil Plat & Phil Smith, Bolton
- 3 13176 Dave & Lynn Lawson, Bassenthwaite
- Silver 13186 Josh Gebhard & Kieron Parsloe, Derwent
- Bronze 13694 Gareth Hughes & Charlotte Hill, Hollingworth Lake

Mandy Mitchell and Jon Close



photo: Trevor Miller

Northern Bell

As well as his triumph at the Northerns in June, Mike Senior had won the Northern Bell event at Budworth earlier the same month, beating home sailors Bill Kenyon, with crew Ben Ditchburn, into second place. Bill and Ben had already established their challenge for the Series by winning at Bolton and coming second at Royal Windermere to Dave and Lynn Lawson. They were subsequently runners up to Ian Dobson at Burwain SC and to Richard Whitworth at Hollingworth Lake SC. The Budworth pair eventually claimed the Northern Bell, knocking Martin Brennan and Alistair Knott of Hollingworth Lake SC into second place.

The marine lake at West Kirby was drained earlier this year for essential maintenance work, which unfortunately was severely delayed and caused the club's Open meeting to be cancelled. This had been an eagerly awaited event, as the success of the six-race format in the previous two years had created a lot of interest and promised a good turnout. West Kirby is the home club of the Northern Bell sponsor, Neil Platt. Thanks to Neil for his continued support of the Series.

Results

1	13900	Bill Kenyon & Ben Ditchburn, Budworth
2	13842	Martin Brennan & Alistair Knott, Hollingworth Lake
3	13375	Gary Dewhurst & Thomas Bennett, Burwain
Silver	13880	Mandy Mitchell & Jon Close, Winsford Flash
Bronze	13862	James & Judith Downes, Budworth

It's been great to see so many photographers at events this year. Welcome to new GP sailor, Trevor Miller, who took great shots at the Winsford Flash Open. Pictures bring events to life, but it is the hard work of all those behind the scenes who make it all happen. So I would like to say a very big 'thank you' to all the club members who have run races, provided rescue, supplied us with food and drink, and processed results. And, on a personal note, thanks to all the Fleet Captains for their support and for encouraging GP14 sailing at their respective clubs. Such people have made our Class successful in the North West over the past 60 years, and hopefully will go on to make the next 60 even more so.

Mandy Mitchell, Area Rep

North Wales Area

The Welsh Championship was held at Aberdovey on 2 & 3 May. There were only 10 entries, but the racing did not lack quality – in fact it was some of the best sailing of the year. The wind was very light on the first day, but Sunday's force 4 caught everyone by surprise and the first race took place inside the bar, waiting for the flood tide to flatten a lumpy sea.

Results

- 1 13417 Mike Senior & Luke Shaw, South Staffs
- 2 13427 Justin Jones & Lucy Evans/Chris Anderson, South Staffs
- 3 14038 Simon Potts & Drew Nickless Dovey
- 4 14025 Carl Jeffs & Jim Toothill, Trimply

The number of racing GP14s in the area is up to about twelve. In Llandudno we use GPs for all our training and attract a lot of younger sailors through the RYA On Board scheme. Unfortunately, as the youngsters make progress, they are sent off into the Zone squads and disappear from club sailing for the time being. We have to encourage Welsh Yachting to take the GP14 more seriously as a preferred training boat (it might help if the Association arranges more coaching), and also anticipate that some of the youngsters will come back to club racing when the Zones are no longer appropriate for them.

We are looking forward to events in Wales next year, especially the Nationals at SCYC and 60th anniversary celebrations at Dovey, birthplace of the GP14.

Andy McNamara, North Wales Area Rep



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Scottish Area

GP14 sailing in Scotland is continuing its steady growth with an abundance of enthusiasm in the clubs that actively race our class, as well as increasing interest from others who use the GP14 for training.

The first event of the year was at Annandale in April, when lots of on-the-water coaching from Mark Greenhalgh on Saturday was put into practice in the first traveller event on the Sunday.

The Scottish Championship was next on 30 & 31 May, at Loch Ryan, who put on a great event even though Sunday was unusually calm for this Irish Sea venue. Sixteen boats attended and it was wonderful to have several English boats including those who took the top three places. The support of these northern English clubs has been fundamental in keeping Scottish GP14 sailing on the map during the rise of asymmetric and handicap racing.

Results

1	14021	Andy Tunnicliffe & Greg Pitt, Royal Windermere
2	14037	Dave & Jackie Gebhard, Derwent Reservoir
3	13176	Dave & Lynn Lawson, Bassenthwaite
Silver	13713	John Beardon & Fergus Barrie, Annandale
Bronze	13593	Gus MacCleod & Eric Borkand, Arran



photo: Gus MacCleod

Annandale
A Team winners
at Arran

On to July, when two Arran GP14s made the journey to Llandudno for the Nationals and Angus Campbell and Greg Hamill returned with the Largs Trophy. Well done guys; hopefully many more Scottish boats will be at Abersoch in 2010.

Arran was next to host a Scottish GP14 event, the ever popular team racing. With six teams of 6 competitive GP14 sailors, rules knowledge, tactics and close boat handling skills were challenged. The Annandale A team got the better of the Arran A team in the final. The hospitality of Angus and Yole Campbell and the Arran members was, as always, superb.

Seven Scottish GP14s supported the National Inland Championship at Derwent Reservoir; this may have been down to the persuasive powers of chief organiser and honorary Scot Ann Penny who supports all the Scottish events. All had a great time at this excellent Championship – well done, Ann.

Team racing at Arran



photo: Gus MacCleod

The Scottish Travellers series concluded at Castle Semple on 24 & 25 October. It was a fantastic weekend, with a shifty breeze on Saturday and steady planing conditions on Sunday. Paul O'Neill and his team put on a tremendous ceilidh on Saturday evening. All four series events (Annandale, Loch Ryan, Derwent and Castle Semple) had an excellent number of competitors and there were 9 qualifiers, a great result considering this is the first time this circuit has run for several years. Congratulations to overall winners Dave and Jackie Gebhard from Derwent Reservoir. Full results and plans for next year are to be found on the GP14 website.

Duncan Greenhalgh, Scottish Area Rep

West Australian Branch

The new season is upon us, with a successful Opening Day at Mounts Bay Sailing Club recently held on Saturday 4 October. We welcome the McKinley family to our circle, recently over from the UK and seasoned GP enthusiasts, who enjoyed their first race in their newly acquired historic *A Grand Day Out* sail No. 5675. Rumour has it that the pleasures of warm water sailing will cause so much infighting between family members that we could soon see a second boat within the McKinley clan! A further two promising members have shown up in the form of John and Mario, who, now that their children have advanced to Sunday afternoon sailing, can now also indulge in that leisurely Sunday afternoon sport of GP racing on the Swan River. Our more southerly counterparts at the glorious Dunsborough Bay Yacht Club have a later start to their season, but they have been making tremendous progress on the fundraising and building of their new clubhouse. We certainly look forward to enjoying whatever part is completed by the time our State Titles come around down there next March.

Our regular mid-winter July AGM was followed a few weeks later by our 44th annual prize night which had a great attendance from both active and retired sailors. The night did, sadly, bid a formal and fond farewell from active sailing to several of our long serving members, namely Charles Jackson, David Curtis, Rob Spinks and John Collier, to all of whom we are indebted for many years of loyal service. We are assured however that their retirement from sailing does not mean we will no longer see them at Association functions. Richard Estaugh's tragic passing was remembered by many of those present, as they had met him personally at our club during the 1979 Worlds.

Re-elected committee members for 2009/10

President: Bruce Quail
 Honorary Secretary: Ian Greenham
 Honorary Treasurer: Louis Proksch
 Class Captain: Steve Heywood
 Measurer: John Collier

Bruce Quail, President, Western Australia Branch

Results from our annual prize giving

GP14 W.A. State Champions	La Rousse	Bruce Quail & Steve Heywood
Mounts Bay Club Championship	La Rousse	Bruce Quail & Steve Heywood
Casper Cup (Short Race Series)	Cocktail Cherry	Louis Proksch & Steve Dickinson
Silver Anniversary (Maylands Handicap Series)	Minette	John Collier & Dorothy Grigg
Nanette Too (MBSC Handicap Series)	La Rousse	Bruce Quail & Steve Heywood
Heirisson Island Classic	La Rousse	Bruce Quail & Steve Heywood
Stumped Award (Blooper of the season)	Cocktail Cherry	Louis Proksch



Rigging on the Blackwood River

Cruising corner

Cruising Log Trophy



photo: Ian McCulloch

Jamie McCulloch with
Jester the Jack Russell

We are delighted to announce that this year's winner of the Cruising Log Trophy is Ian McCulloch for his log *Moby Minnow Meets Moby Dick*. This recounts a few days in Anglesey last year, when four of us were cruising in company in two GP14s, and one of the highlights was finding ourselves amongst a pod of minke whales! Presentation of the Trophy will be arranged in the near future.

Deadline for this year's competition: 1 January.

Ireland: 48 hours single-handed in a GP14

Earlier in the summer, news came in of an intrepid Irishman, Rob Dowling.

Five years ago he did a marathon 24-hour sail, sponsored by his local club. He followed that with a 500-mile solo sail down the Amazon in a (highly customised) plastic bath tub, and last year did a 114-mile raft race down the Amazon. In September he headed back for another raft race.

In the meantime, in July, he did a sponsored solo sail in his beloved GP14 as a fund-raising effort for a new charitable project which he is setting up, Cotar Children, to assist the sick children of the Amazon River. He hopes that this sail in Irish waters will get him into the Guinness Book of Records, and that it will become an annual 48-hour challenge. Rob completed his challenge but unfortunately did not manage to raise the necessary funds to continue his work with the children in Peru.

To quote two extracts from Rob's account: 'Moving into the first night the sunset was beautiful. I recall thinking I was sorry to see it leave, the heat was most welcome. As daylight faded, reality crept in. On my first night sailing in darkness, I rigged up floor torches so I could move about without breaking a foot on the floor strapping. My dinghy is old, with airbags on the sides, and the flooring has sides which could easily catch a foot when tacking. I recall my first experience of darkness sailing and thinking every thing just seems different. Too strong a flashlight and your vision was useless looking about before a tack. So low floor lighting was the answer. On the shrouds I had makeshift tell-tails – golden coloured ribbon from a party balloon. They proved to be excellent, as looking up at the burgee was very difficult on the neck and it was hard to see. On my tiller extension I had taped a small hand torch. This proved to be necessary as I moved around the boat. Extra pieces of most vital equipment included a radio and a foam pad tied to a rope. My rear suffered the pains of sitting down for such a long period'

'With night one out of the way, when the daylight came I was thrilled I could take a breath and say thank you God – one down, one to go. There was almost no sun breaking through; I was freezing, the bow wave kept me wet but focused. The winds came at me with a vengeance from day two, and around 6am I was fighting a battle to stay upright.

'My arms, hands and fingers were cold, hiking out against gusts of wind that would kill a racehorse. I had a picture of Jazmin pinned in front of me and when the going got tough I would look at her and think "no way am I giving up."

Jazmin was the first beneficiary of the charity which Rob set up, a young girl only a few weeks away from death when they found her in a remote part of the rain forest in Peru, who, with a lot of medical attention, made a remarkable recovery.

Rob Dowling's full account of his 48-hour solo sail is at www.sail-world.com/UK/A-marathon-sail---48-hours-solo-in-a-GP14-dinghy/58897

2009 cruising events

Ivan's Bala Weekend took place at the beginning of July, and several of the 'usual suspects' amongst the cruising GP14 sailors took part, as well as members of his home club, in a variety of boats. They all enjoyed an excellent weekend, with a combination of sun and no rain plus plenty of wind giving good sailing.

The first of my own club's Mersey Open Invitation Cruises attracted one GP14 visitor, Peter James, but in the event the weather conditions were such that we had to cancel activities on the water. But the club also own a small fleet of Blokarts, miniature land yachts, so our disappointment was mitigated by the opportunity to sail ashore; and 30 mph under sail, only a few inches from the ground, can be quite exciting!

You can find a report of the outstandingly successful and enjoyable UK National Cruising Week, at Traeth Bychan in August, following this section.

As a one-liner, I like the advice recently given on Openboat to a new GP14 owner: 'Cruise her, don't race her; the enjoyment lasts longer!'

Finally, under this heading, both the Editor and myself are acutely aware that the geographical coverage of these reports is often somewhat limited. May I therefore put in a plea to any of you who do any cruising at all, particularly in other parts of the country, to let me know so that you can be included in future reports.

Future cruising events

We took the opportunity of this year's Cruising Week to discuss with participants where we wanted to go in future years. Preliminary discussions were already in hand with Poole with a view to possibly holding the 2010 UK National Cruising Week there, and there was unanimous enthusiasm for going back there. Looking ahead to 2011, there was also unanimous enthusiasm

for taking up Neyland's 2007 invitation for a return visit, so we are now starting discussions with them. For 2012 I have been asked to look into south Devon or south Cornwall, which I am very happy to do, and where there are a number of possible venues to consider.

For some future year, possibly 2013, I personally would love to go to the Channel Islands, and make it longer than just a week. Whether this is a viable option in terms of cost will, however, depend on the general financial situation nearer the time.

I also hope that we will continue to have a growing programme of shorter events, spread both geographically and in time, to cover the greater part of the UK and of the season.

Vintage Section

There has been encouraging interest shown for the concept of forming a Vintage Section, to support and celebrate our oldest boats, and we had two of the very oldest boats (nos. 7 and 64, both dating from 1951) sailing together in the Cruising Week, plus a moderately early Mk 2 GRP boat (no.10445, dating from 1973) which has been superbly restored.

As part of our 60th anniversary celebrations next year, we hope to arrange a cruising weekend at Aberdovey, the original home of the GP, and to muster a strong vintage representation for it – although it will of course be open to GP14s of any date. I hope to be able to report something in time for the next issue.

It has also been suggested that we should hold a Vintage Regatta next year, perhaps in tandem with a conventional GP14 Open Meeting, in which case we could either use a different course or else the CVRDA handicap system so that boats sailing on original rig and cotton sails could compete on more equal terms with those sailing modernised rigs. Alternatively we might share a Vintage Open Meeting organised by another class

A really useful facility – www.boatlaunch.co.uk/

of similar performance. We hope to have further information in the Spring issue of Mainsail.

Advanced Seamanship Training

I did float some time ago the idea of advanced seamanship training for cruising, to match the advanced race coaching that the Association can offer. As yet that has not met with much enthusiasm, but an outline for a training scheme still exists, if members are interested. May I make the point that there is probably as much scope and as much need for advanced skills in cruising as there is in racing, but they are not always the same skills (although there is of course some degree of overlap), and by drawing on the expertise of people within the Association and outside, we can probably provide access to advanced training if required.

Personal – future retirement

In 2012, in three years' time, I hit age 70, and will by then have done five years as Cruising Representative and six years (or is it seven?) on the Committee. That double milestone seems an appropriate point at which to retire from the role,

assuming that I am not voted out in the meantime. I mention it now in order to give a generous breathing space, which I hope will provide time and an opportunity for anyone else who might wish to become involved in organising cruising activities to start making a contribution, and consider succeeding me in due course. Ideally that might be someone younger than myself!

If any member would like to start to get involved on a partial basis, albeit without any official duties, and potentially work his or her way into the job in due course, that would be a good introduction and would be welcome.

Boatlaunch

The free online launch directory Boatlaunch offers a comprehensive selection of information in the region of your choice – slipways, jetski-friendly slipways, marinas, tides (the UKHO easytide service), engine dealers, chandleries, sea schools, wrecks, events, general articles, great days out, boatlaunch articles, accommodation, campsites, restaurants and wheelchair accommodation.

Oliver L. Shaw

Cruising in
Nothumbria –
the obelisk
markers at
low tide
see page 36



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Cruising Week at Traeth Bychan

The cruising fleet enjoyed an excellent week's sailing in the UK National Cruising Week, hosted this year by Red Wharf Bay Sailing & Watersports Club at Traeth Bychan, Anglesey. Six helmsmen and their crews turned up, with eight boats between us, Gareth Morris and I having each brought our vintage boats as well as our modern ones, and our numbers were occasionally augmented by members of the host club. Not only were we able to enjoy some superb and very scenic cruising waters, we also had what turned out to be the last week of decent weather for over a month.

For the latter part of the week we had scheduled a sail that I had been trying to achieve for about four years, but until this year I had never had the right combination of weather and tides. This was the sail northwards along the coast and round Point Lynas, into the delightful small bay variously known as Porth Eilian, Porth Yr Ysgaw or Lynas Cove. And indeed we finally managed it, a few days earlier than planned, when on the Tuesday we found ourselves almost within spitting distance and in ideal conditions, so immediately changed our passage plan. The return passage then unexpectedly provided the 'big game sailing' of the week, although we were not to know that when we set out...

Not all participants were able to join us right from the start of the week, most arriving on the Saturday ready to sail from the Sunday. But Richard Moore and Tamsin, his youngest daughter, arrived on the Friday evening, as did my crew Kevin Tilbury, so we all met up for a convivial pub meal that evening. We then followed that with a shakedown sail on Saturday, in somewhat gusty conditions, during which Kevin and I distinguished ourselves by having the first capsize of the week – not ideal when cruising, especially as we were quite a long way from base and had gone out without a safety boat, but we recovered the boat without problems and resumed our sail.

Sunday was the day of the prestigious Anglesey Offshore Dinghy Race, hosted by the same club, and we had offered the cruisers the opportunity of entering, but the alternative attraction of a short cruise southwards along the coast to the neighbouring drying inlet of Traeth Coch and a convivial pub lunch at The Ship won the day.

Monday dawned with persistent rain, but, with the promise of brighter weather in the afternoon, we decided to do things ashore in the morning and reconvene after lunch. A group of us then drove over to the historic harbour of Porth Amlwch, which in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries used to be one of two ports for the neighbouring copper mines, and in the days of wooden ships was also a significant shipbuilding port. Nowadays the harbour is used by pleasure craft and fishing boats, and is the home port of the schooner Pickle, a modern but faithful replica of HMS Pickle, one of the smallest ships at the Battle of Trafalgar and the ship charged with bringing the news of the victory back to Britain. There is also a heritage trail, a museum and quite a pleasant café on the quayside.

Richard & Tamsin Moore in their nicely restored GRP Mk.2



photo: Edward Washington



Monday afternoon saw glorious sunny conditions, with just enough wind to move the boats briskly, but without ever being hard pressed, so it was an ideal time for Gareth and I to leave our modern boats ashore and sail our respective vintage ones. Both boats are part way through refurbishment, with mine, Snowgoose, no. 64, being gradually returned to original 1951 specification and now sailing on a superb suit of cotton sails in virtually new condition. Of course, sailing on cottons and with the original rig (standard jib rather than genoa, and no spinnaker) she was the slowest boat in the fleet, but nonetheless Kevin and I were delighted with just how well she sailed. We took the fleet northwards this time, a few miles up the coast to round Ynys Dulas, a low rocky outcrop surmounted by a rescue tower, and then returned to base.

On Tuesday the initial plan was to sail into Traeth Dulas, an extensive but very shoal estuary opposite the island which we had sailed round the previous day. We needed to transit the channel within a fairly limited tidal window,

because the entrance channel is narrow, tortuous and unmarked, and half way along it the tides run at up to 6 knots in the narrows. I did not want to take the fleet in there any earlier than 1300, so we planned to review the situation when we arrived in the vicinity of the entrance, and if necessary sail on a little further up the coast and then return.

We had a safety boat allocated to us, but the club had been let down by the person they had expected would operate her, so although the boat remained available we would have to operate her ourselves. The forecast was westerly, so we would be in the lee of the land, force 3 with the possibility of force 4 later, and sailing conditions were idyllic. All of us preferred to sail rather than operate the safety boat, and all the helmsmen were massively experienced, so we took a deliberate decision not to take it. That decision is relevant to what happened later in the day, but I remain convinced that it was a reasonable decision in the light of the experience of the personnel and of the forecast.

Tuesday,
Porth Eilan

In due course, in ideal sailing conditions, we found ourselves well ahead of time, so sailed on up the coast. Then, when we reached the moment at which it would be appropriate to turn round to make for Traeth Dulas, we were so close to Lynas, and the conditions were so ideal, that I took a snap decision to go on, changing our lunchtime destination to Porth Eilian. We then bucked the last of the flood tide, foul for the direction we were sailing, round Lynas, and sailed into this utterly delightful small cove on the far side of the headland, where we went ashore for our picnic lunch.

After lunch and a brief walk ashore, we set off for the return passage, ensuring that we got away in time to round the headland before the young ebb strengthened too much. However, as soon as we got out to the vicinity of the headland, we met an absolute slammer of a wind, which we later learned had been recorded by Moelfre Lifeboat Station as 30 mph for a good half hour, rising to 38 mph. That is the extreme upper end of force 7, and Moelfre is in the lee of the land; we got it at sea, off an exposed headland, and with wind against tide, so I am confident that we experienced force 8 at times. I immediately put in the first reef in the main, followed by the second one only a minute or two later, and radioed a recommendation to the rest of the fleet to reduce sail, although I was later told that they all had so much noise in the boats that they could not hear the radio!

Thankfully every last one of our helmsmen was massively experienced, and all boats were able to cope with the conditions, although Rob Barlow sailing single-handed did suffer a capsize and inversion, from which he recovered unaided.

I was immensely impressed at his ability to recover the boat single-handed from inversion in conditions in which I know that I would have been struggling. A major part of the reason he was able to do so was that he had fitted righting lines: long lines, knotted every foot of their length, with



Don't those cotton sails set well, and look good... Oliver's GP no.64

one end of each secured inside the boat near the thwart. As soon as he found himself in the water he grabbed one of these lines and thereafter never let go, so he remained always attached to the boat. Then he swam round the stern, flicked the line over the hull, and then swam round to the middle of the boat. He then lay flat in the water, with his feet braced against the hull, and hauled in one knot at a time. As soon as he had hauled his body above the water the boat started to come up.

I won't claim that it is easy, but it is certainly effective, and I am so impressed that I have now fitted similar righting lines to my own boat.

This gale split up the fleet. Ivan and Edward Washington decided to return to the shelter of Porth Eilian, and then when Rob capsized they came out again to stand by, before finally returning to Porth Eilian and later recovering their boat by road. I stood by the casualty under heavily reefed genoa and no main, until finally discharged perhaps an hour later, and then we resumed our passage. Meanwhile the rest of the fleet made fast passages home, in most cases dropping one or other sail.

However Gareth Morris, by far our youngest helmsman and race-bred, although now firmly bitten by the cruising bug, sailing with a teenage crew (plus Gareth's dog), left full sail up and sailed the boat as though he were racing, taking little over an hour for the passage home. I would like to be able to report that he also flew a spinnaker, but that would be stretching the truth

Cruising in Northumbria

– although he told me later that he had in fact briefly considered doing so!

Full marks to the entire cruising fleet for coping superbly well with extreme and completely unforecast conditions, conditions which nearer home caused major problems to the racing fleet, and in which the local lifeboat performed no fewer than eleven services.

By Wednesday the gale had dissipated. We paid a visit in the morning to the Lifeboat Station, which is when we learned what the true force of the wind had been, and then we sailed southwards across the wide expanse of Red Wharf Bay for a picnic lunch on the beach at Llandonna, finally returning via Traeth Coch and a quick pint at The Ship. Then in the evening we enjoyed our annual Cruiser Dinner at the Parciau Arms.

On Thursday we sailed over to Puffin Island. The intention had been to sail round it, but in very light winds some people were not entirely happy about the strength of the tide around the island, and anticipated difficulties getting back in time for lunch, so we contented ourselves with sailing just up to the Sound and then returned.

With the excuse that they had rented a holiday cottage from the coxwain of the local lifeboat and they had to see him in order to pay him, Gareth and Naomi had arranged a private conducted tour of the station for us on Friday morning, with the opportunity to actually go aboard the boats and look them over – something the ordinary visitor is not permitted to do. The club also offered to put a race on for the three of us who didn't want to pack up for an early departure. Unfortunately, however, the car let me down with a leak in a brake pipe so Kevin and I never made it to the lifeboat station or to the afternoon race, which had to be aborted because there were only two potential participants.

So a wonderful week's cruising ended with a convivial barbecue at Gareth and Naomi's holiday cottage on the Friday evening.

Oliver L. Shaw

This is a contribution from Ed Wingfield, who runs the Dinghy Cruising Association's annual Holy Island Rally, one of the high spots in the calendar, described on the host website as 'Probably the best rally in the country. Breathtakingly beautiful Northumberland coastline and astounding wildlife not normally accessible to the smaller boat anywhere else in the country.'



A Bayrider with Holy Island Castle behind

photo: Ed Wingfield

Holy Island is an excellent base for the cruising sailor to consider as it offers such varied sailing. On arrival it is worthwhile for the skipper to walk the footpath to the high ground near the Holy Island village known as the Heugh. From here s/he will have a panoramic view of the whole area: the sheltered sailing nearby within the protected natural harbour, the large inshore estuarial area over Holy Island Sands and Fenham Flats which becomes a tricky creek circuit to explore at low-water. Let your eye follow beyond the obelisk leading-line marks along the dunes to Bamburgh Castle. To southeast, low and offshore lie the Farne Islands some 6-7M away.

Even before arrival, the skipper, as a motorist, has to consult tide times as the causeway covers two hours before and three hours after high water. Every year gormless tourists are rescued by RIB or Sea King as their vehicles become overwhelmed – despite all the warning signs!

On payment of £5 to the harbourmaster Mr Tommy Douglass, the skipper is allowed one week's launching and parking of the vehicle on



photo: Liz Hall

Upturned herring
boat shacks

the grass near the upturned herring boat shacks. You can hand launch across the soft beach into the Ouze two hours either side of HW or you may use the slipway outside the pier (or the adjacent hard ground), and launch all the way down to LW. Note: the pier and slip are for the fishermen. You may use them, but must not obstruct their access.

Island facilities? Next to none! Water is available from a standpipe outside the boundary wall of the Manor House Hotel. Very basic provisions can be bought at the souvenir shop and Post Office. Quality wine and beer is available. If you need fresh provisions, go off-island to Belford mini market or Berwick upon Tweed supermarket. The two island pubs and a hotel are your options for eating ashore. B&Bs are available for live-ashore sailors. Check the Northumberland Tourist Board site for these. There is no camping on the Island. You can of course sleep aboard the boat.

Policing of the Reserve is relaxed and you may sail as you please except for two highly sensitive areas where arctic, common and little terns ground nest. You must not land on or near Black Law and Guile Point in the breeding season. A colony of about 200 grey seals live within the creeks of the Reserve. They haul out in their favoured places. Their haunting calls will be heard across the anchorage on a quiet evening. Best of all is to take the boat into the creeks at low water and view the seals close up. They are inquisitive, yet frightened: you'll have some fantastic close-up views. By the way, one of the

creeks contains a small (hobby) oyster farm. The oysters are served up in restaurants about the region. Additionally you may see licensed winkle-pickers and a mussel gatherer working at low water. Puffins, along with guillimots, razorbills and shags are best seen on the Farne Islands in late spring. Eider duck will be seen in the Ouze throughout the year. Wigeon and brent geese arrive in the autumn. At low tide, the shores teem with feeding seabirds.

The Dinghy Cruising Association has recently moved the annual Rally from May to September, when the weather is usually more reliable. Skippers are required to be self-sufficient and take full responsibility for their boat and crew – there is no safety boat. We offer adventures for skippers of all levels of experience. It is suitable for the novice skipper and young families as there is protected sailing in the natural harbour. We have a beach fire and barbecue for the kids to enjoy, the skippers enjoy the beer and the yarns.

Many have gained their first experience of coastal sailing here, but the short hop to Farnes requires pilotage and navigation skills, as rocks and shoals are to be avoided. Less experienced sailors might offer to crew a short handed boat. To return to Holy Island at night is a thorough examination of your sailing skills! See the Rally site www.tmtr.com/rally for reports of previous adventures.

Ed Wingfield

Sixty years, fourteen

In preparation for the sixtieth anniversary of the GP14, Hugh Brazier has been rummaging through the GP14 Class Association archives, and has pulled out some samples of what lurks among the records of over 14,000 boats – roughly one boat selected (not entirely at random) from each thousand.



photo: Kevin Tibury

Oliver Shaw's *Snowgoose* (no.64) and Gareth Morris's *South Bank* (no.7) at the cruising week.

GP14 no. 1 – but which one?

GP14 no. 1 was launched in Aberdovey in 1950. The boat was named *Kittiwake II*, and belonged to E. Howard Davies. Confusingly, however, Howard Davies was given special permission to transfer this number to any new boat that he acquired, and there are believed to have been three built. The original is said to have been renumbered 313 (or was it 1370?), but the true identity and later whereabouts of the first GP14 has been the subject of much correspondence, and not a little head-scratching, over the years.

1001 – still going strong?

Psyche was built in Derby from a Bell Woodworking kit, and the 'anticipated completion date' is recorded on the registration form as May 1956. But the boat was not measured and issued with a certificate until July 1957 – does this mean that the building took a little longer than expected? The man who built it owned it for almost 35 years, and after a few further changes of ownership the boat was last heard of in 2004.

2001 – a familiar name appears

Built in Belfast over the winter of 1957/58 by S G Duffin. Originally called *Shearwater*, sold less than two years later and renamed *Kylemor*. No record in the files since 1959.

3081 – a rap over the knuckles

The builder of *Magellan Cloud* made a mistake in 1959, and ended up with an aft deck the wrong size. Jack Austin (former Association Secretary and well known as a stickler for the rules) commented, 'It is a common mistake ... Contrary to what he says, at that stage it would have been comparatively simple to correct the error, but he

thousand boats

appears to have carried on and completed the boat knowing it to be wrong.' The boat was nonetheless issued with a certificate, and was still owned by an Association member in 2007.

4000 – rocking the royal boat

Royal Favour, built in 1960, was given by the Association to Prince Philip (unfortunately there is no signature on the membership form!). He lent it to a sail training school on Windermere, where in 1975 it was involved in an accident, considered to be beyond repair, and broken up. Much frantic letter-writing when it emerged that the royal owner of the boat had not been consulted, or even informed. A letter from the Association to the sailing school ends, 'Before I communicate with Prince Philip, I would be pleased if you will inform me of the action you intend to take to replace Prince Philip's GP14.'

5000 – far-flung GP14s

Boat number 5000, built by Lawrence & Plater, was first registered in Canada in 1963 under the name of Kunning Kate, and subsequently moved to New York State, where, named Sneetch, it was last heard of in 1976. There are several other foreign boats in the files for the early 5000s, including 5008, apparently built in Ghana but owned by someone in Louisiana; 5012 to 5016, all Canadian; 5023, which spent at least ten years in Nigeria; 5030, in what was then Southern Rhodesia; and 5033, built in Malaya in 1962.

6001 – a windswept boat meets a fiery end

Built from a Bell kit in 1963, issued with a certificate in 1964, changed hands in 1967 and 1996, all the time under the name of Windswept – and then, forty years after the boat was built, disaster struck: '5 November 2003: sunk, holed, destroyed on bonfire.'

7002 – the first glassfibre GP14

On 6 May 1967 J W Davis & Son (Yachting) Ltd issued a receipt for £240, for 'one deluxe glass fibre GP14 sailing dinghy, sail number 7002.'

This was the first of the Mark I GRP hulls produced by Bourne Plastics. Most of them had light blue GRP decks, but 7002 was decked in wood – and was last recorded in 1982, somewhere in the Midlands.

8010, 8011, 8032, 8055 – where are they now?

Boats 8010 and 8011 were registered to RAF Muharraq (Bahrain) in 1968. Boat 8032 belonged to the National Westminster Bank Sailing Club, and was issued with a certificate in January 1971. Boat 8055 was owned by Central Grammar School, Birmingham, in 1970. They all promptly vanished without trace, leaving nothing in the files except the initial registration document.

9005 – uncanny modification

This wooden boat was built by Day & Allen in 1971, and appears to have been sold by the first owner after just three months. Originally named Jelly Roll, it became Southern Comfort in 1976, and apart from a brief period under a different (but illegible) name in the early 1980s it has remained Southern Comfort ever since. This is one of the few boats to have undergone the conversion from Series I to Series II floor layout – carried out in 1997, and (as noted by the measurer when the boat was re-measured), 'uncannily modified to minimum weight'.

GPs in strange places: do you know of one? Send us pictures and tell us where they are...

photo: Ken Hemsell



Roy Nettleship's
No. 19 (10011)

10011 – a binary boat

Built in 1972 by R R Sills of Liverpool, one of a fleet of twenty-four built for RYA/BT team racing, and passed through several hands (and changes of name) until 1996, when it was acquired by Roy Nettleship and renamed Number Nineteen (think binary numerals). Restored, redecked, and with its mast step modified, the boat still makes regular appearances in championship fleets.

11717 – an Australian winner

Built by Don Marine in early 1978, this was the boat in which Richard Estaugh won his first World Championship – and his first UK Nationals – in 1979. It's not entirely clear whether the name Bruce was given to the boat before or after those World Championships, in Perth, Western Australia. By the spring of 1980 the boat had changed hands, and it eventually moved to Northern Ireland, under the name of Colonel Blood.

12594 – from Ireland to Wales, to Ireland, and back to Wales

Guinness was built in Belfast by Alistair Duffin, and sailed by Simon Relph in his first World Championship victory, in Mumbles in 1985. Immediately after the event it was sold and went back to Ireland, and then, with another change of

ownership in the late 1990s, moved back to south Wales. The boat had weight correctors in the form of four wooden blocks under the floorboards – common practice at the time. The records do not tell us whether the correctors were ever removed.

13098, 13099 – Series II prototypes

These two boats, originally registered as 15001 and 15002, were built in 1989 by J Atkinson and Alistair Duffin as prototypes of the new Series II design. In March that year they were displayed at the boat show at Crystal Palace (where it seems there was much trouble caused by the theft of a double-stacker trailer and two trolleys), but since then they appear to have retired from the limelight.

13477 – the first Holt/Speed FRP

Another new development, this one from 1996. The first of the very successful, and now very familiar, Speed FRP hulls.

14000 – the golden ticket

GP14 14000, a Speed FRP boat, was donated by Speed Sails and raffled in early 2008, raising a substantial sum in support of the Association's efforts in youth training. The winner of the raffle, and now the proud owner of GP14 14000, Golden Ticket, was Paul O'Neill of Castle Semple Sailing Club.

The GP14 archives contain the records of a further 13,985 (or so) boats, each with a story to tell. For some the details are sketchy, barely more than the name of the first owner or a measurement form, but in other cases there is a full history of the boat through the years, including countless gems among the correspondence. Plans are afoot to digitise the files, with the aim of making these fascinating stories from the past 60 years more accessible to GP14 sailors.

Another voice from the past

The Eric Twiname Memorial Trust and *Start to Win*

Earlier this year, the Eric Twiname Memorial Trust was generously assigned the author's copyright of *Start to Win*, written by Eric Twiname in 1973. Out of print for over 20 years, Adlard Coles (now Adlard Coles Nautical, part of A & C Black Publishers) have recently republished this classic – now in its third edition and substantially re-designed, with a Foreword by Ben Ainslie and an updated Rules section by Bryan Willis to accord with the 2009–2012 ISAF Rules.

Despite the passage of time *Start to Win* has undoubtedly retained its position as *the* book on simple racing principles, written as it was specifically for the benefit of the ordinary dinghy sailor. As such it manages to remove much of the mystique of racing sailing and assists helmsmen to improve their skills and tactical ability. There is arguably nothing else that sets out the techniques

Start to Win is available from Adlard Coles Nautical and through most nautical booksellers.



of sailing in such a clear, understandable and straightforward manner. *Start to Win* has been welcomed back by its many followers, and will no doubt be read for the first time by many more. This classic, which complements *The Rules Book* also written by Eric Twiname and revised by Bryan Willis for the 2009–2012 rules, is set to help sailors achieve their racing best for many years to come.

Royalties from *Start to Win* go to the Eric Twiname Memorial Trust, which was set up in 1980 in order to perpetuate Eric's memory and to enable his many and diverse sailing interests to continue. It became a registered charity in 1991 with the primary objective of providing funding or equipment that will assist those in full-time education at schools and universities in the United Kingdom to sail or yacht race, with the emphasis being directed towards youth. Purchase of this book will therefore assist the Trust with its invaluable support for youth racing sailing, which includes bursaries for juniors on starter courses, the on-going provision of support RIBS for all eight national youth classes, the funding of dinghies for training purposes for sailing associations and clubs, and the financing of national championship events.

Bruce Aitken
Chairman, Eric Twiname Memorial Trust

TAKING CHANCE OUT OF STARTING



127 Just over a minute to the gun, Boat A is luffing and slowing to create a gap ahead (the dotted area). By approaching from the 'wrong' direction, Boat A should be able to tack into this (or another) carefully prepared hole.

find, or make, a starting hole, you simply tack into the hole that somebody else has prepared and is jealously guarding. Checky, but it works.

Port tack starts on a port biased line do work sometimes and may be worth trying if you like living dangerously. But a starboard start at the port end is far safer and just as effective. To make the port tack work you have to be travelling fast and be on the line at the gun. In the closing seconds all that remains is to look at the approach of the right-of-way boats and hold your breath. But only try a port tack start in a well-insured boat (128).

128 Port tack starts are not for the chicken-hearted. (Start of a race in the Endeavour Trophy series at Bamburgh-Craigh, ROB VAN MESDAG)



Better than skiffs

Phil Hodgkins

It's hard to think that after a five-year break I'm back sailing the boats I raced so hard as a teenager. At the age of 13 I thought the GP14 was the fastest thing on the water for me and I loved every minute of every race, capped off with a perfect World Championship at Abersoch in 2003, where my brother and I won the bronze fleet.

In my naivety, I looked longingly at the new breed of faster and supposedly more exciting boats and thought to myself 'I gotta get me one of those'. So at the first opportunity my brother and I put our GP14 on the For Sale board and within a day it was sold. Now the choice was which fast boat? After a little thought I decided an RS400 was the right boat for the job, fast enough to fully satisfy my new found addiction for speed, but practical enough to enjoy some racing.

A couple of years passed and it was fun, but I always wanted something even quicker, so it wasn't long before the RS400 was gone and a B14 replaced it. Now all I will say about the B14 is that it was great in a straight line, a very straight line, but was a real handful and a half and close to suicidal in mixed fleet lake racing with shifting winds. After less than a year, and still learning how to sail the B14 I went on a trip to the Lord Birkett race at Ullswater and suffered what can only be describe as the scariest and fastest capsizes of my life – who would have thought a boat could do a back flip at nearly 20 knots!

It was time for a change again and, dare I say it, time to use my common sense... so I thought I'd get myself an RS200. Fairly fast, nice fleet racing and much cheaper to keep on the water compared to Skiffs. While at University the RS200 did its job, kept me entertained and enjoying racing. Problem was, I craved the excitement of good, close fleet racing but still had a need for speed. With University nearly over and needing some cash to recover my socialising (...I mean 'text book and lodging') debts, I had to let the RS200 go to a new home.

With University now over, it was off into the real world to get a job; fortunately I landed on my feet and got a terrific job in Chandlery where I get to play with all sort of boating equipment. My nice boss let me loose in their RS700, a boat for the real speed freaks. I was in heaven or so I thought. I'll admit it's good fun in a steady force



photo: Andy Bury

The excitement of good close fleet racing

... its great to be back in a challenging and entertaining boat...

2–4 but really anything outside that range means it's either extremely hard keeping it afloat and moving, or it's insanely fast – resulting in extreme cases in actual fear for my survival; capsizing at 20+ knots is not recommended for body or soul.

It's only been a few months since I stepped back into a GP14, kindly borrowed from my parents, but since then I have had so many exciting and close races, both at the back and the front of the fleet, at both club and national level. I even went as far as to drag a skiff sailor into the boat as a crew for the Nationals at Llandudno. His first words when he saw the boat were ... 'erm, it's made of wood' to which I replied 'that's generally what Duffin GPs are made of'. I think after three days of close racing he may just be a convert.

I know it's not long since I returned to the GP14 after a few years in faster boats, but already it's obvious to me that there is a lot to be said for it; nearly 60 years after it first hit the water it's still going strong, helping to produce some of the country's finest sailors and delivering great racing, event after event, year after year. There's no reason why the GP14 can't remain one of the world's top fleets for another 60 years to come.

So are skiffs better than GP14s? All I can say is its great to be back in a challenging and entertaining boat and I look forward to thrills of competitive race in the future for many years to come. So come one and all, old and young – experience the joys of GP14 sailing.

I'm glad to be back.

All the fun of an RS700 – this is not Phil!



Obituary

Richard Estaugh 1958 – 2009

The UK sailing community was stunned last April by news of the sudden death of the well known dinghy sailor and Speed Sails boss, Richard Estaugh, whose importance to the GP14 Class cannot possibly be overestimated. This is an edited version of a tribute written by Justin Chisholm – the full version can be found on his website www.offshorerules.com

Richard's sailing career began in the Midlands at Chasewater where his prodigious talent was first spotted and nurtured by the members of Chase Sailing Club, where he remained an active member and staunch supporter. It was here that he was introduced to the GP14, a class with which his name will always be synonymous. In 1979 he was crowned both National and World Champion for the first time. Incredibly between then and 2000 Richard went on to win a total of twelve national and six world titles in the GP14. He always remained fiercely loyal to the class which had brought him so many successes, even donating a new Speed Sails FRP hull as part of a raffle prize to celebrate the issue of sail number 14000.

Richard also successfully applied his talents to other Classes and managed to win the Enterprise World Championships on four occasions, which he matched with a string of four National Championship victories. In 2007, he fulfilled his long-time goal to win a Fireball World Championship, when he claimed victory on the final day at Lake Silvaplana in Switzerland. Unsurprisingly, given his championship success rate, he was amongst the most regular competitors at the invitational 'Champion of Champions' Endeavour Trophy, an event which he won three times.

Eschewing Olympic yachting in favour of a more commercial route, Richard managed to translate his passion for sailing into a successful business. The Speed Sails organisation has become a household name within the UK sailing community, supplying equipment, sails and boats to the



14 April 2009: Richard Estaugh crewed by Simon Potts leads the fleet during the 2008 GP14 World Championship.

photo: Justin Chisholm

nation's most successful sailors and its comprehensive tuning guides for the most popular dinghy classes are essential reading for aspiring champions and club sailors alike.

Given his roots as a 'pond sailor' in the landlocked Midlands, Richard's ability to turn in championship winning performances on the open sea, often in fleets of over a hundred boats, perfectly illustrated his innate talent. Double GP14 World Champion Simon Relph, who had more first hand experiences of Richard's abilities than most, recalls that 'Richard simply didn't make any mistakes. If he was behind you he would pounce on any slip up and if you let him get in front then he was gone.'

Despite his incredible successes, Richard was quiet and calm, an unassuming individual whose open and friendly manner in the dinghy park made his victories all the more popular amongst his fellow competitors. Close friend Simon Potts, who crewed for him over a fourteen year span, remembers that on the water Richard was always respectful of the other competitors. He also recalls that his laid back demeanour evaporated the moment the warning signal sounded. 'At that point he instantly became highly focused. It was



Richard (left), with Hugh Gill and ?? presenting GP no. 14000 at the 2008 Dinghy Show

like flicking a switch. Nothing else mattered except the race. Richard's aggression was generally channelled at himself, although if you did make a mistake he would certainly let you know about it. He would keep up a bit of a muttered running commentary about the race. Everything from the state of wind and waves, to what the other competitors were doing, why we were going where we were going and what he expected to happen next. It was a stream of consciousness which I called the 'EStaugh Chunter' and only people who crewed for him will ever have heard it.' According to Simon the finishing gun would always signal a return to Richard's more relaxed persona and apart from the occasional quick debrief on the way in, the day's successes and failures were left out on the racecourse.

Richard's legacy of dominance in the major UK dinghy classes throughout the Eighties and Nineties will forever set him apart and one of the tragedies of his untimely death is that we will be denied the opportunity to find out what other victories might have lain in wait for him. Close friends knew that he harboured a burning desire to win a second Fireball World Championships and a newly purchased boat was due to be launched.

There is a term which is bandied about in the yachting media so freely as to render it almost meaningless, but those who either raced against him, knew him well or were lucky enough to count him as a friend, will recognise that in Richard EStaugh we had one of the few people who genuinely merited the description 'sailing legend'.

Justin Chisholm
14 April 2009

From the forums

I did not know Richard personally but I never met anyone who had a unkind word to say about him. He was true a legend in the sailing community and will be a chapter of dinghy sailing history never to be forgotten.
Andy Bury, www.gp14.org/

A great guy who always had time to talk to everyone.
Gareth Morris, www.gp14.org/

Rich was extremely kind and generous! He gave me my break into sailmaking, without which the only other choice for me was joining the army to get shot at. He was really supportive and always made time for me. I wish I'd had the chance to race against him in a championship. He would have whooped my ass but I would have liked to race him.
Doug Horner
www.yachtsandyachting.com/

Not only was Richard an awesomely good sailor, he was also one of the most humble. I shan't pretend I knew him well – I didn't, but he just came across as one if life's nice guys.

On the odd occasion when I did manage to get anywhere near him on the water, he just found another gear and disappeared off into the distance again.
Jaydub
www.yachtsandyachting.com/

Rich was an awesome person! a great sailor and the best mate anyone could wish for. I only wish he could have enjoyed the coming season, he had a full diary and was keen to get on the water. We will all miss him dearly, on the water and in the bar. Thank you Richard for giving me the pleasure of sailing with you for so long it has been an honour and a privilege. I will never forget our times together, I will always love you!

Pottsy
www.yachtsandyachting.com/

Richard had amazing sailing skills, he was such a natural in a boat, so graceful everyone aspired to be like him. I knew Richard mainly from being one of his main rivals but had the good fortune of crewing for him at the Enterprise Worlds in India in 1991 which ended in controversy. He was the perfect gentleman, always gracious in victory and defeat, a true Corinthian.

Andy Service
www.offshorerules.com

Technical

In a tangle over spinnakers

One of the most difficult things for beginners to master is the art of reliably getting the kite flying. They find the kite gets twisted, the ropes get entangled with other ropes or with innocent parts of the boat. Worse still is when the whole lot disappears under the boat.

This article aims to help the less experienced to avoid these frustrations by offering a few tips to becoming good kite flyers. Those more experienced than me, who can add to (or correct) my suggestions, please get in touch so that I can make this article a useful part of the Members' section of the website.

Spinnaker tangled on hoist (wine glass)

Avoidance

This is normally caused by pulling the sail down both clews at the same time. When pulling down the sail, the side of the sail nearest the crew should be stowed first, followed by the rest.

Recovery

This can normally be cleared by judicious pulling of sheet and guy, and/or by moving the pole windward or removing the pole from the mast (only) to release the tension. If the twist is near the top, slackening the halyard a few inches often clears the problem. Occasionally it may be necessary to detach the pole completely and lower the kite to disentangle it manually as it is lowered.

Halyard caught inside the pole or around the mast ring (direct pull halyards only)

Avoidance

It is necessary, when stowing the spinnaker, to ensure the halyard runs outside of and to the rear of the spreaders/shroud where it will normally stay. This prevents it getting tangled with items forward of the shrouds (pole, ring etc). To reinforce this, an upward pointing lacing eye can be taped to each shroud to allow the halyard to be clipped after pulling down the sail (see right). This does not prevent the halyard from being hoisted since it frees itself without aid during the hoist.

Spinnaker halyard and/or twinning line entangled with genoa sheet and shroud preventing full sheeting of genoa

Avoidance

This happens when the spinnaker is not fully stowed, and is normally avoided by better management by the crew (and by the helm allowing sufficient time for the drop).

Recovery

It is normally most easily remedied (particularly when windy) by tacking to free up the spinnaker for correct stowing (now on the windward side so not upsetting boat stability).

Halyard entangled with genoa head shackle, preventing lowering of sail (direct pull halyards only)

Avoidance

Install a cable gland sheath to the genoa halyard. This drops down after the sail is attached and covers the shackle, thus preventing the halyard becoming snagged. The sheaths can be obtained as part of a cable gland pack from electrical supply outlets.

Recovery

Normally this entails lowering the genoa and freeing by hand, although it might sometimes be possible without this.



Lacing eye taped to the shroud



The Nationals
at Llandudno

Spinnaker prevented from hoisting by the bobble getting caught in the vee formed between the two sheets at the genoa clew (direct pull halyards only)

Avoidance/recovery

To avoid the problem in light winds the helm may hoist the spinnaker a few inches before tacking at the windward mark to ensure the bobble/knot is clear of the sheets after the tack. Alternatively the crew should pull in the genoa tack a small distance as the helm hoists the kite.

Spinnaker gets caught under the genoa whilst hoisting (leeward hoist)

Avoidance/recovery

This may be avoided by ensuring the genoa is fully sheeted before hoisting the spinnaker (light winds only), by the crew pulling in the foot of the genoa as the kite is hoisted or by the helm giving the genoa sheet a sharp tug after hoisting.

Spinnaker/sheets under boat

The spinnaker acts as a wonderful brake when flown in this way – definitely best avoided.

Avoidance

Make sure you have an adequate spinnaker sheet catcher mounted on the bow deck (plastic tubing or cable ties are ideal). This reduces the risk of the front of the sheet falling into the water, which starts the process.

It is vital to ensure the helm keeps the halyard tensioned as the kite is dropped – this keeps both halyard and sheet tight during the drop and prevents a wayward sheet. When dropping make sure that the sheets are properly stowed.

It is also vital to ensure that the halyard is free before tossing the kite up for a windward hoist. Standing on one of the ropes and trying to undertake this procedure is a sure fire route to frustration. To avoid this the helm should test the halyard is free before allowing the crew to throw the kite.

Recovery

Sometimes the situation is spotted before the kite disappears, and the crew can lie on the bow deck and redirect the errant ropes. If the sail gets fully under the boat, then it is necessary to detach the kite from one sheet and pull it from under the boat (making sure you do not lose any twinning line bobbles). Then pass the sheet end around the bow and re-attach to kite, having made sure it passes through the twinner ring with bobble (if used) correctly positioned.

Now doesn't that seem all too simple? If only....!

Maurice Cooper

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