

SEAFLY DINGHY CLASS ASSOCIATION.

SUMMER NEWSLETTER - JUNE 1974

Editor:

Alan Green,
5, Cradock Place,
Worthing,
Sussex. BN13 2QA.
Tel: Worthing 63040.

Class Secretary:

Peter Scovell,
26, Chestnut Grove,
South Croydon,
Surrey.

Class Treasurer:

Harry Venables,
Cedrus House,
Dry Bank Road,
Tonbridge,
Kent. TN10 3BS.

- - - - -

EDITORIAL:

News and contributions have been rather slow to arrive on the editor's desk; hence the delay in issuing this Newsletter. With postal charges as they are, and shortly due to rise again, it is not worth while sending out a Newsletter unless there is something to put in it. So once again I appeal for news and items of interest.

There are in this issue several items of great importance to the membership, namely the situation regarding the builder of the Seafly, the formal announcement of the Annual General Meeting and the National Championships, so please read on.

The next Newsletter will probably be in the Autumn when I hope to report fully on all the Open Meetings and the Nationals this summer. Contributions please by the end of September. If time permits an interim report will be sent out with the agenda for the Annual General Meeting towards the end of July.

SOUTH DEVON BOATBUILDERS:

Many members will no doubt have heard that productions of the Seafly has temporarily halted and there has naturally been speculations as to the future of the boat. It can be stated that negotiations for the recommencement of building are in hand and it is hoped that in the near future members can be informed as to where building will be taking place; this may be on the basis of completed hulls only.

Members can be assured that the Class Association Committee will keep closely in touch with events and do their best to safeguard the interests of the Seafly Class. By the time of the A.G.M. at Seasalter in August it should be possible to clarify the position.

For the immediate future anyone wishing to purchase a new boat or build from scratch should contact the owner of the copyright, Mr. S. Herbert, whose address is:

The Red House,
Starcross,
South Devon.

OR - Class Secretary
for latest details.

As there is a shortage of good secondhand boats and potential newcomers to the class may not be able to afford a new boat, if you have a boat for sale or know of someone wishing to sell, please contact either P. Scovell, or H. Venables.

1974 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:

Elsewhere in this issue will be found the formal notice convening the 1974 Annual General Meeting at Seasalter Sailing Club on 7th August, 1974. This is likely to be one of the most important A.G.M.'s in the history of the Association, in view of the situation at South Devon Boatbuilders. It is clearly in everyone's best interest to be present if possible.

Peter Scovell, after two years as Secretary of the Association, feels that he can no longer devote sufficient time to the job and tenders his resignation. We therefore need a new class secretary, so if you want to keep the Association alive what about volunteering for the job? It is not very onerous but vital if the Association is to continue.

Cont/.....

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Although our Treasurer has received quite a large number of subscriptions, he reports that not all are in yet by any means. If you have not sent in yours please do so NOW on the form enclosed with this Newsletter. Costs are going up all the time and we do need your support.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS 1974:

Seafly Week '74 will be held at Seasalter S.C., near Whitstable, from 4th to 9th August. Entry fee for the series - practice race on the Sunday and one race each day from Monday to Friday - is £7. I cannot do better than repeat what I said about this event in the last Newsletter.

Seasalter is on the Thames Estuary and being North facing the prevailing wind is usually offshore with smooth seas. Boats are parked on the fine, sandy beach and launching is simplicity itself - no ramps, runs, breakers or any other hazards! The clubhouse has all the usual amenities, including an excellent bar, and the ladies committee provides for the inner man.

There is plenty of holiday accommodation in the area. Information can be obtained from the fleet captain, Jim Wren, 7, Dallin Road, Bexleyheath, Kent. or Harry Venables. Camping is free on the club's car park and it is hoped that caravans will also be able to park there.

We had a record entry of 42 boats last year at Highcliffe. Let's make it 50 this year!

SAIL MEASUREMENT CERTIFICATE:

Enclosed with this Newsletter is the new Sail Measurement Certificate which replaces both the old form and the draft sent out in the last issue. All dimensions are now in millimetres and the measurement instructions are on the back. All sails made after 1st November 1973 must be certified on the one of the new forms.

The new measurement form and instructions have been sent to the following sailmakers:- Lucas, Bowker and Budd, Seahorse, Mountifield and Jeckells. Anyone ordering sails from other sailmakers must make sure that they adhere strictly to the dimensions and instructions so that the sails will measure and the "one design" feature is preserved.

C.C.P.R. DINGHY EXHIBITION, CRYSTAL PALACE:

Our stand this year was a big success and a credit to the class.

The stand was engineered by Terry Smitherman and Dick Flower and their crews. Dick unfortunately at the last minute stepped back to admire his handiwork while on the roof of a house and broke his leg and lots of other things when he hit the deck.

Terry's new Seafly number 451 was exhibited; he completed the boat from a GRP hull and she has a fine mural on the side which was admired by the large crowd of visitors round the stand. It was an exhausting weekend for those who manned the stand and the appreciation of the class association must go to those who did such a very good job in furthering the Seafly image.

Everyone present felt that there was more interest than ever in the Seafly but all were saddened at the news that South Devon Boatbuilders was possibly being sold.

NEWS FROM THE FLEETS:

Blakeney: No news received, but there was an interesting article in one of the

Cont/.....

yachting magazines recently about anew venture by Morris Arthur, currently Seafly National Champion. He is one of a syndicate which is building a trimaran for the forthcoming Round Britain Race. We must wish Morris luck and hope that he will be a s successful in long distance off shore racing as he has been in dinghy sailing.

Blakeney Open Meeting is on 29th/30th June.

Fishers Green S.C.: Fishers Green Sailing Club, a gravel pit sailing club situated on the borders of Herts and Essex. The area of water, which is broadly 'P' shaped, is in the order of 100 acres and depth varies between a few inches and several fathoms. Dotted about the ater is a number of small islands which add interest, confusion or just plain annoyance depending whether one is cruising in a gentle 2-3 or planing flat out in a 4-5. As can be imagined, with an abundance of tree and bush on the islands, the wind is variable and the utmost concentration is required to obtain the most effective course. To confuse the issue even further, cruising is allowed at all times and fishing from the banks during the season. To avoid possible conflict between the two interests, boats are required to clear the banks by 40 feet, a most annoying factor when one is trying to avoid putting in the extra tack.

To minimise the starkness of a worked out gravel pit, the area is returned to nature by the planting of grass and small bushes, wild life is evident in the form of swans, duck and various wildfowl; occasionally one sees the odd heron and a kingfisher has been seen. Quite an idyllic scene on a warm summer day particularly when one is not faced with a long traffic laden journey home.

Fishers Green have an enthusiastic membership and active racing fleet, both class and handicap. The enterprise, GPL4, OK and Mirror have their own starts, in the handicap class one may meet the Wayfarer, Wineglass, Fireball, Y.W. Dayboat, Heron, Selo, Meth and at times the odd Dutchman and Int.14. Unfortunately ours is the only Seafly, although I have hopes of another on the water this year. However Fishers Green have produced a 100% turnout at the last 4 out of 5 Seafly Nationals, the exception being the early season National at Plymouth.

One of the most enthusiastically supported day at Fishers Green is children's day, usually a Bank Holiday, they have their own races, novelty races, greasy pole, obstacle races etc. its quite a sight to see half a dozen youngsters in a paddled Mirror preventing an overtaking boat by throwing buckets of water, hardly Racing Rules asper RYA.

As a family we enjoy all our sailing, but prefer sea sailing. My crew varies between one daughter, one son and at times both when they both wish to race at the same time, rather a drawback when the wind drops and one is caught on an outgoing tide as per Highcliffe last year. They are always critical of the helm, probably not without reason as we are not very successful except at enjoying ourselves.

We find the members of the Seafly Class, particularly those we meet at the various Opens and the Nationals very friendly, so you folk apprehensive at having a go, don't be 'Fright'!

The racing is competitive but not cut-throat, as in some other classes, so 'have a go' and who knows you may help us to finish a little higher up the list. The Nationals, in particular, make a fine family holiday, not relaxing whilst sailing but certainly so afterwards, there are always children around playing and other wives with whom to natter.

We have experienced a few incidents and have learnt a few lessons, e.g. make sure the toe strap fixings are secure, I had a wonderful swim at Worthing when mine parted on a planing reach; make sure the tiller extension cannot jam, ours did on the run in the Run at Highcliffe whilst returning from a race, we did at least two 360 turns before realizing what had happened, mind you, there was a woman at the helm at the time!! All good fun for the onlookers but a trifle embarrassing to us. Be sure of the race timing and don't be going in the opposite direction when the gun goes. I know these things shouldn't happen, but they do.

Out/.....

It was heartening to read the letter from Joan Wilkenson, 'Blue Moon' I think, and to know they intend to have another go, they enjoyed themselves at Highcliffe, which to my mind is the main thing.

Hoping to meet you all at the various Opens and the Nationals. A. Izzard. - C231. 'Chlce Tee'.

Highcliffe: Nothing to report. Open Meeting is on 7th/8th September.

Seasalter: There will be a number of new boats in the club this year. Perhaps the most potent will be Jim Furlong's new GRP boat. Jim is a new member to the class and says the change up from a Merlin Rocket is a very enjoyable one. Brian Howe has a new boat and his wife Val is back in the driving seat again. Bill Prescott has also acquired a new GRP boat - as well as writing some very interesting articles about the Seafly in "Dinghy Sailing".

Two other member have aquired Seafly's which brings the class strength up to 10, most of whom will be at the Nationals.

In some respects it is a pity the title "Seafly National Championships" is so impressive, because this certainly limits the numbers who enter. However well, or badly, you think you sail don't let it put you off entering; remember someone has to be last and most dinghy sailors prefer other boats to be behind them. Also, as Alan Izzard has mentioned, there is a lot more to the week than the sailing, just look at the social programme.

Harry Venables has been trying to sail a Phantom during the winter, due to crew shortages, and has been in the water so many times that he is sporting webbed feet. The boat takes a fiendish delight in tipping up and shoots off like a wild 'hoss' at a rate of knots once it has got rid of its load; then it lays down in the water and waits for Harry to swim to it! The sequel to all this was to tip up his Gull with son Ben as crew; Ben is not now so keen on crewing and Harry looks at his Seafly and wonders if he should try golf in future. The last time he tried was just as hilarious; he stuck a tee in the ground, put a ball on it and belted it straight through the lounge window of a house, broke a bookcase, frightened the dog, and spent all one Saturday morning putting in a new window. (The moral to all this seems to be to keep well clear of Harry whenever he is on the water - Ed.)

South Cerney: Regrettably still no news. It is hoped that some boats will be at the Nationals again this year.

Tankerton Bay: Dick Flower did a great job organising the Association's stand at the C.C.P.R. Exhibition, and Terry Smitherman kindly lent his new boat.

Tankerton Bay Open Meeting is on 8th/9th June and Dick hopes for a good turnout as they are in danger of losing the event for lack of support.

Starcross: Laurie Lanham writes that there is now a fleet of some 35 boats; but alas, not all of them sail very often. It would be very gratifying to see a strong contingent at the Nationals - it's not all that far to travel to Seasalter and if the Nationals are held at Plymouth next year there will be plenty of support coming from the fleets in the South East.

Open Meeting is on 29th/30th June.

Werthing: There is now a fleet of 21 boats, at least half of which sails regularly; one weekend recently saw a fleet of 13 afloat. In the current class points series there is very keen competition between Malcolm Thurgar (C119) a former National Champion, Peter Scovell (C392) runner up at Highcliffe last year, Chris Andrews (C370), John Cadenhead (C174) and Brian Walton (C95). Standards are definitely improving and we hope to make a good showing at the Nationals at Seasalter.

Our annual Seafly Supper in February was a great success with a large proportion of the membership present. The Captain's Cup for "best endeavour" was presented to Gerald Summerfield (C68).

Cont/.....

Worthing Open Meeting is on 22nd/23rd June this year; earlier than usual because of tides being unsuitable in September. Visitors are guaranteed some excellent racing, with plenty of assistance from beach parties should conditions dictate. We would like to see representatives from every fleet.

DOLPHIN TROPHY:

This handsome trophy was donated by the Class Association some years ago and is awarded annually to the member who has put up the best performance at open meetings - apart from the Nationals. The idea is to encourage YOU to go to the opens; you don't necessarily have to be a top class helmsman to win it if you attend enough meetings.

The trophy is awarded on a points basis. The winner at a meeting receives as many points as there entrants plus 1, the second receives the number of entrants minus 1, the third minus 2. and so on. Visitors from other clubs get 2 bonus points. Last year's winner was Harry Venables (Cl67) of Seasalter S.C. who gained 56 points from 4 out of a possible 5 meetings.

PROTEST: A member has sent me a copy of a recent Racing Appeal to the R.Y.A. The case concerned two Seaflys and involved Rules 43.1 and 43.2 (a)(i) - A yacht hailing for room to tack at an obstruction shall tack immediately she is able to do so.

The two boats were beating on parallel courses towards a reef, when the leeward "Nausicaa" called "Water" and the windward "Barfly" immediately responded. "Nausicaa" however held on for 3-4 boats' lengths before taking. The Race Committee dismissed "Barfly's" protest, but on appeal to the R.Y.A. the protest was upheld on the grounds that if "Nausicaa" could sail on for 3-4 lengths the Race Committee should have considered disqualifying her for hailing too soon.

Its interesting to think that our class, small as it is, has established itself in the Case Law of the R.Y.A. Appeals Committee. And where, you may well ask, did this incident take place? Mention of a reef sounds like somewhere pretty exotic and the scene was in fact Wewak Y.C. in New Guinea - surely one of the most far flung places where the Seafly is sailed. More news of the activities at Wewak would be most welcome.

That's all for this Newsletter -- Good Sailing!

Alan Green.

SEAFLY DINGHY CLASS ASSOCIATION - SUBSCRIPTION FOR 1974

I enclose my 1974 Subscription of £1.00 for Full Membership
£0.50 for Associate Membership

Please make cheques or postal orders payable to the Seafly Dinghy Class Association

Name.....Seafly No.....
Address.....Boat Name.....
.....Club.....
.....

Please send your subscription to the Treasurer - Harry Venables, Cedrus House, Dry Bank Road, Tonbridge, Kent, TN10 3BS.

OR hand it to your Fleet Captain. Thank you.